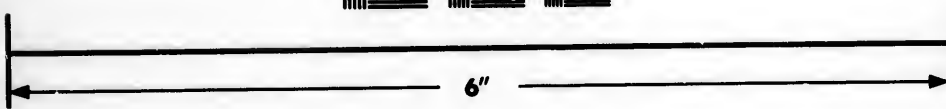
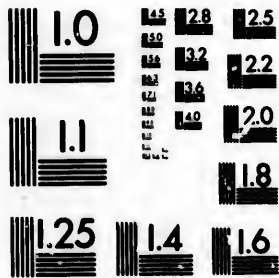


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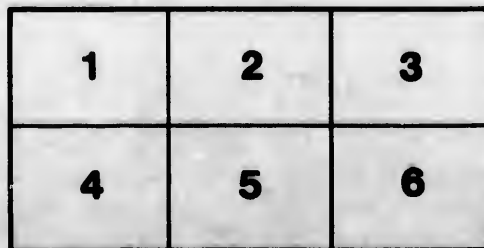
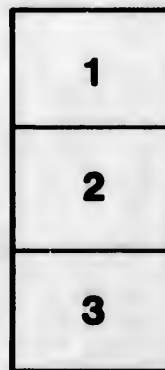
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AGES BEFORE MOSES:

*A SERIES OF LECTURES*

ON

THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

BY

JOHN MONRO GIBSON, D.D.,  
*Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Chicago.*

Second Thousand.

NEW YORK  
ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH & COMPANY  
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## PREFACE.

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THESE lectures formed part of a series on the Pentateuch, delivered in the Second Presbyterian Church, and in Farwell Hall, Chicago. With the exception of the second, and part of the first, they were spoken extempore, and written out from verbatim reports, which were afterward corrected for the press, without, however, any attempt to secure the merits of style which might be reasonably expected of written composition.

But though very little care has been given to the form and style of these lectures, the substance of them is the fruit of repeated study of the Book of Genesis during many years. And inasmuch as the author could not, in the press of other duties, read extensively with a view to the preparation of these particular lectures, but drew largely from materials accumulated before he had the remotest idea of publication, he is unable to acknowledge his obligations to others as frequently as he would have been disposed to do.

The plan of the lectures is the result of an attempt to combine the advantages of the expository and the topical methods, and at the same time to secure the benefits of *continuous* exposition, without wearying and discouraging those who have not time to dwell on details. And while the main object has been the presenta-

tion in outline of the positive spiritual teachings of the book, no opportunity has been intentionally missed of dealing with current objections and difficulties.

Though not aware of the existence of any other book constructed on the same plan, and with the same design, the author would not have ventured on publication, had he not been earnestly urged to do so by very many, whose opinions in regard to the probable usefulness of a work of this kind seemed entitled to the highest respect.

If the present series prove to be of real service to Bible students, the intention is to issue the remaining lectures, on "The Mosaic Era," some time within the year.

Though fully aware of many imperfections, and prepared to have his errors exposed and corrected, the author hopes that, as he has already had the kind assurance of very many that they had derived much benefit from listening to the spoken words, he may also have the joy of finding that, in the form in which they are now presented, they have, by the blessing of God, proved helpful beyond the reach of the speaker's voice, and contributed in measure to set forth some fractional part of "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

CHICAGO, *March*, 1879.

# THE AGES BEFORE MOSES.

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## LECTURE I.

### CONCERNING DIFFICULTIES AND OBJECTIONS.

**I**T is less of a compliment to the age in which we live than many suppose, to say that it is a critical age. The critical faculty has its own value, and is not to be despised. It has done, and is doing, good service in correcting errors, reforming abuses, and demolishing superstitions. But it is a very small part of a man after all. A great critic may be a very small man; and a very critical age may be quite an inferior one. The constructive faculty is much nobler in itself, and immeasurably more valuable in its results, for the obvious reason that it is a much nobler and better thing to build up than to pull down. It is an easy thing to destroy; and there are always destroyers enough. It requires skill and labor to erect a building: any idle tramp can burn it down. God alone can form and paint a flower; any foolish child can pull it all to pieces.

This age is grandly constructive in things material. It has exceeded all others in the progress of invention and discovery, in the multiplication of the comforts and conveniences of life, and in the unlocking of the secrets



of physical nature. Therein lies the true greatness of the present age. But in the higher region of things spiritual, there has been but little development of the constructive faculty. Those whom the age delights to honour in that department are not the builders, but the destroyers; not those who open new windows in heaven, but those who are most assiduous in their efforts to close the old ones; not those who seek to build our knowledge of things spiritual on sure foundations, but those who are always trying to loosen the old foundations or to undermine them altogether. It would seem as if the signs of the times almost justified our taking up the lament of the bard of old: "A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees. But now they break down the carved work at once with axes and hammers" (Ps. lxxiv. 5, 6). The time was, when a man that would go out into the forest and gather material for building the Temple of the Lord, was the man whom the people delighted to honour. But now the man that uses axe and hammer, not in making anything new of his own, or in making anything at all, but in hacking and smashing the carved work of God's sanctuary, is sure to be cheered on by a sufficient number of thoughtless sympathizers. No one who has watched the signs of the times at all closely, will be disposed to doubt that if there were issued at the same time two works on religious themes by authors equally well known and of equal ability, the one constructive and the other destructive, the one conservative and the other critical, the latter would have a very much larger sale, and attract much greater attention than the other. This may be,

and undoubtedly is, partly for the same reason that the burning of a house is more apt to find its way into the newspapers than the building of one. Nevertheless, it remains undeniably true, that the comparatively easy task of the critic and destroyer is much more appreciated in these days in the world of letters than the higher and much more useful work of the man that writes for edification. I wish the English language had a word to express the exact opposite of "edification;" to indicate the pulling down, as it means the building up of the house or temple. It would be a very useful word indeed, to characterize a large proportion of the so-called theological writing of the day. It is not fair to call it iconoclasm. It is not those who break the images, but those who demolish the temple, that we have in mind: those who try to pull down our house about our ears.

As a result of this critical and destructive fashion of the time, the subject of religion, and especially the religion of the Bible (inasmuch as it is practically the only one with which we have to do), is surrounded by a threatening host of difficulties and objections. Few of them indeed are new. They are the accumulation of centuries. They have been raised and answered, some of them in almost every generation since "the truth as it is in Jesus" was first proclaimed. But to a large extent they are new to the people. As a result generally of the wonderful development of the periodical press, and specially of the critical taste and fashion of the time, which leads authors to write and editors to print so much of the critical and so little of the conser-

vative and constructive, the difficulties and objections to the Bible and its gospel are much more familiar to the reading public than the Bible itself, or the system of truth which is contained in it. The Bible is a large book and an old book, and people now have so much that is short and new to read, that they have no time for that which is large and old; and inasmuch as the difficulties and objections are presented in short paragraphs, brief articles and small books, and have moreover the advantage of being new in the sense of being freshly printed (however stale the substance may be), it comes as a natural consequence, that the objection is apt to be far better known than that which is objected to.

There are not wanting answers to these difficulties and objections. No sooner does some new critic and destroyer appear with his axe and hammer lifted up against the pillars of the sanctuary, than some defender of the faith is called forth to stay his hand. But the trouble is, that not one out of ten who read the attack (especially if they relished it) will give themselves the trouble to read the defense. Of the tens of thousands that read the really weak attack of Colenso on the Pentateuch and book of Joshua, how many do you suppose read any of the powerful replies that were made to him? From this it follows that so far as direct answers to the numerous difficulties and objections that are raised are concerned, the friends of the truth are at an enormous disadvantage. The assailants have the spirit of the age on their side—a tremendous power. They have the easy task of criticising; and not only easy, but susceptible of being made piquant. The person that

criticises and denies can, with very great safety, employ the sometimes valuable, but always questionable weapon of ridicule, for he has nothing of his own to take care of. Living in no glass-house himself, he can afford to throw as many stones as he can gather; or, rather, having no house of his own, of any kind, to live in, he can without risk set fire to his neighbor's. Then, above all, they have the immense advantage of needing to occupy so little space. You may put a question in a single line that it will take a page or a volume to answer. An epigram is quite sufficient to convey an objection; and, being short, all the periodicals can copy it, everybody can read it, and most people can remember it; whereas, the page or the article which the epigram requires for its answer, has hard work to get printed in the first place, difficulty in getting read in the second, and finally, but very few will take the trouble to remember it. Such are some of the immense advantages which the critics and objectors have over those who have to do with the substance of things.

When we think of these things it would almost seem as if the truth of the old and large Bible had no chance against such odds, especially with our younger people who are growing up in this critical and sceptical atmosphere. And some there are who, in thinking of these things, take very dark views of the future, and fear the destruction altogether of faith and hope and heavenly love, and all that is supernal and divine in the life of man. But these alarmists underrate the power and persistency of certain indestructible elements of man's spiritual nature: his conscience, his anticipations of im-

mortality, his spiritual longings. There is and always must be a hunger of the conscience, a hunger of the heart, a hunger of the spirit which can not be satisfied by telegraphs and telephones, and can as little be allayed by questions, criticisms, and negations. And so long as the Bible is the only hopeful source of supply for these and similar soul hungers, the critics and sceptics and scoffers will not succeed in their work of demolition.

I. Just here we see what is the most hopeful way of dealing with the scepticism of the age. It is a good thing to meet scepticism on its own ground; to answer its objections, to solve its problems if we can; and if we can not, to show that difficulties of equal or greater magnitude lie across any other path that can be taken. But yet there is a more excellent way. It is good to cancel the negative of our opponent by its negation; but is it not better still to bring forward the positive, to set forth what there actually is in the Bible, to unfold the provision that God has made there for the spiritual wants of man, to make it evident that there, as nowhere else, are to be found "the words of eternal life"? And when once a human soul makes this discovery, difficulties, objections, and questions affect him very little. No person of sense can live long in this world without discovering that the hardest questions can be raised about the best of things; and if the existence of difficulties and objections were to be a bar to our action, ours would be a Nirvana indeed, a state of absolute repose. Suppose you were to cease eating and drinking until you had settled all the questions that could arise, both in regard to

the physiological processes involved, and in regard to the articles of food offered, where would you be before you got started?

If you can manage to show a person what he can find in the Bible, he is not likely (if he be a sensible person) to distress himself very much about what he can not find. Suppose you do not find anything satisfactory in the Bible on the subject of astronomy, or of any physical science whatever, what will that matter, so long as you find what your conscience needs, what your heart needs, what your immortal spirit is craving for? I am one of those who believe there is nothing in the Bible, when it is properly understood, which contradicts astronomy, or geology, or any of the sciences; but it seems to me of far less importance to try to convince people of this, than to try to show what there is in the Bible on its own great theme of man's wants as a dying sinner, and the eternal life which has been provided for him in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. The Bible itself, with its wonderful stores of grace and truth, is the best answer to all the objections which have been made to its Divine origin; and while questions of authority and authenticity are of great importance, and our obligations should be always acknowledged to those scholars who have explored the recesses of these difficult subjects, it will always be the case that to the vast majority the Bible is its own best witness. Once let a man's eyes be opened to see what is really in it—bread for his soul-hunger, medicine for his soul-sickness, comfort for his sorrow, light in his darkness, hope in his death—and he will have proofs enough of its divinity,

which are altogether independent of any questions as to its authorship or origin in history.

And when once an inquirer after truth has tasted of the bread of life, he discovers for himself how utterly unsatisfactory the current scepticism is. How many are there who, while listening to able critics and enjoying the trenchant way in which they deal their blows against creeds and systems and beliefs of the past, never stop to inquire what positive gain there is in all this. It does not necessarily make a man a wise man to show him, however clearly and trenchantly, the follies of other people. It will not feed a very hungry man to-day, to tell him how poor was the food his grandfather used to eat. Suppose that our Edison, instead of setting himself to produce a new and better light, were spending his time and strength on the preparation and delivery of brilliant lectures on the badness of gas. It would be quite easy to get up an exceedingly racy lecture, criticising all our present methods of procuring light; but most sensible people would fail to see the use of it, so long as nothing better was offered in its place. We do not want the gas turned off before the electric light is turned on. But there are many who would immediately see through the folly of bare criticisms in regard to the arts of life, who fail to see that it is just as foolish to present mere criticism for the supply of the wants of the higher life.

If those who are in danger of being carried away by the specious criticism and scepticism of the age, could only be induced to demand some positive satisfaction for their spiritual wants, their safety would be assured

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They would find that only in the Bible itself, and in those productions which are inspired by it, drawn from it as from a perennial fountain, is to be found anything at all satisfactory for the wants of the higher nature. Suppose you could take the entire mass of our higher literature of the present day and divide that portion of it which has to do with man's higher nature, life, and destiny into two parts, the positive and the negative; that which affirms, and that which questions, doubts, or denies; and if your attention had not been previously called to the subject, you would be astonished on the one hand to find what a very large proportion was merely negative, and on the other to discover that whatever had real substance in it—that which you could feed on and live on spiritually—had come originally from the Bible as its source.

Granted there are dark places in the Bible: you need not stay in them. There are dark caves in the earth, and some people have been foolish enough to live in them; but that is no reason for questioning the brightness or the beauty of the sun. It would have been a very strange, not to say suspicious, thing if there had not been things hard to be understood in such a book as the Bible, with so wide a range, and touching so many deep and mysterious questions. Take and use all that is clear and helpful to yourselves; and as for that which is dark and difficult, leave it in the meantime: it may be light will come to you upon it very soon. Old christians will tell you that some of the things which seemed darkest at the first, became most helpful of all in after years. And if you never can understand some things,



if there be some questions that get harder instead of easier as the time passes on, what will it matter if meantime you have been feeding on heavenly manna, growing in heavenly grace, becoming fitted for heavenly glory? And when you hear such remarks as that which was made by the Capernaum sceptics: "This is a hard saying. Who can hear it?" (John vi. 60), instead of thinking it necessary to give up everything until you can explain away the hardness of the saying and make it easy to yourselves or anybody else, let the hard saying alone, and fall back on what you know from your own experience to be good and true, as the sensible apostle Peter did. He felt the difficulty quite as much as did the others. The saying was a hard one to the twelve as well as to all the rest. The Saviour saw that they were stumbling over it, but the time had not yet come when it could be fully explained. So He simply turned around and asked the touching question, "Will ye also go away?" How sensible the answer, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Had they been shallow-hearted critics, they would have gone away with the rest; but they were men of large heart, of vast and deep spiritual longings. And they had found by experience that their Lord was satisfying these longings. Though they were not then in a position to understand what was meant by "drinking His blood," they had some idea of what He meant when He said: "I am the bread of life." They were not self-satisfied, but soul-hungry. They felt the need of going somewhere to have their hunger appeased, and where else could they find such spiritual food as He

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supplied, albeit He Himself and even His words at times were beyond their comprehension? "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

As long as the mere passing life of the world is all that a man knows or cares about, he can not of course appreciate the Christ of God or the revelation He has given us. Here is the fundamental reason for the widespread infidelity of the time, and of all time. A man may be, and very many men are, intellectually wide awake, and spiritually asleep or dead; and so the Bible tells us fairly and honestly: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). This explains why it is, that some of the most determined infidels have all on a sudden had the scales taken from their eyes, so that they have begun to see, almost in a moment, the glory of Christ and the truth of His word. Their intellectual powers are the same as before, their critical faculties continue in exercise, the old difficulties are still there—many of them, perhaps, unexplained, some of them possibly inexplicable this side the grave. What, then, is the reason of the change? The life of the soul has begun. The first stirrings of eternal life have been experienced. There is the hunger of the heart for God, the hunger of the conscience for purity and peace, the hunger of the spirit for the true life which alone is eternal; and not more instinctively will the hungry man stretch out his hand for bread, than will their spirits go out to the only One who ever lived upon this earth, that

with any show of reason or any semblance of truth could say: "I am the bread of Life."

II. But what is to be done in dealing with those who have no experience to appeal to? Have we nothing to say to them unless we have scholarship enough to be able to prove in detail that every part of the Bible is from God? The apostle Peter will help us here, if we attend to the concluding sentence of his answer to his Master's appeal. After raising the question, "To whom shall we go?" he adds these words, "And we believe, and are sure, that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John vi. 69). It was as if he said: There may be difficulty in what Thou sayest, but we will not stumble over the words, so long as we are sure of Thyself. Some things, many things, we may have to take simply on faith; but there is one thing which we know as well as believe, and it is a sufficient foundation on which to rest: "We believe, and are sure, that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." The apostle does not feel it absolutely necessary to be able to answer all difficulties and meet all objections in regard to the words of Christ, so long as he can fall back with absolute certainty on Christ Himself, assuredly known to be the Son of the living God.

There seems to be here an important lesson for the times in which we live. There is a very prevalent idea that the Bible, as such, is the only foundation of the Christian system; that the inspiration of the Scriptures is the bottom truth, below which we can not go.

Now, you will observe that the Bible never claims to

be the foundation of Christianity. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." "Ye are built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." The Lord Jesus Himself says: "I AM the truth." And when the Word of God is spoken of by way of emphasis, it is not the written word that is meant, but the incarnate Word: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (See also 1 John i. 1, 2.) Not the Bible, but Christ Himself, the personal historical Christ, is the ultimate foundation on which the entire system of Christianity rests.

By remembering this we shall keep quite clear of the vicious circle with which some charge us in dealing with the evidences of Christianity. Why do you believe in Christ? Because we find it in the Bible. Why do you believe what you find in the Bible? Because the Bible is inspired. How do you know that it is inspired? Because the Bible says so. That is not reasoning of course; and no intelligent Christian ever takes such a position. An inspired Bible is a broad foundation on which to build a mighty structure, but men still want to know, and we do not blame them for wanting to know, on what foundation the inspired Bible rests.

It is true, indeed, as we have already shown, that in a very important sense the Bible is its own witness. It bears the stamp of truth upon its face. It fits into the human heart, as a complicated key to an intricate lock. It is bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, medicine to the sick, comfort to the sad, "a light to the feet, and

a lamp to the path" of all that take it as a counsellor and guide. But we are now considering how to answer people who know nothing practically about all this, who have never treated the Bible fairly, who have never tested its prescriptions, who have never tasted its dainties, and never tried to take its advice. It is further true that in the Bible itself can be found arguments which, when properly presented and appreciated, are sufficient to convince an unprejudiced mind that its human origin can not be the whole account of the matter; such is the argument from prophecy, from the unity and progress of thought and aim amid the diversity of authorship, and many other lines of evidence. But the difficulty here again is, that a somewhat wide scholarship is needed, even for the appreciation of the evidence; and the question comes whether it is necessary to travel over so wide a field before we can make sure of an adequate foundation for our faith? We think not; and believe that by falling back at once on Christ Himself we can secure an immovable foundation, even though the many other lines of evidence be left out of account.

And so, if we were asked the question: on what authority do you believe the Bible to be the word of God? we would answer: on the authority of Christ. But how do you know about Christ so as to credit Him, and acknowledge His authority? Do we need to fall back upon inspiration for this knowledge? Not at all. We know about Him in the same way as we know about Julius Cæsar, only with far greater certainty. The historical records which have come down to us of the life

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of Christ have been subjected to the fires of criticism as no other records have been ; and so strong have they proved themselves to be, that the most determined opponents of the inspiration of the Scriptures have been constrained to acknowledge them as truly historical, and entitled to credit on grounds quite apart from any theory of inspiration. Take John Stuart Mill as an example. He was as far from leaning toward Christianity as any one could well be. He utterly disbelieved in the inspiration of the Scriptures. But from the simple testimony of the Evangelists, considered merely as historians, he was constrained to admit, as he did admit in his last work, published after his death, that "whatever else may be taken away by rational criticism, Christ is still left ; a unique figure, not more unlike all His precursors than all His followers, even those who had the direct benefit of His personal teaching." And then, after speaking of the originality of "the Prophet of Nazareth," as he calls Him, he makes the extraordinary admission, that even to the sceptic it remains a possibility that Christ actually was "a man charged with a special, express, and unique commission from God." He did not see what perhaps he might have seen if his life had been spared a little longer, that if only Christ be acknowledged as "a man charged with a special, express, and unique commission from God," a sufficient foundation is laid for the entire Christian system. Only get the authority of Christ, as speaking in the name of God to us, fully certified, and everything that as Christians we believe follows of course. If He speaks in the name of God, we have good reason to believe what He

says. We have reason to believe what He says about God, what He says about Himself, what He says about the Holy Spirit, what He says about the Scriptures, what He says about our duty, what He says about our destiny, what He says about everything.

Referring now only to what He says about the Scriptures, we find Him certifying to Moses and the Old Testament prophets on the one hand, and to the apostles on the other hand, as both authorized to speak in the name of God: so that when we are asked, "Why do you believe Moses?" our answer is, "On the authority of Christ;" "Why do you believe Paul?" our answer is, "On the authority of Christ." And thus it is, as Paul himself puts it, we are "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone."

And now we can see that with Christ Himself as the foundation of all, we have a position much less open to attack. It is proverbially a very easy thing to make objections, and it requires a far more extensive knowledge than ordinary Christians can be reasonably supposed to possess, to be able to answer any objection that may be suddenly raised in regard to particular passages. But what if we can not answer such objections? It does not follow of course that they are unanswerable. It does not follow that they have not been answered again and again. As we have had occasion already to remark, it is the rarest thing in the world to find any new argument against Christianity. If you were sufficiently acquainted with the history of past discussions, you would find that the same objec-

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tions had been presented and refuted perhaps a dozen of times. But still, so long as the Bible is supposed to be the ultimate foundation, an exceedingly unpleasant feeling is left when any objection is raised to which we can not at once see the answer. How many are there who have felt as if the very foundations were giving away, because they could not at once see the answer to the really shallow objection that is made to the story of Joshua and the standing still of the sun; or because they could not reconcile the story of the deluge with the observations of science. Why this alarm? Because of the mistaken notion that the Bible is the innermost citadel of our faith. The Bible is not the citadel of our faith. It is the open country; and a very extended country it is. It requires an encyclopedic scholar to cover the whole ground in his mind, and to be armed at every point. What is the citadel? It is Christ Himself. And the best way for ordinary Christians to do, when they are pressed with difficulties and objections about Jonah, or Joshua, or Noah, to which they do not at once see the answer, is to say: "It is not Jonah I believe in, or Joshua, or Noah, but Christ. These are only side issues. Your objections do not touch the rock on which my feet are planted. I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Have you anything to say against Him? Do you feel competent to criticise Him? Are you wise enough, and good enough, and great enough, to sit in judgment upon Him? 'On Christ the solid rock I stand.'"

It is really amazing to see how well the Bible has stood the unnatural strain which has been put upon it.



There are many of its friends who have dealt most unreasonably with it. They have treated it as if it claimed to have been struck off from stereotype plates in heaven, and dropped down to earth—a purely divine production! Whereas the human authorship of its different parts is not only not concealed, but is spoken of just in the same way as if there were no doctrine of inspiration. See as a good example of this, Luke i. 1-4. Yet there have been those who have claimed for it the same kind of ideal perfection that you should expect to find, if it were not human in its origin at all. For example, there have been those who have thought it a very dangerous thing to admit, what every scholar knows to be true, that the Greek of the New Testament is not equal in classical elegance to the Greek of Sophocles or of Plato; as if it were for a moment to be expected or desired that provincial Jews of the Roman age should write in the style of metropolitan Greeks in the Attic age! This is referred to as a mere illustration of the unreasonable demands that people have been disposed to make for the Bible. And as a general fact, we may say that there has been altogether too great a disposition to make the whole system of Christianity stand or fall with some Biblical question that has been agitating the minds of critics and expositors. Yet even this tremendous and unnatural strain that has been put upon the Bible can be scarcely said to have been too much for it. But that is no reason why those who believe it should insist on exposing it to this strain. The fact that the whole country is capable of being so well fortified is no reason why we should forget that we have a citadel that is acknowl-

alleged to be so strong that few, except the coarsest and most ignorant, ever venture to attack it; viz.: Christ Himself, "The Rock of Ages," whose challenge still rings out strong and clear across the centuries, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" And again, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life;"—and again, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." The Church's oldest creed is in some respects the best, which begins: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ His only Son."

It may be worth while also to notice before leaving this point, that it greatly elevates our conception of revelation to make Christ and not the Bible the ultimate foundation. We are familiar with the objection that has been made to a revelation in a book. And if it were indeed true, that it was in nothing better than a book—a thing of parchment and of ink—that God had revealed Himself, then there might be some reason why thinking people should say: "Give us the glorious revelation of nature. Ask us not to turn from its magnificent pages to paper stained with printer's ink!" But it is not so. The revelation God has given us is not a book, but something immeasurably nobler and grander. It is a revelation in a Life. "The Word was made"—what? Paper and ink? Not at all. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Here indeed is a revelation worthy of God. "Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into

glory. That noble, glorious Life is the grandest thing the ages have witnessed. The majesty of Sinai itself fades before the majesty of the Divine Son of God. All nature bows the head before Him. Most fitting is it that at the dark crisis of His history, the rocks should rend, the graves open, and darkness overspread the sky. Greater than great nature is nature's Lord. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him: and without Him was not anything made that was made." Can you conceive of any revelation grander than that which God has given us in Him who is the true, the eternal Word of God?

As for the Bible, it is but the record of the revelation—a priceless record—one which we can never overvalue and which we can not too diligently study; but it is only a record: a record of His coming as the central theme, with the long course of preparation in the days of the Old Covenant, and the results in the development of the New. "Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of me." John in Patmos gives the right order: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying: I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and, What thou seest, write in a book." So is it throughout the entire Scriptures. If in a certain sense we are "built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets," let it never be forgotten that "Jesus Christ Himself is the chief corner-stone."

We would now only notice in conclusion that the

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terms of salvation as announced in the Bible agree entirely with what we have been saying as to the ultimate foundation of our faith. There are those in our day who find a stumbling-block at the very threshold of the Christian life, in the fancy, that what is required of them in order to salvation, is the crediting of all the details of a long history extending from the first man to the last man, from Adam to the consummation of all things; and, long accustomed to that sceptical attitude of mind which questions all things, they think it would take them a life-time (as indeed it would) to verify every statement that is made from Genesis to Revelation, and clear them from all possible objections; and so they do not venture at all. But remember, it is never said: "Believe everything that is in the Bible and you will be saved." Ah, there have been many who believed everything in the Bible, who never thought of questioning a sentence in it, who will find themselves none the better for their easy acquiescence in the statements of a book which they had been taught to accept as inspired. There is no such word written as, "Believe the Bible and you will be saved." No. It is "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Do not trouble yourselves in the first instance about questions connected with the book of Genesis, or difficulties suggested by the book of Revelation. Let the wars of the Jews alone in the meantime, and dismiss Jonah from your mind. Look to Jesus; get acquainted with Him; listen to His word; believe in Him; trust Him; obey Him. That is all that is asked of you in the first instance. After you have believed on Christ and taken

Him as your Saviour, your Master, your Model, you will not be slow to find out that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine and for reproof, and for correction, and for instruction in righteousness." You may never have all your difficulties solved, or all your objections met ; but though difficulties may still remain, and interrogation points be scattered here and there over the wide Bible-field, you will be sure of your foundation ; you will feel that your feet are planted on the "Rock of Ages," even on Him of whom God, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, said : "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation : he that believeth shall not make haste."

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## LECTURE II.

### THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE BIBLE.

**I**N the opening passage of the Epistle to the Hebrews we get an insight into the genesis of the Scriptures : how they were produced, not all at a time, but "at sundry times;" not after any uniform method, but "in divers manners;" not in abstract form, as a treatise, but addressed specially to the people of the times when they were written, "to our fathers," "to us;" by men indeed, "by the prophets," so that the human authorship is neither denied nor concealed; yet so that the whole stands before us in its completeness as the work of God: "God, who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son."

In 1 Cor. xiii. 12 we read, "Now we see through a glass, darkly." Literally, "we see as in a mirror"—not the things themselves, but their images—which, in the first place, is literally true of all our seeing, as the science of optics and an examination of the structure of the eye make sufficiently obvious; and in the second place, is true metaphorically of all our knowledge, which may be considered as the "seeing" of the mind. And while it is true generally of all our knowledge, it is in a quite special sense true of our knowledge of the Bible, as seems to be the special thought indicated in a third passage, 2 Cor. iii. 18: "But we all, with open face, be-

holding as in a glass"—as in a mirror—"the glory of the Lord." There the apostle is speaking about the reading of the Scriptures, as you will observe by looking at the connection. He has spoken (v. 14) about the veil being taken away in the reading of the Old Testament, and after its removal, "we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." There we learn (it seems to me) that in a quite special sense our knowledge of the Bible is such knowledge as we can gain of the subjects set before us in it by looking at their reflections in a great mirror. The comparison of these three texts in the point of view just indicated gives us our subject, which we may call "Bible Perspective."

The plan of the Bible is not logical, as of a treatise, but historical; and, therefore, must be viewed in relations of time. It must be looked at in its depths, and in its distances, in order to be understood and appreciated. It is not a string of propositions, but a series of pictures; and its pictures are not the abstract unreal delineations of geometry, but true pictures in perspective, delineated as they appeared in natural life. They are pictures from nature, and not from the imagination; which, by the way, is the true explanation of their exhaustless freshness and endless adaptation. The Bible is the least artificial, the most artless of books; but it is by no means the least artistic. It is truly artistic, because it is true to nature, because it is true to life.

Now this feature of the Bible has been very much neglected in the study of it. There has been, so to speak, too little use made of the eyes in the study of the Bible. It has been dealt with as a book of proposi-

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tions rather than of pictures. It has been used as a book of texts, subjects, stories, and biographies. These texts, these subjects, these stories, these biographies have, as a rule, been taken out of the general mass and studied by themselves; which is very much the same thing as if you were to get your idea of some great landscape painting by having certain pieces of it cut out and brought to you: a leaf here and a leaf there; then perhaps a tree or a shrub or a human figure in the picture. The consequence would be that, while you would see whatever beauty there was in the particular objects examined, you would lose the effect of seeing each in its appropriate place. And, moreover, if the pictures were painted in true perspective, the different figures would often seem out of proportion when looked at out of their right place in the picture. And what is of more consequence, you would not have seen the landscape at all. You would still have the picture itself to see.

The pictorial effect of the Bible has been sadly marred by the arbitrary division (which, in some respects, is convenient) into chapters and verses. What would be the effect, do you think, on the paintings of the best of the masters if they were all cut up by intersecting lines into little squares, quite irrespective of their subjects? Would it not ruin the general effect? At all events, the only way to get the general effect would be by resolutely refusing to pay any attention to the intersecting lines. But in the case of the Bible there have been influences at work to hinder its readers from overcoming the difficulties occasioned by these arbitrary divisions. I remember seeing, some time ago, a specimen of one



of Tennyson's most beautiful poems all cut up in that way: arranged into chapters and verses, disfigured by asterisks, crosses, and references at the side; and it was quite startling to observe how thoroughly the poem was ruined by the manner of printing it. Now, it requires some effort to get over this in the reading of the Scriptures. But, as I have said, in the case of the Bible there are influences at work to hinder its readers from overcoming the difficulties occasioned by these arbitrary divisions. We preachers have been a hindrance by calling so much attention to the little fragments which we call "texts." The word "text" might, with as much propriety, embrace a page or a book; but so universal has been the habit of taking only a very few words at a time, that most people understand a text of Scripture to be necessarily a very short extract indeed. And then, not only have we taken these short extracts, but we have made them *extracts* indeed by drawing them out of their connection and making them stand without anything before or behind to lean against. And in many cases, it is ten chances to one that even the little fragment, which is taken as a text, is pushed out of sight, and the preacher sets out on a philosophizing or poetizing expedition of his own. The systematic theologians are not apt to give much help either. It is their business to deal with the subject-matter of the Bible logically, without much consideration of its form, historically. They endeavor, indeed, to preserve the analogy of faith, which is a very important matter to attend to in the study of the Scriptures; but they have not concerned themselves much, as from the nature of their work they could not, with the analogy of

sight, which has its own importance too. Even our commentators have not given the help they ought in this direction. They, too, have been too much occupied with little details, to the neglect of the great bearings of the Scriptures. If they have not made too much use of the microscope, they have certainly made too little use of the telescope. A better day, indeed, is dawning in this respect. The best modern commentators are devoting much more attention than formerly to broad and comprehensive views of the Scriptures. But, as yet, the work is only begun. The private use of the Bible devotionally and practically has, for the most part, followed the bad example of the preachers, picking out texts and short passages here and there, while both the setting of the gems in most instances, and the broad general effects in almost all, are entirely lost. When we think of all these things we shall see that the subject of Bible Perspective is one that needs special attention. The lovely flowers of the Bible that are scattered here and there and everywhere on its pages, have been gathered and enjoyed ten thousand times. Its precious gems have been dug up, displayed, admired, and treasured; but its magnificent landscapes are scarcely ever seen.

The study of the Bible in perspective will remove many difficulties. It will enhance the beauties we have already seen, and reveal new beauties we were not wont to see; and discover hidden treasures too. It will greatly aid us oftentimes in the interpretation of the Scriptures, and assist us frequently and materially in their devotional and practical use. It will show in a striking light the unity of the Scriptures, and so afford a proof of their divine origin, alto-

gether apart from questions as to their human authorship. It will prevent the dislocation of Scripture, rendering it as impossible, for example, to tear the book of Deuteronomy from its place (as some modern critics have attempted to do), as it would be to shift a building or a figure from the foreground to the background of a picture without altering all its proportions. Take some of these large pictures and shift one of the figures in the foreground—a man, or a house, or a tree—and place it in the back part of the picture. Every rule of perspective would cry out against it. Similarly with Bible perspective.

Some of the advantages we have just enumerated may appear as we attempt to set before you certain important effects in Bible reading, which are ordinarily lost, but which would be secured if the perspective of the Bible were carefully attended to. This is all we can undertake to do with so wide a subject. Let me call your attention to the importance of

#### I.—DEPTH AND DISTANCE.

Just as a picture may represent great depths and distances of space, so the Bible represents great depths and distances of time. It is not a flat surface, as a scientific book would be. It stretches away from us into long distances. Now, it is of very great importance to recognize these distances—to *see* them. The length and breadth of the Bible any one can see, just as any one can see the length and breadth of a picture; but its depth and distance, being in perspective only, may be very readily missed. When we take up the Bible in our hands, the beginning, and the end, and the middle of it are equally near us.

It is just as easy to turn to one as the other; and it requires an effort of the imagination to consider at what different depths the eye must look at Genesis and Revelation; just as in a picture, the background and foreground are really in the same plane, and it requires a conscious or unconscious effort of the constructive imagination to appreciate the depth of the whole picture and the distances of the different parts. I verily believe that if any intelligent and candid person, however sceptical in his disposition, could fairly realize "the sundry times and divers manners" of revelation—the "sundry times," extending over thousands of years, perhaps several thousands, if we take into consideration the pre-existing materials of which Moses probably availed himself when he prepared the Pentateuch, and the "divers manners," embracing such wonderful diversity of circumstances in the different authors, and such totally different influences by which they were surrounded—if any one, I say, could only fairly realize "the sundry times and divers manners" on the one hand, and the unity and progress of thought on the other, he would need no other proof to convince him that the Bible must be of God. Had the human authorship been the whole account of the matter, it would have been a heterogeneous mass. It must have been so, coming at such "sundry times," and in such "divers manners," and under such diversity of influences. It must have been a heterogeneous patchwork, and not the consistent, harmonious, and progressive whole, which it is.

And just as the perspective view of the Bible in its depths and distances supplies a demonstration of its inspiration, so it does away with some of the most

serious difficulties which are felt in these days of doubt and questioning. Take the objections founded on the miracles of the Bible as an illustration. The main popular objection may be put briefly thus (you hear it hundreds of times): if miracles were so plentiful in Bible times, why are they not of common occurrence still? Let us consider for a moment: "Plentiful in Bible times." What are Bible times? One would like to know within a few thousand years, or a trifle like that, what times are meant. If you think miracles were abundant during all the centuries and millenniums of Bible times, you are greatly mistaken. There is a general impression that the Bible is a book full of miracles which come in at random, as they do in the old heathen mythologies; but those who pay any attention to Bible perspective know better. Have you ever considered that in the book of Genesis, covering more than 2,000 years at the lowest computation, there is not a single miracle wrought by human agency? Adam works no miracle. Abel works no miracle. Enoch works no miracle. Even Abraham works no miracle. Nor one of all the patriarchs. How different from all the old mythologies; and how different from what it would have been, if this book had come to us merely from some dim mythological past! Even where God Himself is represented as doing things out of the general course of nature, it is only at long intervals, and very rarely, as in the translation of Enoch, the judgment of the flood, the confusion of tongues, the birth of Isaac. Remember that these events were centuries apart from each other. Even if there had been a miracle for every century, which there is not, you could scarcely say that

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they were "very plentiful." If you look at the history perspectively, you will learn first, that all through Bible times, miracles were not the rule, but the exception; and more particularly that the miracles cluster around particular epochs when there was special need for such signs of divine presence and power: as at the time of the Exodus after the long, dark interval of Egyptian bondage; at the time of Israel's deepest declension, when the prophets Elijah and Elisha were called in a special way to witness for the Lord; and above all, in the times of Christ and the founding of the Church, after the long and silent interval from the restoration to the Advent. Does not this way of looking at the sacred history put the Bible miracles in a very different and altogether reasonable light? Many other illustrations might be given under the head of depth and distance, but we must hasten to another point.

## II. LIGHT AND SHADE: RELIEF.

How many read the Bible as if it were as level as a prairie. They lose its edges, its corners, its hills and valleys, and they do not even recognize its lofty mountain peaks. They will be close up to Sinai before they have had the first glimpse of its vast and rugged mass, and they will be at the very foot of the Cross before they have seen its projection on the canvas or its shadow on the ground.

The life of Abraham is a grand thing in itself. It is a matchless biography; but how very much of it is lost when it is taken by itself: away from the dark background of heathen Chaldea, and without its relations to all that goes before, and all that follows. You may

take Genesis xii.-xxv. and cut it out, print it by itself and read it as a biography, and you have a most admirable monograph: something very valuable and very useful. But while Abraham out of the Bible is an excellent monograph, there is no comparison with Abraham in the Bible, standing out there in grand relief in his own place in the great panorama. So it is with Moses. So with David, and so above all with the Lord Jesus. How many are there able, after any fashion, to construct in imagination the life of Jesus as it appears on the canvas of the Bible, standing out there after all the preparations that have been leading up to it throughout the Old Testament, and after the solemn and impressive pause between Malachi and Matthew.

Here, again, we may get no little help in relation to subjects that are often felt to present serious difficulties. Every one is familiar with the slaughter of the Canaanites. Being one of the hardest things in the Bible, everybody knows it, of course; and many judge of the entire Old Testament by it, which is about the same kind of criticism as it would be to cut out some very darkly shaded corner of a great masterpiece, and show it as a specimen of the whole. But put it in its true perspective, and what do you see? For centuries you see a people there guilty of the worst of crimes. The Lord bears with them. He bears with them with infinite patience. He visits them in mercy. He sends His chosen Abraham among them, and rears the patriarchal family there, a centre of light for the whole land. Altars are raised. Pure worship is offered. Mercy and truth meet together in the land. Still the people go on

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in their sins and abominations. Still the Lord waits. "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." The Lord is still waiting. For four hundred years He waits—for four hundred years; and then only, after so long a time, after so many centuries of waiting, He issues the stern order and cuts the Canaanites off. Now, I do not say that this removes all the difficulties connected with the subject, but does it not put the whole thing in a very different light, and in a much more honest light? The difficulty about the Canaanites is no longer like the huge Matterhorn rearing its inaccessible and rugged sides from the level plain. There is still the dark and rugged mountain, but there is a gradual ascent to it. It no longer seems clearly impossible to get over it.

A good picture is distributed in masses, and a practiced eye will see and dwell upon those parts of the picture, taking the remaining parts in relation to those masses. And so in the Bible we see a similar massing: as for example, around Egypt and the Exodus, around David and the Monarchy, around Babylon and the Restoration, around Christ and the Cross. Let any Bible student master as thoroughly as he may these four things, the Exodus, the Monarchy, the Restoration, and the Cross, and he is in a fair way for seeing the relation and bearing of the greater part of both the Old and New Testaments. This would not only explain passages that in the chapter by chapter way of reading the Bible are utterly unintelligible, and that can not possibly be understood unless one thoroughly understands the historical framework, but it would throw a great deal of lovely light upon passages that are quite familiar to us all. Take the 40th of Isaiah for example.



How many are there who read and enjoy that chapter who would see immeasurably more beauty and force in it, if they understood its relation to the return of the captives from Babylon. Many of the Psalms, too, have a glory that can not be seen unless they are read in the light of the Restoration. So with many other Scriptures, quite familiar in themselves, but almost unknown in their relations, almost unknown in the general perspective of the Bible. And then, how few are there really able to add to the light and shade of the historical books, the rich coloring of the poetical books. When you read the history, you get the sketch without the coloring; when you read the Psalms or the Prophets, you get the coloring without the sketch; whereas it is only by the combination of the two that you can well understand or appreciate either. Here, again, multiplied illustrations might easily be given, but we must hasten on to the third point.

### III. THE POINT OF SIGHT.

The point of sight in a picture is that point in the horizon toward which and on which the most important lines converge. This is not a strictly scientific definition, but it is close enough for our purpose. This brings us into the region of perspective proper; and as every artist knows, it is quite essential that the eye be directed to the point of sight, in order that due proportion throughout be maintained; and so far, at least, as the beholder is concerned, the point of sight in Bible perspective is of much greater importance than in the enjoyment of art. It is possible to see very much of the beauty of a picture

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even though you do not know what "point of sight" means. But it is impossible to understand and appreciate the Bible unless you know its point of sight. That was the trouble with the Apostles in their reading of the Scriptures before the Lord called their attention to it. "Oh, fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke xxiv. 25). Observe, it is not: You have not understood that passage in the 53d of Isaiah, or the 2d Psalm. It is, "slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken." "And beginning at Moses and *all* the prophets, he expounded unto them in *all* the Scriptures the things concerning *Himself*." There is the point of sight. And still further (Luke xxiv. 44), "These are the words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." They never understood it before, but they understand it now. Again He says: "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me." Then in another place: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would believe Me, for he wrote of Me." These words of the Lord Jesus Himself, prepare us for the comprehensive declaration of the Apocalypse, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10).

It must be very important, then, for the understanding and appreciating of the Scriptures, that we take firm hold of this principle. All the great lines converge on Christ. He is the point of sight of the Bible as a whole;

of the Old Testament and of the New ; and of each of the series of pictures which make up the one and the other.

It is only by keeping this in view, that we can make anything at all worthy of very much that is in the Old Testament Scriptures especially: the dry genealogies for example, the long descriptions of the tabernacle and its furniture, the otherwise wearisome details of the Levitical code, and many other things. After all, it is not so great a wonder that many think the Old Testament of so little use. They can not see the bearing of almost anything. Yet all they want is to get the point of sight, and they will easily discover why this is there, why that is described so much in detail, why certain things that seem of little consequence are so much insisted on, and others that seem of greater consequence are passed over in silence, and so forth. The point of sight is the key to the whole.

The Bible as a whole may be considered as a grand panorama, yet without the defects of a panorama ; for immense as it is, it has but one point of sight from beginning to end, as a long panorama can not have. Christ is the Alpha and Omega: the all and in all. The one panorama may be viewed as consisting of two great pictures: first, a larger one with bold rugged outlines, great masses and immense depths ; but, with all the roughness of its outlines, you find all the great lines from the foreground of Genesis to the background of Nehemiah and Malachi converging to a single point ; and that point is the coming of Christ—His first coming as the babe in Bethlehem. Remove that larger picture, while yet your eye is fixed upon the point of sight, and

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what do you see? Another picture: smaller, richer, more finished. In the foreground of this picture you have what was the point of sight in the old picture. You have the First Advent right in the foreground; and away in the distant horizon, at its point of sight, you will still see Christ, no longer in the manger now, or on the cross, but on the Throne. "Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him."

Again, we may consider each Testament to be made up of separate pictures. Not always rigidly separate. Sometimes they are like dissolving views, in which the background of one may become the foreground of another; as in the case of the Wilderness and Canaan, Moses and Joshua, with Jordan as the background of the one and the foreground of the other. Generally speaking, however, it is practicable to divide the history into a series of quite extensive views. For this purpose it will be necessary to be quite independent of the arbitrary divisions of chapters, or even sometimes the divisions of books, and to study by eras, by the successive stages of the covenant. (It is a pity we use the terms "Old" and "New Testament." Literally, it is the "Old" and "New Covenant").

From this point of view we may see how it is that prophecy may have a series of fulfillments. We here touch a difficulty in relation to prophecy that has given much trouble to students of the Bible. Much has been said in condemnation of what has unhappily been called the "double sense" of prophecy; but the difficulty would entirely disappear if the point of sight were clearly kept in mind. For example, in certain parts of the Old Testament the lines converge

on David; yet you find these same Scriptures applied to Christ without any hesitation in the New Testament. But, to remove any appearance of inconsistency, you have only to remember that David sustained the same relation to his era that Christ did to His. He was the Messiah of his time, the Lord's Anointed. David is the type and representative of Christ in that particular picture, and so occupies the point of sight. Thus it comes to pass that even David's words are the very words of Christ, as in the twenty-second Psalm: "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?"

A good deal has been said about the want of perspective in prophecy. By this is meant that in a prophecy which, as you read it, is continuous, one verse may apply to an event quite at hand, and the next verse to an event far away in the future. This is spoken of as a want of perspective in prophecy. It does not strike my mind in that way. It seems to me a kind of celestial perspective rather, which of course has its own laws. Let me illustrate. In a landscape the ground plan may extend only a few miles; and yet there is a star shining in the sky. What is the depth of the picture? A few miles only. What is the distance of the star? Millions of miles. Yet the star is in true perspective. So it is often in the Bible. Look at the book of Genesis. What is the depth of the ground plan? It goes as far as Joseph, and no further. But see! there is a star shining on the brow of advancing night. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and to Him shall the gathering of the people be." That is the evening star of the patriarchal

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era. It will be the morning star of the next era, when an unwilling prophet shall be constrained to say: "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." And as the day comes on, you will hear these words: "Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise." All in true perspective; yet not of the earth but of the heavens; not of the ground plan, but of the sky.

May we not find here some solution for a difficulty that perplexes many? I mean the scarcity of references to the life beyond the grave in the Old Testament generally, and particularly in the earlier part of it. A belief in a future life, the patriarchs and saints of the olden time most certainly had; but they had no enthusiasm in looking forward to an immediate entrance into it; and accordingly we find no such happy, hopeful utterances as are so common with the New Testament saints. It seems very strange, and not a little perplexing, to those who believe that the Old Testament salvation was the same as the New. But consider a moment. Remember what the Lord Jesus said: "I am the Resurrection and the Life." Observe it is not, "I proclaim the resurrection;" it is: "I *am* the Resurrection and the Life." The great object of faith, from the beginning to the end of the Scriptures, is Christ; and everything that the believer hopes for is dependent on Him.

Now, put yourself in the position of dying Jacob for a moment, and you will see how it must have been. Immediately beyond his death there was nothing for his faith to lay hold on. Suppose he had grasped the idea of a heaven immediately before him, it would necessarily

have been a Christless heaven. In order to find something to rest on, his faith had to go away forward to the coming of the Saviour in the distant horizon of his spiritual vision; and so we hear him cry: "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Jehovah! (O Thou coming One)" (Gen. xlix. 18). All his hopes for the future were based upon the covenant and its great promise: the promise of a coming Saviour. Hence it is that he must first grasp in his faith the idea of the coming Shiloh (Gen. xlix. 10); and then, after that, the great gathering of the people: "To HIM shall the gathering of the people be." But who can doubt that he looked forward himself to a place in that great gathering, in the vast throng of the redeemed?

In our more highly-favored times we have not to look far forward into the future to find Him in whom our hopes centre. He has already come. He is here. We know that He is waiting for us when we cross the river. So that to us to depart is to be with Christ at once. Is not the difference very obvious and most natural? In both cases it is the Saviour who is the great object of faith. But in their case the coming of the Saviour was removed from them by a long and unknown interval of time; and hence, there could be no enthusiasm in regard to the entering of the unknown—rather was there a shrinking from it, and a clinging to long life upon the earth as a special blessing; while as for us, now that Christ is known to be waiting to receive His people, we can comfort ourselves with the thought that "to depart and to be with Christ is far better."

Still, even in our time, the light of the future is centred on Christ. "It doth not yet appear what we

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shall be; but when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." As Dr. Ker, of Glasgow, says in his sermon on this text: "God's heaven is made to grow out of Christ, that Christians may not have a single thought about it, in which He is not present. . . . He darkens all the sky save where He appears—spreads a vast trackless waste around, and leaves the soul with Christ alone." Whether in the Old Testament or the New, the believer grasps, by faith, not a heaven with Christ in it, but Christ with heaven around Him. As before, the point of sight is the key to the whole.

In the New Testament, as well as the Old, we have the star in the sky: the star of Bethlehem, which was the evening star of the past; and the morning star of the future—"the bright and morning star" of Revelation.

We might take up other points, such as the importance of having the light fall rightly on the picture, especially the light from the Sun of Righteousness; but time forbids any further attempt at detail. Let us close with a few general thoughts.

There are, as every artist knows, certain necessary elements for drawing a picture aright, and for appreciating a picture that is correctly drawn. There are similar necessities in Bible perspective. First is the base line on which the picture is constructed; then the line of the horizon (speaking of a landscape picture, though there is technically a horizon in any picture), where earth and sky meet, the most important point of which is the point of sight already referred to. What is the base line of the Bible? It is Sin. And is it not one of the chief reasons why the Bible is made so little of



that men do not realize what sin is—how dreadful and how fatal it is? What is the horizon line of the Bible? It is Holiness. That is where earth and heaven meet. But on that horizon line there is only one point of sight. It is where God and man meet, in Christ, in whom alone holiness can be reached.

Look at that landscape painting. At the top of the plane of the picture, you have the sky, which seems to approach nearer and nearer to the earth, as it falls away to the background, descending and descending until it touches it on the distant horizon. Again, beginning at the base line, the foreground seems to ascend and ascend until it reaches the horizon and meets the sky. From high heaven, God comes down to meet man upon the earth. From the base of sin man is borne upward to meet his God. The place of meeting is in Christ. There all the lines of faith and hope converge. "There is salvation in no other." There are indeed other points of convergence: the point of distance and other vanishing points. Where are they? "Without"—in the outer darkness.

It is important to keep in mind the distinction between the visible and the real horizon. In voyaging across the Atlantic, for many days you see nothing but a waste of waters around you. That is the horizon of sight; but far beyond there is another horizon, on the edge of which you will in due time see the longed-for shore. Sometimes, when we look away into the future, we mistake the near for the far horizon. If the clouds gather on that near horizon, we are apt to think it will be cloudy all the way, and we need to be reminded that the far horizon of faith is bright and clear, however dark may be the near horizon of sight.

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This cheering thought ought never to be lost sight of in endeavoring to understand the ways of God as revealed in the Scriptures. Many of the Bible scenes have very dark horizons. How portentously the clouds are massed on the horizon of Genesis. And as the history proceeds, the prospect scarcely seems to brighten. For the generation which came out of Egypt, what was the horizon? A grave in the wilderness for all but two. Even Moses himself must die without entering the promised land. And what is the horizon of the Monarchy? The Assyrian captivity for Israel; the Babylonish bondage for Judah. And even after the Restoration, and notwithstanding the bravery of the Maccabean princes, again the scene darkens down, and at the horizon we see the people of God in subjection to the all-conquering Romans. Yet *after all*, the fullness of the time arrives, the *gloria in excelsis* is sung, the glad tidings are announced, the Saviour of the world appears.

Remember, the point of sight may be out of sight, away on the far horizon of faith. So was it under the Old Covenant; so is it still under the New. Here is the trial of our faith. But "to them that look for Him, He shall appear." And meantime, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," we see truth and beauty, grace and glory. Looking away from Him, everything is out of proportion; there are difficulties; there are contradictions; the lines all lead away into the outer darkness.

"We all beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord."—You have often admired the line of shimmering light which shines on the ruffled waters when the moon is in the heavens. Look in any other direction, and the

waters are dark and troubled. Look toward the orb of night, and you see the glory all the way right from your feet to the heaven above. Another standing beside you, looking at another angle, will see another line of light and glory; and another in another place will see another, and so on endlessly. The moon is really shining over all the water, but each one sees only a portion of its radiance, and that portion only by looking in one direction. So is it in the Bible. The glory is shining all over it. You may see nothing of heaven in it so long as you will not look in the right direction. But look to the point of sight; look to Jesus, and you will see the glory of the Bible. You can not see it all. Another will see something else that you do not. And another, standing at another point, will see something that you and he have missed. But every one who looks earnestly in the right direction will see something. We may be called by different names, and we may look at sacred truth from different stand-points and at different angles, but if "looking unto Jesus" be our motto, we shall see the glory of the Lord. And though no one can see it all, each one will see all he needs. Every one that looks in the right direction will see a path of light and glory leading from his own feet across the troubled waters of this life up to the heaven above. "We all, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory;" and "when He shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory."

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## LECTURE III.

### THE GENESIS.

Gen. i.-ii. 3.

**T**HE poet Tennyson speaks of

—"deeds and lives that lie  
Foreshortened in the tract of time."

Of this kind of foreshortening the book of Genesis is a remarkable example. The lives of the men that lived before Abraham, long as they were, pass so rapidly before the eye that it is difficult to realize that in the course of a few short chapters, many long centuries have been traversed. And the deeds of the Great Creator before the time of Adam, are recorded in such rapid succession, and with such sublimity of condensation, that it is only after the imagination has been thoroughly accustomed to the deep perspective, that we are able even feebly to realize that in the course of a few short verses whole ages of time have been compassed.

These earliest ages of the world's history will come before us in proceeding to consider the Genesis proper, as we may call that portion of the larger Genesis contained in the first chapter and the first three verses of the second chapter, which ought by all means to have been included in the former.

In looking at this Genesis record we shall consider first the form of it, then the scope of it, and finally its substance.

I. First, its form. Here it is very important to notice that it is not historical in form. The book of Genesis as a whole is historical, and from this we are apt to suppose that every part of it is so. Now it is quite manifest that this portion of it is not historical. The histories of the Bible, so far as their human authorship is concerned, were produced just like other histories. They are the reports of eye-witnesses, or of those who obtained their information from eye-witnesses, or from persons competent to testify to the facts. But it is quite manifest that there could be no eye-witness of the things recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. If it is not history then, what is it? Manifestly it must have been an apocalypse. God must have revealed it to some of the prophets, in the early times. (See Luke i. 70). We are not told how He revealed it, but it looks as if it may well have been in the usual way, namely, by visions. (See Num. xii. 6). It would seem as though a series of pictures of creation had passed before the mind of the ancient seer. And, as in other parts of Scripture where God made known His will by visions, so here there are voices falling on the ear, as well as scenes presented to the eye. "God said: Let there be Light." "God called the Light, Day," etc.

And here it is most interesting to compare the apocalypse at the beginning with that at the end of the Bible. How natural it was, how necessary, that we should have an apocalypse at the beginning to tell us of that part of the earth's history which transpired before man existed. And how necessary, too, that we should have an apocalypse to tell us what it was important for us to know about the undiscovered future.

The unknown past—the unknown future—both of these needed an apocalypse, and so we have it. And how numerous and striking the correspondencies between the two. For example, we have the seven days of creation at the beginning; and at the end we have the seven churches and the seven seals and the seven vials and the seven trumpets and the seven voices. Then again, when you compare the first few chapters of Genesis with the closing chapters of the Bible, you see the same great ideas reappearing. In the first apocalypse we have the heavens and the earth, and in the last the new heavens and new earth. In Genesis we have the paradise of Eden; in Revelation the paradise of God. In Genesis we are told of the rivers of Eden, and the Tree of Life “in the midst of the garden;” in Revelation we are told of the River of the water of Life, and the Tree of Life upon its banks, and “in the midst of the Paradise of God.” At the beginning of the Bible we have the institution of marriage; and at the end we have “the marriage supper of the Lamb.” Many other comparisons might be made between the two, showing the connection between the first and the last book of that wonderful Bible which opens with an apocalypse of the dateless past, and closes with an apocalypse of the dateless future. So much for the form of this book.

II. Next let me call your attention to the scope of it. And first, it is dateless. There is no date at the beginning of it. It simply says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” There is no date at the end of it. This is not often noticed. We are told, “The evening and morning were the first day,” the

second day, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth day, but we are not told that the evening and morning were the seventh day. There is no date, then, at the end, any more than at the beginning of it. We shall see the importance of this a little later.

Next, it is measureless. There is nothing in it to measure the scope of it. It has been said that it is measured by the narrow boundary of six or seven days. There seems abundant reason to conclude that there was no such intention of limiting the scope of this chapter. In the first place, notice that three days are spoken of before any measures of time are given. So the first day and the second day and the third day were without measure. Again, in Gen. ii. 4, the same word "day" is used to cover the entire time of the creation work. Then there is evidence to show that the Jews, and in particular the sacred writers, did not understand the day of creation in the limited sense of either twenty-four or twelve hours. Take the ninetieth Psalm for example. Observe that this Psalm starts from the idea of creation; and it is worth while to notice that the title of the Psalm ascribes it to Moses, so that we may have here the views of the author of the Pentateuch himself. Well, what does he say? "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from age to age Thou art God." These words translated "everlasting" in our version refer to enormous periods. And observe there is no reference to the future, as many suppose. It is all to the past, to the past of creation, as its majestic history sweeps on "from Olam to Olam," from age to age. And again in the fourth verse: "A thousand years in Thy sight are

but as yesterday when it is past." Or take the parallel passage in the New Testament, 2 Peter iii. 8: "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." And observe that here, too, the mind of the writer has been carried back to the book of Genesis, for only a few sentences before he has been speaking of "the beginning of the creation" (v. 4).

As a good exercise on this subject, let me recommend you to take some of the numerous references to creation in the Scriptures and see if you can find a single one that conveys the idea that the work of creation transpired in a short space of time. If the sacred writers had really entertained the idea that so great a work was done in so short a time, would not some notice have been taken of so wonderful a fact? Whereas, if any reference to time is made at all, it is the thought of ages rather than of days that is impressed on the mind. In this connection it may be well to refer to the ideas about creation which are found outside of the Jewish people; and here the remarkable fact meets us that, while the heathen traditions of the creation have so much resemblance to the Mosaic Revelation, as to indicate identity of origin, the idea of long periods is quite familiar. Take the following sentence from the Brahminical records as a specimen: "One thousand divine ages are a day of Brahma, the creator." These are very ancient authorities you will see, for the extension of time expressed in the word day; and by no means liable to the suspicion of their being driven to it in order to escape geological difficulties! And in the same way sufficient evidence has been adduced to show that Josephus and many of the old Jewish rabbis, and some of



the early Christian fathers too—Irenæus in the second century, Origen in the third, and Augustine in the fourth—did not regard the Bible as committed to literal days in the creation narrative.

Further, what if the days instead of representing the periods of creation represented the time of the vision? May it not have been a seven-day vision, and this only a brief account of it? And if it took so long a time for the vision to pass before the seer's mind, what a conception of age-long periods would it give him. If a scene passing before your mind should occupy only fifteen minutes in passing, it would appear a long time. If it took an hour, it would seem very long; and if it took an evening and a morning, it would seem almost interminable. I do not urge this very strongly, but it seems to me not by any means unreasonable.\*

Let us now revert to the fact already noticed, that the seventh day is left open. It is not said of the seventh day as of the others, "the evening and the morning were the seventh day." Why not? Because all the rest of the Bible is included in the seventh day. This is evi-

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\* While we hold very strongly to the interpretation of the days above given, we have nothing but respect for the views of those who interpret the days literally and bring in the periods of geology between the first and second verses. It is of course impossible for both to be right; and yet either may be a tenable hypothesis. And it is very important to remember that while different hypotheses necessarily discredit each other, they by no means discredit the sacred text. No one pretends that there was any intention of teaching geology. All that is wanted is room for the discoveries of science; and the greater the number of so-called "reconciliation" hypotheses, provided only they be tenable, the more evidence have we of the wisdom displayed in presenting the truth so as to be final spiritually, and yet so singularly *open* for future physical investigation.

dently the thought in the Saviour's mind, when in defending Himself for healing a man on the Sabbath, He says: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v. 17). It is as if He said: "My Father's Sabbath has been in process all these years since He rested from His creation work, and though He no longer works as Creator, He does work as Sustainer and Redeemer: and so may I; My Father worketh hitherto and I work." And the very same idea is fully wrought out in the intricate, but interesting passage in the fourth chapter of Hebrews.

We are living, then, in the seventh day. In what part of it? Remember the order. It is "the evening and the morning." The Hebrew order—through darkness to light—is the divine order, and how much better and more suggestive of happy, hopeful thought, than our modern order, which ends in the darkness of midnight. Is it the evening still? Or did the morning break when the Sun of Righteousness appeared upon the horizon eighteen centuries ago? If so, we are only in the early dawn as yet. There is a great deal of darkness about us. But the Day of the Lord is coming, a day which shall know no ending, for "there shall be no night there." The path of the exalted Saviour through the ages, however obscure it now may be to sight, will be shown at last to have been like that of the true disciple in his day and generation, "as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the Perfect Day." So much for the magnificent scope of the Bible "Genesis."

III. We come now to the substance of the revelation. Here we have three great subjects: God, Nature, and Man.

I. First, what do we learn of God? His existence is simply postulated: "In the beginning God"—How much grander, stronger, and better than any argumentation would have been. The existence of God really needs no argument. It comes to us in the shape of an intuition. It is inborn in us, and those who are atheists, are atheists in spite of themselves, I was going to say. They have struggled away from their natural convictions. Atheism is not natural. And downright atheism is a very rare thing indeed. We have also the unity of God as against the polytheism of the heathen world; and the spirituality and personality of God as against all pantheistic notions of Deity. Then, finally, His supremacy as "God over all." If we could realize the extent of the evil arising out of the superstitions of the ancient world, we should see how important it was to set forth the conception of God's supremacy over all in the beginning. Take the superstitious notions about the weather as an illustration. What a comfort to all to whom this Revelation came, to be assured, long before there was or could be any science of meteorology, that all these changes, that seemed so capricious, were under the control of One intelligent and beneficent Power. Or, again, think of the tendency to worship the heavenly bodies. What a complete antidote to this tendency was the announcement of the fact that all these came into existence by the fiat of the Almighty, and were consequently under His absolute control. The supremacy of God is a very important part of the apocalypse of Genesis.

Have we anything about the Trinity? Attention is often called to the plural form of the name of God, used

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with a singular verb, the idea being that the plural form gives the conception of trinity and the singular verb that of unity. I do not think we should lay much stress upon this, however, because the plural in the Hebrew language is often used as signifying the excellence, the greatness, the majesty of the subject in reference to which it is used. So the plural may be used here to signify the greatness of God. But the apostle John has called our attention to the presence in this narrative of Him whom we call the Second Person of the Trinity. "In the beginning was the Word" (John i. 1). God *said*: "Let there be Light." And we can see for ourselves "the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters." We have then God, the Word, and the Spirit, all brought before us in the work of creation.

As we review the truth about God contained in this apocalypse, we should feel constrained to bow the knee in lowly adoration. What a well-spring of worship is there in these opening sentences of the Bible, and how the solemnizing and elevating effect of them appears in all the subsequent literature of the Hebrews. Hence comes that lofty appreciation of nature which is found nowhere else in the ancient world, and is so conspicuous and so inspiring throughout the pages of the Bible. Read the one hundred and fourth Psalm for example, the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, and the closing chapters of the book of Job, and you will hear the majestic echoes of that voice of majesty that speaks so grandly in the Genesis. "Hallelujah!" "Halle!ujah!" is the never-dying refrain of the Creation Epic: "Praise ye the Lord."

2. Next, what do we learn about Nature? Here, unhappily, the attention of Bible students has been almost exclusively directed to certain difficulties. These difficulties all arise, as it seems to me, from three sources, and the Bible is not to blame for any of them. First source: treating the passage as if it were history, whereas it is apocalypse. Second source: taking it as intended to teach science, especially astronomical and geological science. Third source of difficulty: the mistakes of translators. For example, the unfortunate word firmament continually comes to the front as one of the "mistakes of Moses." Strange that a Latin word should be a mistake of Moses! Did Moses know Latin? Did he ever write the letters f, i, r, m, etc.? Not only is the word "firmament" not in the Hebrew Bible, but it does not represent the Hebrew word at all. The word firmament means something strong, solid. The Hebrew word, for which it is an unfortunate translation, signifies something that is very thin, extended, spread out; just the best word that could be chosen to signify the atmosphere.\*

Then there is the word "whales," that Professor Huxley made so merry over a year ago. But the Hebrew does not say whales. The Hebrew word refers to great sea monsters, and is just the very best word the Hebrew language affords to describe such animals as the plesiosaurus and ichthyosaurus and other creatures that abounded in the time probably referred to there. Let us only guard against these three sources of error, and

\* The mistake is really a mistake of science. It was the false astronomy of Alexandria that led the Septuagint translators to translate *raqia*, expanse, into *στερεωμα*, firmament.

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we shall not find many difficulties. If we would only avoid the mistakes of Moses' critics, we would not show our ignorance by talking about the mistakes of Moses.

We have said that almost everybody knows about the difficulties, but how few are there comparatively that know about the wonderful harmonies? So much is said and written about the difficulties, that many have the idea that the narrative is full of difficulties—nothing but difficulties in it—nothing that agrees with science as we know it now; whereas, when we look at it, we find the correspondencies most wonderful all the way through. Let us look at a few of them. And first, the absence of dates. The fact is very noteworthy that there is such abundance of space left for the long periods, not till quite recently demanded by science. And this does not depend on any theory of day-periods; for those who still hold to the literal days, find all the room required before the first day is mentioned. Not six thousand years ago, but "in the beginning." How grand and how true in its vagueness.

Another negative characteristic worth noticing here is the absence of details where none are needed. For example, there is almost nothing said in detail about the heavens. What is said about the heavens in addition to the bare fact of creation, is only in reference to the earth,\* as, for example, when the sun and moon are treated of, not as separate worlds, but only in their re

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\* This is strikingly indicated in the Hebrew text, by the accent punctuation: "In the beginning—created God—the heavens and the earth. And the earth—it was without form and void;" which is, read in full: "And the earth" (for it is only the earth that this narrative has to do with),—etc. Bearing this in mind, it is evident that

lation to this earth as giving light to it and affording measurements of time. There is no attempt to drag in the spectroscope!

A certain infidel lately seemed to think he had made a point against the Bible by remarking that the author of it had compressed the astronomy of the universe into five words. Just think of the ignorance this betrays. It proceeds on the assumption that the author of this apocalypse intended to teach the world the astronomy of the universe; and then, of course, it would have been a very foolish thing for him to discuss the whole subject in five words. Whereas, in this very reticence we have a note of truth. If this work had been the work of some mere cosmogonist, some theorist as to the origin of the universe, he would have been sure to have given us a great deal of information about the stars. But a prophet of the Lord has nothing to do with astronomy as such. All that he has to do with the stars is to make it clear that the most distant orbs of light are included in the domain of the Great Supreme, and this he can do as well in five words as in five thousand; and so, wisely avoiding all detail, he simply says, "He made the stars also." There was danger that men might suppose some power resident in these distant stars distinct from the power that ruled the earth. He would have them to understand that the same God that rules over this little earth, rules to the uttermost bounds of the great universe. And this great truth he lays on im-

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when heaven is spoken of again as in the eighth verse, it is not the universe at large, but the visible heaven, as the definition indeed most accurately points out: "God called the firmament (expanse) Heaven."

movable foundations by the sublimely simple words, "He made the stars also."

But passing from that which is merely negative, see how many positive harmonies there are. First, there is the fact of a beginning. The old infidel objection used to be that "all things have continued as they were from the beginning of the creation." Nobody pretends to take that position now that science points so clearly to beginnings of everything. You can trace back man to his beginning in the geological cycles. You can trace back mammals to their beginning; birds, fishes, insects to their beginnings; vegetation to its beginning; rocks to their beginning. The general fact of a genesis is immovably established by science.

Secondly, "The heavens and the earth." Note the order. Though almost nothing is said about the heavens, yet what is said is not at all in conflict with what we now know about them. We know now that the earth is not the centre of the universe. Look forward to Genesis iv. 2, and you will find the transition to the reverse order—quite appropriate there, as we shall see in the next lecture; but here, where the genesis of all things, the origin of the universe, is the subject, it is not the earth and the heavens, but "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Thirdly, there is the original chaos. "The earth was without form and void." Turn to the early pages of any good modern scientific book, that attempts to set forth the genesis of the earth from a scientific standpoint, and you will find just this condition described. Observe, too, in passing, how carefully the statement is limited to the earth. The universe was not chaotic then.



Fourthly, the work of creation is not a simultaneous, but an extended one. If the author had been guessing or theorizing, he would have been much more likely to hit on the idea of simultaneous, than successive creation. But the idea of successive creation is now proved by science to be true.

Fifthly, there is a progressive development, and yet not a continuous progression without any drawbacks. There are evenings and mornings: just what science tells us of the ages of the past. Here it is worth while perhaps to notice the careful use of the word "created." An objection has been made to the want of continuity in the so-called orthodox doctrine of creation, the orthodox doctrine being supposed to be that of fresh creation at every point. But the Bible is not responsible for many "fresh creations." The word "created" is only used three times in the record. First, as applied to the original creation of the universe, possibly in the most embryonic state. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Next, in connection with the introduction of life (v. 2), and last, in reference to the creation of man (v. 27). In no other place is anything said about direct creation. It is rather making, appointing, ordering, saying "Let there be," "Let the waters bring forth," etc. Now, is it not a significant fact that these three points where, and where alone, the idea of absolute creation is introduced, are just the three points at which the great apostles of continuity find it impossible to make their connections? You will not find any one that is able to show any other origin for the spirit of man than the Creator Himself. You can not find any one that is able to show any other origin of animal life than

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the Creator Himself. There have been very strenuous efforts made a great many times to show that the living may originate from the not-living; but all these efforts have failed. And the origin of matter is just as mysterious as the origin of life. No other origin can be even conceived of the primal matter of the universe than the fiat of the Great Creator. Thus we find the word "creation" used just at the times when modern science tells us it is most appropriate.

Sixthly, the progression is from the lower to the higher. An inventor would have been much more likely to guess that man was created first, and afterward the other creatures subordinate to him. But the record begins at the bottom of the scale and goes up, step by step, to the top: again, just what geology tells us. All these are great general correspondencies; but we might,

Seventhly, go into details and find harmonies even there, all the way through. Take the fact of light appearing on the first day. The Hebrew word for "light" is wide enough to cover the associated phenomena of heat and electricity, and are not these the primal forces of the universe? Again, it used to be a standard difficulty with sceptics that light was said to exist before the sun was visible from the earth. Science here has come to the rescue, and who doubts it now? It is very interesting to see a distinguished geologist like Dana using this very fact that light is said to have existed before the sun shone upon the earth as a proof of the divine origin of this document, on the ground that no one would have guessed what must have seemed so unlikely then. So much for the progress *toward* the Bible which science has made since the day when a sceptical writer

said of the Mosaic narrative, "It would still be correct enough in great principles were it not for one individual oversight and one unlucky blunder!"—the oversight being the solid firmament (whose oversight?), and the blunder, light apart from the sun (whose blunder?).

I have spoken already about the words "created" and "made," in relation to the discriminating use of them. This word *ragia*, too, how admirable it is to express the tenuity of our atmosphere, especially as contrasted with the clumsy words used by the enlightened Greeks (*stereoma*), the noble Romans (*firmamentum*), and even by learned Englishmen of the nineteenth century (*firmament*)! And not to dwell on mere words as we well might, look at the general order of creation: vegetation before animal life, birds and fishes before mammals, and all the lower animals before man. Is not that just the order you find in geology? More particularly, while man is last he is not created on a separate day. He comes in on the sixth day along with the higher animals, yet not in the beginning, but toward the close of the period. Again, just what geology tells us.

These are only some of the many wonderful harmonies between this old revelation and modern science. I would like to see the doctrine of chances applied to this problem, to determine what probability there would be of a mere guesser or inventor hitting upon so many things that correspond with what modern science reveals. I don't believe there would be one chance in a million! Is it not far harder for a sensible man to believe that this wonderful apocalypse is the fruit of ignorance and guesswork, than that it is the product of inspiration? It is simply absurd to imagine that an igno-

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rant man could have guessed so happily. Nay, more. Let any of the scientific men of to-day set themselves down to write out a history of creation in a space no larger than that occupied by the first chapter of Genesis and I do not believe they could improve on it at all. And if they did succeed in producing anything that would pass for the present, in all probability in ten years it would be out of date. Our apocalypse of creation is not only better than could be expected of an un-inspired man in the days of the world's ignorance, but it is better than Tyndall, or Huxley, or Haeckel could do yet. If they think not, let them take a single sheet of paper and try!

3. Finally, what do we learn about Man? Here we have man in his heavenly relations. When we come to the narrative of the Fall we shall meet him in his earthly relations. But here he is introduced in his relations to God. "God created man in His own image. In the image of God created He him."

Here, in the first place, we see man's true place in nature. He is not altogether separated from the animals below him. As we have already seen, he was created on the same day with the highest group of animals. But while his lower earthly relations are not ignored, it is by his higher heavenly relations, his relations to God, that his place in nature is assigned him. "God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him." It is important for us to take firm hold of this truth in these days. When man's place in nature is discussed nowadays, anatomy seems to be the first and last resort. It has even been suggested by a very eminent anthropologist that

the investigation would be more satisfactorily made upon subjects "packed into large vessels filled with spirits of wine!"\* The corpus, the corpse, is the final appeal. No account is taken of man's spiritual powers; no notice taken at all of his higher nature, by which he is related to God. Tell me which is the more important part of a man, his bodily organism, by which he is related to the beasts below him, or his spiritual nature, by which he is related to God above him? Is not the Bible, when it gives man his place in nature as created in the image of his Maker, far more rational than these materialists, who only give us his place in relation to the lower animals?

Let us look for a moment at this truth, of man made in the image of God, as a foundation truth in theological as well as anthropological science. In the first place, it is the only basis of Revelation. If it had not been true that man was made in the image of God, a revelation from God would have been an utter impossibility. Just think of it for a moment. We are told in the Bible that "God is Love." Would that convey any idea to our minds if there were no such thing as love in our hearts? Or when we are told that God is just, could we have any conception of the meaning if we did not know from our own natures what justice is? Or take the great and blessed truth of the Fatherhood of God; what possible notion of it could we have, if fatherhood were unknown among men? So you will find, when you think of it, that it would have been impossible to have any idea of God at all, unless we had been

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made in His image. The truth that man was made in the image of God is the only rational basis of revelation.

Further, we have here a rational basis for the Incarnation. What more natural, when God would reveal Himself in some way that would appeal to our senses, when He would come near to us and let us know Him as a Friend—what more natural than to take the form of a man, seeing man was made in the image of God? The doctrine of the New Testament is that the man Christ Jesus was “the Image of the Invisible God.” The doctrine of the Old Testament is that man was made in the image of the Invisible God. You see the harmony between the two: man in the image of God, and Jesus Christ “the Image of God.” Thus we find here a rational basis for the Incarnation.

We find, still further, a rational basis for the doctrine of Regeneration by the Holy Spirit. We are told there in Genesis, that “God breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul,” and in another passage that “the inspiration of the Almighty gave him understanding.” Is it not, then, reasonable to suppose that the inspiration of the Almighty will be necessary to restore to him his understanding, to restore to him his true life, when he has lost it through sin? Do we not find again a beautiful correspondence between the Old Testament doctrine of man’s generation and the New Testament doctrine of man’s regeneration, as both requiring the inspiration of the Almighty, the in-breathing of the Spirit of God? So that in this old doctrine concerning man and his place in nature, as made in the image of God, we find the only rational

basis for a revelation of God, for a revelation of God in Christ, for a revelation of God in Christ by the Holy Spirit: a trinity of truth in unity.

And still further in this old doctrine of man made in the image of God, we have the foundation laid for those glorious hopes that are set before us in the New Testament. When we look at man's lower nature and his relation to the animals, it seems hard for us to believe the glorious things spoken in the Bible about the prospect that is before us of dwelling in God's holy heavens and reigning with Christ upon His throne. What the Bible has to say about our future destiny as sons of God, seems too good to be true. And indeed so long as we dwell upon our earthly relations and have in view only our lower nature and our material bodies we can not rise to these conceptions. But when we think of ourselves as being made in the image of God, it does not seem any longer unreasonable or extravagant that we should share the glory of God. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Let us only rise to our true dignity as sons of God, and then we shall be prepared to realize our lofty destiny as heirs of the glory of God!

We have finished what we had to say on the substance of this revelation. We have had important truth concerning God, concerning Nature, and concerning Man. Can we learn any lessons of Grace before we close? It is true that sin is not yet in the world. So grace is not needed, and accordingly has no place directly in this apocalypse. But can not we learn some lessons of grace indirectly? May it not be that God's

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work in nature is a picture of His work in grace? Look and see. The first thing in the transformation of chaos to cosmos is Light. God said, "let light be, and light was." That was the first thing needed to prepare the way for the coming order. And it is the first thing needed to illumine the chaos of the sinner's heart. God must say, "let light be," before the sinner can be brought "from darkness unto light and from the power of Satan unto God." The next thing, after the production of light and the primal forces of the universe, is Order, advancing steadily from stage to stage. So God deals with the soul that comes to Him. He first gives light, gives it in a moment as by a word, and after the sudden change, follows a gradual transformation. Just as the Spirit of the Lord moved on the old chaos, and gradually it was reduced to order, so the Spirit of the Lord moves on the dark and troubled waters of the heart and restores it stage by stage to order; and at each stage He says, "It is good, it is good." The Lord rejoices in His work.

We get still another view of God's working when we reach the animate creation. The earth had not only been "without form," but "void," and now that Light has come, and Order has followed, it only remains that the void be filled with life. Light, Order, Life: these are the three remedies for chaos, with its darkness, confusion, and death. And we, too, want something to fill the void, and so God in Christ comes to us, and by His Spirit gives us life: a life which, following the order of the creation record, is gradually becoming higher and higher, nobler and nobler, until it reaches up to God Himself. Then, when all is finished, God says, "Be-



hold, it is very good." So shall it be at the last, when God has finished His work; when everything within has been reduced to order, when life has reached its culmination, when we have become at last like Him, who is "the Life." Then the Lord will look upon His finished work in grace, and say: "Behold, it is very good." What follows? "The rest that remaineth for the people of God." Not the rest of inactivity. God has not been inactive during this seventh day. It was only rest from the work of reducing things to order. He no longer needed to reduce things to order. It was only the administration of that which was already brought to order that was henceforth necessary. So after God has come into our souls, and everything has been reduced to order, and we have been brought to that perfect day, we shall enjoy the rest of heaven, the rest of unwearied, active service, and onward, unobstructed progress that remaineth for the people of God. "There shall be no night there," no confusion there, no death there. Light, Order, Life, all very good, for evermore!

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## CHAPTER IV.

### IN EDEN AND OUT.

Gen. ii. 4—iii. 24.

THE word "generations," used in the first verse of the passage before us, requires some attention. The formula to which it belongs is a familiar heading throughout this book, and is, indeed, considered by some to mark the beginning of the separate documents of which Moses is supposed to have made use in preparing the Pentateuch under divine guidance.\* It is evident, from its use here and in some other places, that it carries a wider sense than that of lineal descent. The word history comes near to this wider sense; but it is history, viewed not as mere annals or chronicles, but as development, outcome. "The generations of the heavens and the earth," then, we take to be the historical outcome.

And here it is worthy of remark that the staple of the Bible revelation is fact, not theory or doctrine. Doctrines and theories may be easily invented, but facts can not be made to order. There is no important doctrine of Scripture that is not wedded to some fact in history which gives it a basis. And wherever the Bible

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\* See Gen. ii. 4; v. 1; vi. 9; x. 1; xi. 10, xi. 27; xxv. 12, 19; xxxvi. 1; xxxvii. 12.

and history meet, its facts are confirmed, and thus a solid foundation is given for its doctrines. This can be affirmed of no other book claiming to be a revelation from God.

The heading of this passage might not be inappropriate as the title of all the rest of the Bible. We have had the origin in the first chapter, and all the rest of the Bible gives the development—the development of the heavens and the earth, until at last, after all the changes of time are over, we shall witness the inauguration of “the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” In the meantime we shall limit our view to the little book of Generations, with its sad record of Fall and Failure, gilded however with a gleam of hope at the close.

In considering the *form* of the creation narrative, we found it to be not historical, but apocalyptic. In the book before us we see the transition from the apocalyptic to the historical form. The book of Genesis, as a whole, is a historical book. We are passing now into the historical part of it. But while we remember that the portion before us is historical, let us not forget that it is very peculiar history. It is a very, very old history. Moreover, we can not tell what kind of writing prevailed at the date of the original record, long before Moses set it in “the Book of the Law.” Perhaps it was pictorial writing; and in any case the form of language used would be exceedingly simple. So we may expect this history to come to us not as history does now, but in some peculiar style, such as we find here. One peculiarity (we have not time to refer to others) is the large symbolical element in it. For instance, the Tree of

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**Life.** When we turn to the book of Revelation and find the Tree of Life used symbolically there, is there any reason to doubt it is symbolical here?

It is, however, of great importance to remember that the symbolism attaches to the form, and not to the substance of the history. To call this whole story of the Fall a mere allegory, is to take away from it all historical reality. Let us distinguish carefully between the *reality* of the history, which is a very important thing, and the *literality* of it, which is of minor importance. It is very unfortunate that so much time is often spent upon the mere letter, regardless of the warning of the great apostle: "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." This accounts for nine-tenths of the difficulties people have about it. Suppose a person, seeing a cocoon for the first time, and being told it was good for food, should spend all his time gnawing away at the shell, and never get at the kernel. No wonder if his verdict should be, it is not fit to eat. So you will find that most of the people who have insuperable difficulties with the Bible are those who are busying themselves all the time about the shell and never get hold of the kernel. If they could only seize the kernel they would so readily see the beauty and enjoy the taste, and find the use of it; and then, perhaps, they would begin to see some beauty and some usefulness in the shell too. "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

A very good illustration of this is found in the fifteenth verse of the third chapter, where we read about "the seed of the woman bruising the head of the serpent." The literalists get nothing more out of it than a declaration that in time to come serpents will annoy

the descendants of Eve by biting at their heels, and on the other hand, the descendants of Eve will destroy serpents by crushing their heads! The mere shell of the thing manifestly. The reality, as pictured there, is of a great conflict to go on throughout all these ages of development; a great conflict between the forces of good on the one hand, and the forces of evil on the other. Of this conflict the issue is not doubtful. There is to be serious trouble all the while from the forces of evil, but in the end these forces will be crushed. There is One coming—a descendant of this same woman, called here “the seed of the woman”—who will at last “bruise the head of the serpent,” and gain the victory, and bring in that glorious era when sin and suffering and pain and death shall have all rolled away into the past. There is a great deal more than this in that wonderful verse—more than we would have time to tell though we spent a whole hour on it. We only refer to it now as an illustration.

And now, what matters it whether you take the “serpent” that tempted Eve to be a real and literal serpent, or the mere (phenomenal) form of a serpent assumed by the Spirit of Evil for the purpose? or even whether the serpent form is connected with the old style of pictorial representation? All that is minor and subordinate. There is no use of wasting time on it. All we want to be sure of is the truth, that there was a tempter, an evil spirit, that in a seductive form tempted our first parents and they fell. Let us by all means beware of allowing our time to be frittered away by mere trivial questions of the letter, instead of making it our great aim to see and to seize the great spiritual truths set forth in this old and simple record.

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There are many who represent this book of the Generations as a second edition of the Genesis, or separate account of the creation; and of course they find difficulty in comparing the two. All their difficulty, as we shall see, comes from their not understanding the passage as a whole, their not perceiving what it was intended to teach. It will help us to meet this difficulty if we follow the same order of ideas as in the exposition of Genesis i., viz., God, Nature, Man. In all we shall find marked differences. But these differences, instead of presenting any difficulty, will have their reason made abundantly manifest.

I. First, then, there is a different name for God introduced here. All through the Genesis it has been, "God said," "God made," "God created." Now it is invariably,\* "Jehovah God" (LORD God in our version). And this is the only continuous passage in the Bible where the combination is used. How is this explained? Very easily. In the apocalypse of the Genesis, God makes Himself known simply as Creator. Sin has not yet entered, and so the idea of Salvation has no place. In this passage sin is coming in, and along with it the promise of salvation. Now the name Jehovah is always connected with the idea of salvation. It is the covenant name. It is the name which indicates God's special relation to His people, as their Saviour and Redeemer. This name is introduced now, because God is about to make Himself known in a new character. He appeared in Genesis simply as Creator. He appears now in the book of the Generations as Redeemer; and so we get the name

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\* With the very significant exception of the words spoken by Satan.

Jehovah in place of the name God. But lest any one should suppose from the change of name that there is any change in the person; lest any one suppose that He who is to redeem us from sin and death, is a different being from Him who created the heavens and the earth, the two names are now combined—Jehovah God. The combination is retained throughout the entire narrative of the Fall to make the identification sure. Thereafter either name is used by itself without danger of error.

II. Look next at the way in which Nature is spoken of here. When you look at it aright, you find there is no repetition. Nature in the Genesis is universal nature. God created all things. But here, nature comes in, as it has to do immediately with Adam. Now see the effect of this. It at once removes difficulties, which many speak of as of great magnitude.

In the first place, it is not the whole earth that is now spoken of, but a very limited district. Our attention is narrowed down to Eden, and the environs of Eden, a limited district in a particular part of the earth. Hence the difficulty about there not being rain in the district ("earth") disappears. Let me here remind you once for all that the Hebrew word for *earth* and for *land* or *district* is the same. See Gen. xii. 1, where the word is twice used, translated "country" and "land."

Again, it is not the vegetable kingdom as a whole that is referred to in the fifth verse, but only the agricultural and horticultural products. The words "plant," "field," and "grew" (v. 5) are new words, not found in the creation record.\* In Gen. i. the vegetable kingdom

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\* The correct translation of the fifth verse is: "Now, no plant of

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as a whole was spoken of. Now, it is simply the cereals and garden herbs, and things of that sort; and here instead of coming into collision with the previous narrative, we have something that corresponds with what botanists tell us, that field and garden products are sharply distinguished in the history of nature, from the old flora of the geological epochs.

In the same way it is not the whole animal kingdom that is referred to in verse nineteen, but only the domestic animals, those with which man was to be especially associated, and to which he was very much more intimately related than to the wild beasts of the field. It may be easy to make this narrative look ridiculous, by bringing the wild beasts in array before Adam, as if any companionship with them were conceivable. But when we bear in mind that reference is made here to the domestic animals, there is nothing at all inappropriate in noticing, that while there is a certain degree of companionship possible between man and some of those animals, as the horse and dog, yet none of these was the companion he needed.

In the first chapter of Genesis, nature is the great theme. We are carried over universal nature, and the great truth is there set forth, that God has created all things. In the second chapter of Genesis, man is the great theme, and consequently nature is treated of only as it circles around him, and is related to him. This sufficiently accounts for the difference between the two.

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the field was yet in the land, and no herb of the field was yet growing."



III. Passing now from nature to Man, we find again a marked difference. In Gen. i. we are told, "God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him." And here: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground" (ii. 7). Some people tell us there is a contradiction here. *Is there any contradiction, let me ask? Are not both of them true? Is there not something that tells you that there is more than dust in your composition? Is there not something in you that tells you, you are related to God the Creator? When you hear the statement that "God made man in His own image," is there not a response awakened in you—something in you that rises up and says, It is true? On the other hand, we know that man's body is formed of the dust of the earth. We find it to be true in a more literal sense than was formerly supposed, now that chemistry discloses the fact that the same elements enter into the composition of man's body, as are found by analysis in the "dust of the ground."*

And not only are both these statements true, but each is appropriate in its place. In the first account, when man's place in universal nature was to be set forth—man as he issued from his Maker's hand—was it not appropriate that his higher nature should occupy the foreground? His lower relations are not entirely out of sight even there, for he is introduced along with a whole group of animals created on the sixth day. But while his connection with them is suggested, that to which emphasis is given in the Genesis is his relation to his Maker. But now that we are going to hear about his fall, about his shame and degradation, is it not appropriate that the lower rather than the higher part of his

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nature should be brought into the foreground, inasmuch as it is there that the danger lies? It was to that part of his nature that the temptation was addressed; and so we read here, "God formed man of the dust of the ground." Yet here too there is a hint of his higher nature, for it is added, "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," or as we have it in another passage, "The inspiration of the Almighty gave him understanding."

In this connection it is worth while to notice the use of the words "created" and "formed." "God *created* man in His own image." So far as man's spiritual and immortal nature was concerned it was a new creation. On the other hand, "God *formed* man out of the dust of the ground." We are not told He created man's body out of nothing. We are told, and the sciences of to-day confirm it, that it was formed out of existing materials.

Then, in relation to Woman, there is the same appropriateness in the two narratives. In the former her relations to God are prominent: "God created man in His own image. In the image of God created He him; male and female created He them"—man in His image; woman in His image. In the latter, it is not the relation of woman to her Maker that is brought forward, but the relation of woman to her husband. Hence the specific reference to her organic connection with her husband.

Here, again, it is very easy for one that deals in literalities to raise difficulties, forgetting that there is no intention here to detail scientifically the process of woman's formation, but simply to indicate that she is organically

connected with her husband. It is here proper to remark that the rendering "rib" is probably too specific. The word is more frequently used in the general sense of "side." As an evidence that there is no intention to give here any physiological information as to the origin of woman, we may refer to the words of Adam: "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." And now, is there anything irrational in the idea that woman should be formed out of man? Is there anything more mysterious or inconceivable in the formation of woman out of man, than in the original formation of man out of dust? Let us conceive of our origin in any way we choose, it is full of mystery. Though there may be mystery connected with what is said in the Bible, there will be just as much mystery connected with any other account you try to give of it. Matthew Henry, in his quaint and half-humorous way, really gets nearer to the true spirit of the narrative than any physiological interpreter can, when he makes the remark that some of you may be familiar with, "that woman was taken out of man, not out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled underfoot; but out of his side to be equal to him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved." Another remark of his is worth quoting. Referring to the fact of Adam's being first formed and then Eve, and the claim of priority and consequent superiority as made on his behalf by the apostle Paul, he says: "If man is the head, she is the crown—a crown to her husband, the crown of the visible creation. The man was dust refined, but the

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But, Matthew Henry apart, one thing is certain, that this old Bible narrative, while it has not done that which it was never intended to do, while it has given no scientific explanation of either man's origin or woman's origin, has nevertheless accomplished its great object. It has given woman her true place in the world. It is only in Bible lands that woman has her true place; and it is only there that marriage has its proper sacredness. Here as everywhere else, we see the practical power of the Bible. It was not written to satisfy curiosity, but to save and to bless; and most salutary and most blessed has been the influence of these earliest words about woman, setting forth her true relation to man and to God, to her earthly husband and her heavenly Father.

IV. Now, looking at the sad story of the Fall, you can not but observe how simple it is, and yet how full of profound lessons. And therein it is differentiated from all those traditions of the Fall which are evidently related to it, and which confirm it in all its main features. Many point to these traditions as discrediting the Bible story; as if the very number of the witnesses cast discredit on the testimony. The very fact that there are so many similar traditions of the fall, among the different races of mankind, shows that there must have been some common foundation for them all; and when you institute a comparison of our simple narrative, so full of profound lessons, with these other traditions, you see at once which is the genuine, the original. You see it

in the simplicity of the Bible story as compared with the puerilities and absurd details found in the others. You see it in its profound spiritual teachings compared with the deficiency or absence of such teachings in all the others.

We can not now dwell upon the lessons. We can only hastily indicate some of the points. Here we find that the root of sin was unbelief; in exact correspondence not only with what we may call the philosophy of sin, but also with the great Bible doctrine of the prime necessity of faith in order to salvation. Then, in regard to the nature of sin, we learn that it is the gratification of present desire regardless of law and right. We learn also the insidiousness of sin, not only in the symbolism of the serpent form, but in the process of the temptation itself, beginning with desires that are innocent enough in themselves and leading on to the transgression of law. Again, we find that this old, simple story touches the weak points of the men of the nineteenth century just as certainly as it touched the weak points of Adam and Eve. The woman saw the fruit of the tree, that it was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise. Here we have just the three weak points of our nature, spoken of by the apostle John, when he says: "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, are the things that are in the world." If you were to analyze the temptations which you have to encounter from day to day, you would find it is just there where your weakness lies, and liability to fall. Whenever you sin it is because you have yielded to the lust of the flesh, to the lust of the eye, or to the pride of life. You could not get a more philosophical

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account of it in a learned treatise. Finally, notice the consequences of sin as developed in the story: first, the guilt and shame, then the fear, then the guile, then the selfishness, then the suffering, and disappointment and death. Time will not allow us to dwell on each of these in detail. One or two points, however, need special notice.

The Bible has been charged with representing labor as a curse. The charge is not true. On the contrary, we are told that Adam was appointed in Eden to dress the garden and keep it. The law of labor came in among the blessings of Eden, along with the law of obedience and the marriage law. It is a slander on the Bible to say that it represents labor as a curse. It is not the labor that is the curse. It is the thorns and the thistles. It is the hardness of the labor. "In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread." Labor would have been easy and pleasant otherwise.

Then in regard to death. There are those who represent the Bible as if it taught that death was unknown in the world until after the Fall. And then they point us to the reign of death throughout the epochs of geology as contradicting the Bible. Now, the Bible teaches nothing of the kind. On the contrary, there seems rather to be a suggestion that death was in existence among the lower animals all the way through. Not to speak of the probability that one of the divisions of animals, mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis, corresponds with the carnivora, is there not something in the way the subject of death is introduced, which rather suggests the idea that it was already known? It was a new thing to Adam. It was not a new thing

to animal life. Man had been created with relations to mortality below him, but with relations also to immortality above him. Had he not fallen, his immortal nature would have ruled his destiny; but now that he has separated himself from God by his sin, his lower relations, his mortal relations, must rule his destiny. Instead of having as his destiny the prospect of being associated with God in a happy immortality, he is degraded from that position, and is henceforth associated with the animals in their mortality. We are told that "death passed upon all *men*, because all have sinned." But you do not find a passage in the Bible asserting that death passed upon the animals because of man's sin.

Not to dwell longer on details, let us call your attention to an instructive comparison between the first and second chapters of Genesis. In the first chapter the word good, good, good, rings all the way through it. And at the end: "God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good." In the second chapter we come to the sad contrast of evil. Not the origin of evil. The Bible gives no solution of the origin of evil, because that is a merely speculative question. Not to show us how it began, but how to make an end of it, is the object of the Bible. The origin of evil must remain where we find it, shrouded in impenetrable mystery, until we are constituted differently from what we are, and can see things in God's light. But referring now to the contrast between the good that rings all through the account of the Genesis, with the evil that looms up, dark and terrible, in the book of the Generations: how different is the Bible representation from the idea of the old philosophers that repre-

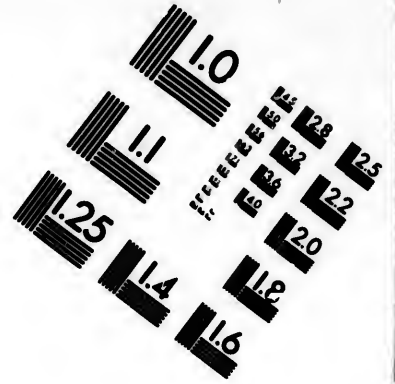
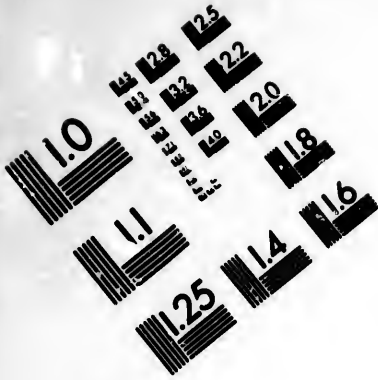
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mented matter as the root of evil, that associated evil with things material. How different is it from the unhealthy monkish ideas (even in puritanism, with all its excellencies, we can find some trace of them) of the evil of the world and of nature itself. Now, we see how at the very outset the Bible teaches us that sin alone is essentially evil. Nature is good. The world is good. The universe is good. All things God has made are good. "He hath made everything beautiful in his time." The only thing that is evil is man's sin, and that which springs immediately from it. So we do not need to give up the world in the sense that we need separate ourselves from nature. We do not need to become monks and nuns and occupy ourselves exclusively with spiritual things. We may enjoy the good things that are around us. We may enjoy the glories and beauties of this natural world. The only thing necessary for us to avoid is sin. That is all. Get rid of sin and you will get rid of all that is evil; and then, when at last you stand in your lot in "the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness," again will God look down and say, as He said of that old creation, "Behold, it is very good."

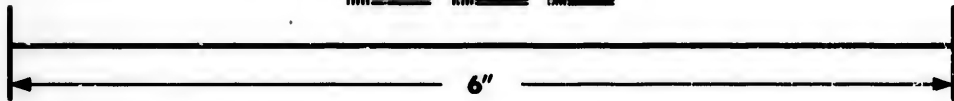
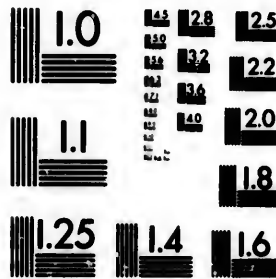
V. Still following the order of thought in the last lecture, we come to the subject of Grace. And here we find already, in the very record of the Fall, in the very history of man's degradation and shame, the beginnings of the Gospel. We have the way of salvation dimly outlined and foreshadowed. We have passed from the light and glory of the Creation to the clouds and darkness of the Fall. As we read on, the darkness deepens, clouds gather about us, and night seems to be setting in for-







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ever; but at the evening-time the light appears. The rays from the Sun of Righteousness begin to pierce the gloom. The dark clouds show a silver lining just at the edge; and because it is mainly darkness that is visible, there are many that miss the light. They do not see the lesson of grace that is here, because it comes in the form of a cloud. But look carefully and you will see it.

We see the dawn of hope in the fifteenth verse of the third chapter. It comes indeed in the form of a curse, a cloud black and heavy, but when you begin to look into it, you see the bright light that is in it. Although it speaks of a long and dark conflict, lasting through the ages, yet at the end of the vista there is a prospect of glorious victory through the coming Saviour, "the seed of the woman." So that in the very bosom of the curse, we see the germ of salvation.\*

Adam saw it, because we read immediately after, that "Adam called his wife's name Eve." Her name formerly was "Isha" (ii. 23), signifying her relation to her husband. Now he changes her name and calls her Eve. What is the meaning of Eve? It means Life. Remember, that whenever a name was changed among the Orientals, it was for some reason. This is more than a mere piece of information as to a name. What do we care what her name was? It might have been Sarah or Mary or anything else, without making any difference to us, or to any one, unless there was some significance in it. With a change of name in Scripture there was always something critical transpiring in the history of

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\* See the following Lecture for the development of this.

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the person, as when Abram's name was changed to Abraham, Sarai's to Sarah, Jacob's to Israel, etc. What is there critical here? Adam called his wife's name Eve, *i. e.*, Life. Why? The sentence of death had just been pronounced, and if he had only seen the darkness, he would have been much more likely to call her name Death; but he called her *Life*. Why then? Because he had taken hold of the promise. Taught by God, he looked forward to the future, and caught a glimpse of the coming Life. So Adam called his wife's name *Life*. There is still more in the reason given: "Because she was the mother of all living." He recognized the fact that it was through the seed of woman that life was coming. And so here we have the dawn of faith, just as in the fifteenth verse we had the dawn of hope.

Next we are told that the Lord God clothed them with skins. Now, that is a very strange piece of information, if you simply take the letter of it; if you suppose the intention was merely to tell us something about their clothing. If we desired archæological information as to how they lived, we would want to know a great deal more. We would want to know what kind of a house they had, and how they managed to furnish it, and what kind of implements they ate with, and so forth. You can not see any reason for it if you take the mere letter. But remember the symbolism that there is in this narrative; remember how their guilt was set forth in the significant symbol of their nakedness; and now the covering of their guilt is set forth in the corresponding symbol of clothing them. Adam has now taken hold by faith of the Divine promise of salvation through the seed of the woman, and has his guilt covered, as his nakedness

was, with the robe that God gave him. Some follow it a little further and suggest the idea that this robe was made of the skins of animals that had been slain in sacrifice; and that these sacrifices were connected with some teaching which the Lord had given them on the subject of the atonement. I do not insist on this, though it may well be, especially as we find Abel, in the very next chapter, bringing a sacrifice of slain animals; but this seems evident, that the intention is to teach that God in His mercy covered their sins, forgave their transgressions, and treated them as His children, although they had offended Him.

The next thought seems to be that of discipline, vs. 22, 23: "The Lord God said: Behold, the man has become as one of us to know good and evil. Now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat and live forever: therefore, the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the Tree of Life." Now, most people, when they read this, only see what appears on the surface. They only see the dark clouds, in other words. They do not catch the silver lining, wherein all the beauty lies. So far as appearance goes, it seems a hard fate. They were driven forth out of the Garden of Eden, and there were the cherubim and flaming sword—to keep them out, as people think. If you look at it a little more carefully, you see something better in it than that. Why was not Adam permitted now to go to the Tree of Life? Remember its symbolical meaning.

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The Tree of Life was connected with the enactment of the obedience law. It was the symbol of this, that if the law was kept, life would be the result. But now Adam had broken the law, so he could not get life in that way any more. The only way Adam can get life now, is through the coming Saviour. If he had kept his innocence, he would have had life in the first way, which is symbolized by the Tree of Life. There was no chance for him now in that direction. So it was in mercy that he was pointed elsewhere. Adam was turned away from the Tree of Life, not because God did not wish him to recover his lost estate,\* but because he can not be saved in that way now. He has to go through a long course of discipline before he can reach the Life which the Tree symbolized. The Tree of Life passes away out of the Bible field, and discipline comes in—trial, probation, conflict, the fight of faith, on, on, on through all the ages of the long interval, until at last "the mystery of iniquity is finished;" and then at last, at the end of the Bible, the Tree of Life is seen again, and the redeemed of the Lord are gathered around it. Adam was turned away from the old covenant of works that he might be led to the new covenant of grace, in order that, through discipline and suffering—the only way now open to him—he might regain the Tree of Life and the blessings of a lost Eden.

Now, about the cherubim and flaming sword. Were

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\* The word "live" in the Hebrew text is not necessarily connected with "lest." It may be considered as closely connected with the word "eat" before it, the link of connection being found, not in the actual fact, but in the mind of Adam, who had the (mistaken) idea, that by eating it he would secure life forever.

these to aggravate his condition? to keep him from bettering it? Not at all. Follow the word cherubim throughout the Bible and what do you find? You find the cherubim immediately over the mercy-seat. The cherubim are associated with the thought of God's gracious presence, and His throne of grace, where He meets with His people, where He shows them forgiveness, where He places before them the way of salvation, where He tells them of the "Way of the Tree of Life." And what is the flaming sword? It represents justice indeed, but justice meeting with mercy. We have, in fact, here the origin of the *shekinah* over the mercy-seat. As a matter of Hebrew, it is worth noticing that the word "placed" (v. 24) is the root of the word *shekinah*. God "shekinahed" in that place the cherubim and the flaming sword. Now, the *shekinah* was the symbol of the presence of God; and coming in between the cherubim and over the mercy-seat, it indicated this great thought, that God was ready to forgive and ready to bless. Here, at the close of this sad story of the Fall, instead of having the sword of justice unsheathed, and the whole ending in terror and darkness, we have the first sanctuary set up. Just as we have had the dawn of hope, and the dawn of faith, and the first rays of the rising Sun of Righteousness, so also we have the first house of worship; not, certainly, to keep Adam from the Tree of Life, but "to keep the way of the Tree of Life," to show Adam how he was to get back again to that condition which he had lost by sin; not to keep him out of it, but to keep it for him, and to keep it before him. That old sanctuary had the same object that this sanctuary has to-day. Why are these houses of

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worship erected? Why these services? To keep the way of the Tree of Life. I am afraid if it were not for these services and these sanctuaries, many of us would forget the way of life. Sanctuaries are erected to keep it before us. Thus man is reminded that he needs Life, and a way pointed out by which he can reach it.

Surely it is not unreasonable that there should have been such a special manifestation to primeval man. We do not need it in these days, because our Shekinah is the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have access to the Father. But before He came, there was need of special manifestations, and accordingly we find in the Old Testament the record of such appearances as the cloud and the pillar of fire in the wilderness, and later on, the shekinah in the temple. Such manifestations were necessary then; but when the Lord Jesus Christ came, He was the fulfillment of all these things. Now we do not see any shekinah. We do not have any cherubim. We do not need anything of that kind to remain with us, for we have the abiding presence of our Lord and Saviour. We have the written Word. We have our sanctuary services. We have the water of baptism and the memorials of our Saviour's broken body and shed blood in the symbolism of the Lord's Supper. These take the place of those old symbols, and keep for us the way of the Tree of Life.

## LECTURE V.\*

### THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL.

Gen. iii. 15.

**T**his verse is of so much importance in itself, and also in relation to all the rest of the Scriptures, that we shall depart from our usual custom, and devote the whole hour to its consideration, taking up in detail those points to which only a passing reference could be made in the lecture on Eden. "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" These words have been appropriately called the "Protevangelium," the first Gospel. At first sight it seems strange that these words should be considered the beginning of the Gospel. The form is not that of a Gospel, but of a curse. It is the first curse that we meet with in reading the Bible. But think a moment. On whom, on what is it a curse? It is a curse on the great adversary of mankind. It is a curse upon evil—on sin, and death and hell. It is a

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\* This lecture was delivered after all the rest, being added by request, in order to develop more fully some important thoughts that had only been sketched in the more general lectures. This will account for what may seem unnecessary repetition in some of the following lectures, especially in that part of the twelfth lecture which sketches "the conflict."

curse upon our curse. You will observe, and it is well worth noticing, that there is no curse pronounced upon the man, nor upon the woman either. "Unto the woman he said: I will greatly multiply thy sorrow." But no Christian needs to be told that sorrow is not necessarily a curse. "And to the man he said, Cursed is the ground for thy sake." The ground, not the man, is cursed. And though the thorns and thistles may very well be represented as a curse to the ground, they may be a blessing rather to the man. They are part of his needed discipline. There is then no curse pronounced upon the man nor upon the woman, who being tempted, yielded to temptation; but only upon the tempter: "because thou hast done this thing, thou art cursed." I need not stop now to repeat what has been said before as to the serpent representing figuratively the evil spirit, so that the curse is really upon "that old serpent the Devil," as he is called in Revelation.

But can the Gospel come in the form of a curse? It can—nay, it must. There are those who, shutting their eyes to the terrible fact of sin with all its dreadful consequences, as they are seen in the world, please themselves and try to please others by preaching a gospel of easy good-nature, of love and mercy and good-will to all mankind—a sort of universal salvation on the easiest terms possible, or without any terms at all. But sin and its terrible consequences are fearful facts that can not be ignored. It is all very well to pass them over in a sermon, to string so many sentences together without any reference to so disagreeable a subject. But by leaving sin out of our sermons, and out of our thoughts, we can not get it out of the city, out of

the country, out of our hearts. That is no gospel at all that does not deal with the terrible facts of sin; and the only way to deal with sin is to curse it. The only way to deal with sin is to destroy it, to root it out. And so it comes to pass that the Gospel, to be a genuine Gospel, must come in the form of a curse upon sin, a curse upon our curse. It is Salvation which the Gospel brings; but it can bring it in no other way to any human soul than through conviction of sin. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and the end of the Gospel; but hatred—hatred of sin—is the only portal to true, and pure, and holy love. When the Spirit, the Comforter, comes, what is the first thing He does? He convinces of sin (John xvi. 8, 9). Yes, it is indeed profoundly true that the Gospel of peace and love begins in enmity, just the enmity before us here: "I will put *enmity* between thee and the woman," etc.

Do not think then there is anything inconsistent in the Gospel beginning, so far as the form is concerned, with a curse. But we shall see the evangelical character of the prophecy more clearly if we pass from the form to the substance.

I. As soon as we look at it, we recognize, speaking generally, a great conflict ending in victory. Of this conflict there is a threefold presentation.

1. First, there is a personal conflict: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." Here it is worth while to notice that the Hebrew tense admits of a present as well as a future interpretation. There is, properly speaking, no present tense in Hebrew—only the past and the future. So when the future is used, it may denote the present, running on into the

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future. So here it is not only, "I will put enmity;" but, "I am putting and will put enmity between thee and the woman." The work is begun. The unholy alliance, into which Eve had been beguiled by the Evil One, is already broken. She is already a changed woman. She is no longer on the serpent's side. She is on the Lord's side. There is enmity between her and the serpent. So Eve stands before us now, no longer as a sinner, but rather as a saint—using the word *saint* in the Scripture sense of the term, which is the etymological and proper sense, meaning not a particularly holy person, as we generally understand it, but one that is separated from sin—one that is separated unto God, however little progress has been made in the divine life. In that sense, Eve is now a saint—separated unto God; and as such, she is the first type and representative of all the separated ones, who constitute the Church of God. So it comes to pass that the Church is generally represented under the figure of a woman, and a mother; individual believers being reckoned as her children. But I am anticipating. I mention this now as preparing the way for what is coming. Meantime what we are immediately concerned with is the personal matter, the change of heart, that already had passed upon Eve, the enmity established between her and Satan.

2. After the personal comes the general conflict "Enmity between thy seed and her seed." What is meant by the two "seeds"? We would not have very much difficulty in guessing, but we are not left to guesswork. We are very plainly told in the later Scriptures. For example, in the eighth chapter of the Gospel of John,

the Jews had been congratulating themselves on belonging to the promised seed: "We be Abraham's seed" (verse 33). Our Saviour said, in reply: "I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me." That is a strange thing for Abraham's seed. You may be Abraham's seed literally, but certainly not spiritually. "They answered and said unto him: Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them: If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." Notice how distinctly He recognized the spiritual sense of the term, not the literal. "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning. That is the reason ye seek to kill me." Or turn to Matthew xxiii. 33, where, addressing the same kind of people, the Saviour says: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers" (*i. e.*, ye seed of the serpents), "how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Or take the parable of the tares (Mat. xiii. 38): "The good seed are the children of the kingdom. But the tares are the children of the wicked one." So much for our Saviour's language. And the apostles speak in the same way, as, for example, Paul speaking to Elymas, the sorcerer (Acts xiii. 10): "O, full of all subtilty, and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" Perhaps most definite of all, is a passage in the 3d chapter of the 1st Epistle of John. Read from the 8th verse: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the

devil." Then follows something like a definition of the two seeds. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil : whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one and slew his brother." You see how plainly it is stated that the seed of the serpent are those who follow the deeds of the serpent ; they are those who inherit the wickedness of their father the devil, as it is put here. And of course, if the seed of the serpent are those who inherit the wickedness of the evil one, the seed of the woman are those that inherit the saintliness of the woman. It is as plain as anything can be, that it is the spiritual, and not the literal, seed that is meant ; that character is in view, and not simple descent. And that is the reason why Cain, as I have explained elsewhere, is not included in the seed. In this connection it may be worth while to notice the name of Seth (Gen. iv. 25), which is derived from the very word used here for " putting " enmity between the seeds. Though Cain was yet living, Eve felt that her seed was gone, because righteous Abel had been slain ; and so, when the next son is born, she regards him as the true seed : " for God, said she, hath *appointed* (same word again in the original) me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." This shows how the matter lay in her mind even then ; how even Eve herself understood the real distinction between the two seeds. You see, then, how distinctly this general conflict is foreshadowed, between the righteous and the wicked to the end of time.

3. Not only is there a personal and a general conflict, but there is a special one. "Thee and the woman"—

personal. "Thy seed and her seed"—general. "It" (or he, because the pronoun is masculine) "shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel"—special.

Now, I do not say that Christ is very plainly indicated here. The time had not yet come for this. The hope of the coming personal Saviour was only gradually unfolded. But I do say that certain lines are drawn which, when produced, are found to converge on Christ, who occupies the point of sight, away on the distant horizon. Take the seed, for example, and trace the converging lines. At the outset, here, where the lines are widest, we have the seed of the woman, embracing all the righteous. Presently it is narrowed to the seed of Seth; farther on, to the seed of Noah, and then of Shem; later still to the seed of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. Still further on into the distance, we reach the seed of David. You see how the lines are converging, narrowing and narrowing all the while; until, away on the far horizon you see the point of convergence in the manger at Bethlehem, where, of parents humble indeed, but of the house and lineage of David, of Jacob, of Abraham, of Noah, of Eve, the Christ of God is born.

This view of the prophecy seems to me to lead the way to a reconciliation of the positions taken by such men as Kurz and Hengstenberg respectively, the one showing strong reasons for finding the personal Christ in the later part of the prophecy, the other producing cogent reasons for his belief that the doctrine of a personal Messiah was not unfolded until a much later period. In a certain sense both are right. The fact is, that while Kurz is right in saying that Christ is not yet manifested in this early prophecy as a personal Saviour,



it nevertheless remains true that certain lines are drawn, which, when produced, converge on Christ, who is at the point of sight; so that in a sense Hengstenberg is also right when he says that the personal Christ is in view in the prophecy.

Here, too, we have an explanation of the peculiar language that is used: "He shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." This is evidently something special and peculiar. The language is unmistakably personal. And not only is the personality of the reference explained, but the strange fact that the woman and not the man is taken as the representative here. In every other case it is the man, and not the woman, that is singled out. It is "the seed of Abraham," not of Sarah. It is "the seed of Jacob," not of Leah. It is the seed of David, not of Bathsheba. Why, then, is the woman singled out here? Was not Adam a subject of grace as well as Eve? Was he not a saint too? Was he not at enmity with the serpent as well as his wife? Why then "the seed of *the woman*?" Have we not here a foreshadowing of the great mystery of the Incarnation? a hint that the coming Saviour is to be One who shall be the seed of the woman in a sense in which no other can be? "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His son, made of a woman."

So it becomes more and more evident that Christ is at the point of sight. His name is not mentioned. His figure is not sketched in the picture at all, but the main lines all point to Him. Away on the distant horizon they all converge on Him. And now we can see a very full and beautiful meaning in such words as those in

Revelation, where John is assured by the angel from heaven that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10); a general fact which we find to be true of the most remote and germinal of all the prophecies.

Observe, further, that it is only at this point that victory comes in: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," only conflict there; no victory. "And between thy seed and her seed," only enmity, no victory. But come to the point of sight, and *there* is not only conflict, but victory: "He shall bruise thy head." Apart from the Captain of our Salvation, there was nothing for us but defeat. Though victory is finally assured to all the true seed of the woman, it will be His victory, made theirs by faith:

"I asked them whence their victory came ;  
They, with united breath,  
Ascribed their conquest to the Lamb,  
Their triumph to His death."

So far we have attempted only a general sketch. We might also look at details with advantage. In speaking lately on the subject of Bible perspective, I had occasion to remark that our commentators, if they have not used the microscope too much, have used the telescope too little. In saying this, I cast no discredit on microscopic examination of the Bible. Many passages in the Bible deserve and will repay the most minute investigation. Just as in nature, it is not everything that is worth while to examine under the microscope, but certain objects judiciously selected will repay the closest examination; so here in the Scriptures, while

as a rule we should take perspective views, yet frequently we find passages that should be studied quite minutely by themselves. This is one of them. Let us look at a few points. Let us examine this gospel germ of truth, and see how much there is in it for us to admire. We have been dealing only with the great general doctrine of salvation which is in it, in the form of a conflict with, and victory over, the spirit of evil. But there are the germs of much that is important in sacred truth besides. There is, for example, the change of heart necessary in order to salvation; for is not this implied in the enmity to the serpent, which is the necessary condition of victory? "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." There, in the background, we have original sin; and very little reflection is required to recognize in these words a parallel to those of our Lord to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee: Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." Then again we see the necessity of Divine power in order to work the change. It is not "She must put enmity." It is, "*I will put enmity.*" "Except a man be born of water *and of the Spirit*, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." And then there is a hint of the necessity of a mediator between God and man. It is, "*I put enmity,*" when the change of heart is spoken of; but when the conflict is referred to, it is, "*He shall bruise thy head.*" There is "the mediator between God and man." And we have the humanity of the mediator also, for is He not of the seed of the woman? And while His humanity is foreshadowed, we have at the same time a hint of His supreme power, inasmuch as He is more than a match for the great adversary of mankind. Still further, in the

bruising of the heel, without which the victory is not gained, we have a foreshadowing hint of the mystery of the atonement. And then in the fact that it is only at the third stage that the victory is reached, we have an intimation that the victory must at last be gained through Christ; that "there is no other name given under heaven among men" by which we can be saved. And, finally, coming to individual Christian experience, we are warned of the life-long struggle we must maintain with sin, and the only way in which victory can be secured; while at the same time we have the comfort of the assurance that though the heel (our lower nature) may be bruised, the head will not be broken. These mortal bodies must suffer much, and at last dissolve in weakness, perhaps in agony, but at the worst it will be only the bruising of the heel. Like Christ Himself, by these very sufferings we shall enter into our glory (Luke xxiv. 26).

This brief analysis may serve to show how much is folded up in this old germ of prophecy. Just as God wraps up in the seed, the stem and the root, the leaves and the branches, and all that afterwards comes out of it so in this old seed-bed of theology, as we may call it, He wraps up all the most important things that are afterwards fully unfolded. Here is an Evolution study that will richly repay the student. There is a true doctrine of Bible evolution, just as there is a true doctrine of evolution in Nature, if scientific men would only keep it in its place, and not make it first a universal dogma, and then a self-existent Deity.

II. Let us now look at the facts in history, to which the prophecy points, and which constitute its fulfillment

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In the first place, we see the development of this conflict right along from the time of its first beginning; "from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias, slain between the temple and the altar;" and from the days of the first martyr, Stephen, down to the present time, when in heathen lands converts still must seal, at times, their testimony with their blood, and when in Christian lands "those that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer" certain kinds of persecution, and keep up a constant conflict with the powers of evil. The conflict will go on, and will not cease until the last of Satan's captives shall be rescued from his grasp and brought as sons to glory; when there shall be the great gathering of the people around Shiloh, the Prince of Peace, the Captain of our Salvation.

But of all that long conflict, the crisis, the decisive action, is that to which our attention is specially called in the prophecy—the conflict that the Lord Jesus had to wage against the powers of darkness and the machinations of evil men when He was here upon the earth. We see Him entering the lists, so to speak, immediately after His baptism. He grows up there "out of His place" just like any of the rest of the people, in the silence and obscurity of His home in Nazareth; but in the fullness of time He comes forth and is baptized in Jordan, and anointed with the Holy Spirit; and immediately, we are told, the Spirit leads Him into the wilderness, and there, tempted of Satan again and again, He stands His ground and gains the victory—not by the force of omnipotence, for this He has laid aside, but armed only with the weapon, which is ours as well as His, the written Word; and thus He reverses the old scene in Eden

when Adam fell. "The second Adam, the Lord from heaven," stands in the desert, while the first Adam, of the earth, fell in the garden. After that, we are told "the devil departed from Him," but only "for a season." All through His life the struggle went on, besides the conflict which He had continually to wage with the evil-minded men of the time. He not only had to struggle against those who would entangle Him in their talk, who plotted against Him, who persecuted Him and sought His life, and finally rejected and crucified Him; but He had this darker conflict to pass through. I know there are many in these days that scorn the idea of spiritual existences; that especially scorn the idea of the existence of evil spirits. But apart altogether from what the Bible says, there are facts in science and facts in history, that can not be explained at all if you sweep away the spiritual world from this earth. Believe me, "there are more things in heaven, and on earth too, than are dreamt of in our philosophy," and he has very little experience in human nature who has not had some evidence of the presence and agency of evil spirits, and something to corroborate the truth of the saying, that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood only, but against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Our Saviour, having taken our place, had this warfare to fight all through His life.

The clouds thicken toward the end of His career. The great crisis of the conflict is at the close. We can see the evidence of it in many passages, as, for example, John xii. 27-31. "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?" What is there to trouble Him? So far as everything

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that could be seen was concerned, there was much to rejoice His spirit. Certain Greeks had come to see Him, and in their coming His prophetic soul recognized the first fruits of a great harvest from the west. So there was really very much to encourage Him at that particular moment. But He says: "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour." A few verses further on we get the explanation of that horror of great darkness, that was coming over the Saviour's soul. He says: "Now is the judgment of this world." The word "judgment" is the Greek *krisis*: "Now is the *crisis* of this world. Now is the Prince of this world cast out." This explains it all. He is coming to the crisis of the conflict. He still, in calm possession of Himself, can speak words of heavenly rest and peace. "In my Father's house are many mansions." "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." But every now and then we see some sign of the dark conflict in which His soul is engaged all alone. "Hereafter I will not talk much with you." Why? His whole heart is going out in love to His disciples. He is eager to tell them all they would like to know. But why can He not? Because "the prince of this world cometh." I have a dark battle to fight that you know not of. "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Here, too, is the explanation of the terrible agony in the garden when "His soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death," and when sweat, as great drops of blood, ran down to the ground. Here, too, the explanation of His terrible anguish on the cross, when He cried: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Have you not often asked yourself the reason of the great difference between the death of the Lord Jesus and the death of so many martyrs, who endured unheard-of tortures without flinching or uttering a cry? Look at Stephen there, when the stones are crashing around him. He has a heavenly smile on his countenance, as he looks upward and sees Jesus sitting on the right hand of God. There is glory on his face, and joy in his heart, and manifest triumph in his death. There is nothing of this in the death of our Lord. Instead of passing through the ordeal in glory and triumph, it was in anguish and torture, and with agonizing cries. Why? Had the Master less courage than the servants? Was He less able to endure suffering than Stephen, or any of the martyrs? Oh, no! It was because He had sufferings to bear that none of them had any knowledge of. He had their battle to fight as well as His own. As the Captain of their Salvation and ours, He stood in the front and thickest of the battle, and by His strong agony gained the victory for them and us. It is to this dark and terrible struggle that reference is made in the Epistle to the Colossians, where we read: "Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it," that is, the Cross. Here, too, we learn why, when the agony is over and He is about to yield up His spirit, He cries: "It is finished." The victory at last is won.

Thus it was that through His death, the final bruising of His heel, He destroyed him that had the power of death, crushing the serpent's head and delivering

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his captives. "It became Him for whom are all things and by whom are all things in bringing many sons unto glory"—Stephen and all the martyrs among the rest—"to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through sufferings." Now that He has gained the victory, that victory is secured for all the rest, who may well face death in any form bravely, now that the Captain of their Salvation has conquered all its terrors for them. It is secured for all the seed; and we have a picture of its consummation in the book of Revelation, where is celebrated in thrilling imagery the final victory of the saints of the Lord "by the blood of the Lamb."

But while victory has been secured for us, it must also be accomplished in us. There must be a conflict and a victory in every human heart. There is not only the special conflict, which the Lord Jesus so victoriously waged, and the general conflict ending so triumphantly for all the seed, but there must be a personal conflict in each individual soul. My friends, you and I will not be saved simply because the great body are saved. We must be saved personally. The conflict must be between you and the evil one. *You* must fight that battle. Not in your own strength—it would be too much for you—but in the strength with which the Captain of your Salvation will supply you. The relation between Divine power and human agency in the personal conflict, is very instructively put in the Epistle to the Romans, where the Apostle says: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." The God of peace shall bruise Satan. It is only God that can do it

But it must be done "under your feet." If you do not put your foot on him, you will never gain the victory. You must set down your feet firmly on your old sins—your selfishness, your lusts and passions, everything in you that is of Satan—and the God of peace will certainly make you "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

Now, let me only remind you in conclusion, that there is nothing which can compare in interest and importance with this conflict of which we have been speaking, between the forces of good and of evil. You may be very eager about certain enterprises on which your heart is now set; you may have your schemes of money-making or of ambition, and they may be important enough in their place; but when we in our turn reach the now seemingly distant horizon, where will all these schemes be then? Then the question will be, not, Did your schemes succeed? Did you make all the money you wanted? Did you gain the summit of your ambition? Not these; but this: Were you on the Lord's side? Were you at deadly enmity with all sin, and especially with the sin in your own heart? Have you any part or lot in this great promise, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on His throne?" Remember the Lord Jesus says, "He that is not with me is against me." It is not enough then to say that you do nothing against Him. You must take a definite position with Him and against His enemies. Are you with Him? Are you sure that you are with Him? I beseech you to make sure of it without delay; for it

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will be a dreadful thing to find out, after it is too late to alter it, that you have been on the wrong side, that you have not been with Christ, and therefore against Him. When we reach "the point of sight" on the horizon of the present age, may we all be found among the conquering seed.

## LECTURE VI.

### THE FIRST AGE OF THE CONFLICT.

Gen. iv.-ix. 17.

**I**N the Eden prophecy (Gen. iii. 15) there was shadowed forth a great conflict between good and evil that should last through coming ages. Of that long conflict this is the first age. It covers the whole time of antediluvian history.

It is important for us to keep in our minds the length of the time, sixteen hundred years and more—over sixteen centuries at the very lowest computation. So, of course, we can not expect anything in the shape of a continuous history. A few chapters cover the whole ground; and while each chapter is undoubtedly historical, the whole is not, properly speaking, history. It is not continuous, but fragmentary. The fragments, however, are not miscellaneous fragments which have been accidentally preserved. Everything that is there, is there for a purpose, and a good purpose; and one chief object that we shall keep in view in looking over these fragments of early history, is to find out the use of the record of them that we have here; what bearing they have upon the great subject and object of the Bible.

I. First we have the story of Cain and Abel. We find here a picture, I may say, exhibiting the nature of the conflict that there is to be between good and evil. We

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see there the early development of evil in its antagonism with good. Perhaps that is the reason why it belongs, or seems to belong, to the book of the Generations of the heavens and the earth. If you look at your Bibles, you will observe that this chapter comes in as a sort of appendix to that book, the next book of Generations not commencing till the fifth chapter.

First, what is the great lesson of Cain's history? Is it not the fearful nature of sin? See to what terrible results it leads in the first generation. The time which has elapsed since the expulsion from Eden, though much longer than appears to the superficial reader, is nevertheless comparatively short; yet the germ of sin that is in Cain's heart has already led on to the worst of crimes. We learn further that religious observances amount to nothing when "sin lieth at the door," as it is expressed in the seventh verse. Cain comes with his offering and presents it to the Lord, and as far as appearances are concerned, everything looks well; but "sin lieth at the door" of the man's heart, and it is of no avail.

On the other hand, what is the great lesson of Abel's history? He comes before us, apparently, as an innocent man. There is nothing said against him at all events. Yet he is required to bring an offering. He is accepted, apparently, not on the simple ground of his goodness, but in connection with the offering that he brings. It is the offering of "the firstlings of his flock." Here we have the first record of sacrifice. Perhaps not quite the first indication of it. We may have had some trace of it in the clothing of Adam and Eve with the skins of animals, probably offered in sacrifice; but this is the first direct account we have; and already in this

first sacrifice of "the firstlings of the flock," we are reminded of the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

Next, what is the difference between Cain and Abel? Some are inclined to think it lay entirely in the offering: not in the men at all; but if you look at the narrative you will find there was a difference in the men. "Unto Cain and his offering" the Lord had not respect; but "the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering." *Abel and his offering, Cain and his offering.* But what was the difference in the men? The great difference in the men, as we are taught in the Epistle of the Hebrews, was faith. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain." So whatever difference there may have been in the men in other respects (and there no doubt was very much), the fundamental contrast between them was, that Abel had faith, while Cain had not. Just as in the last lesson we found unbelief to be the root of sin, so here we find faith to be the foundation of salvation. It may be that the way in which Abel's faith showed itself was his bringing the offering the Lord had prescribed. The offering of Cain seemed appropriate enough; but inasmuch as we are told that Abel came in faith, there seems reason to conclude that the offering he brought was one that the Lord had prescribed; and though there is nothing in the narrative itself to suggest it, there seems to be sufficient warrant in subsequent Scripture for the idea that while Cain's offering was quite appropriate as a mere act of homage, expressed in the sacrifice of property, Abel's offering was not only the sacrifice of property, but of life, involving not merely homage, but faith—a faith which, however

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dimly, looked forward to the coming Seed of the Woman, who, by the sacrifice of His life, should open up the way for sinful man's acceptance with a holy God.

II. The next great subject is the two lines of descent from Adam—through Cain and through Seth. Remember, however, there must have been a great many more than two lines. There are those that thoughtlessly suppose Adam had no more sons than Cain, Abel, and Seth, because these are the only ones mentioned; and for the same weighty reason no daughter at all! Hence, of course, certain difficulties! When the Bible says that "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord," and was afraid of the people he might meet, "where," they ask, "could the people have come from?" They do not realize the great spaces of time in this narrative. They do not realize that Adam was one hundred and thirty years old when Seth was born. It would seem from the way we are told of the birth of Seth, that it must have taken place very soon after the death of Abel. From this it follows that Adam must have been nearly one hundred and thirty years old at the date of Cain's exile; and, as any one can see, there is room here for quite a considerable population. Well, why are these two lines chosen, and these alone? I think we shall find the reason when we look into it.

First, look at the Cainite line. There we find again only one line of descent selected in the family of Cain, and so in each generation, till we come to the fifth, where the line abruptly ends. The probability is that Cain had a number of sons and daughters, and that a great many lines of descent ran out from him. And so with Enos, and Irad, and all the rest. Why the particu

lar selection? Evidently it is to bring in the distinguished family of Lamech, that had so much to do with the progress of arts and civilization. But what has that to do in the Bible record? In the first place, it teaches us that civilization is a human development. You will find in traditions of the heathen nations, accounts of old gods and demigods that introduced the various arts, and by means of new and valuable inventions gave early impulse to civilization. Now, here we have the arts and civilization introduced as a purely human development, and discredit is cast on all these old stories, and the idolatry connected with them—the story of Prometheus, for example, who stole fire from heaven, and of Vulcan, a name which many suppose to be allied etymologically to “Tubal Cain.”

But is there not another reason why this family is introduced? It is to teach us that civilization, good as it is, important as it is, valuable as it is, does not meet the wants of man as a sinner. It is no antidote to sin. It will not take the place of God's way of salvation through Christ Jesus. This family of Lamech was a very distinguished family. You find them distinguished in the arts, in manufactures, in poetry, and music; but in that same family you find polygamy and murder, and general godlessness. It is interesting, in connection with this, to remember that these traditions, that we find in other nations about the origin of the arts, very commonly trace their origin to people that had not the best of characters.

It is worth while to pause here a moment and reflect. Look at civilization as the great rival of salvation—the one representing what man can do for himself, the other

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what God can do for him. There are a great many people in these days who find their religion in civilization, in progress, in the wonders of the nineteenth century, in the great developments of science and art, in railroads, and telegraphs, and telephones, and phonographs. All these things are good enough in their place. All these things are valuable. For all these things we ought to be very thankful. But these things do not meet our deepest wants. Civilization had a fair field in the ancient time: in this Cainite line before the flood; and after the flood, in Egypt and in Assyria, in Babylon, in Greece and Rome. It achieved wonders. It reached a wonderful development in the histories of these countries. But what was the issue of it all? Corruption came in, and the whole fabric of society, with all its glories, fell into decay and ruin. "The tree of knowledge is not that of life."

It would seem from the history of ancient civilization that the Fall had the same effect upon society as it had upon the individual man, making it mortal. What then about modern civilization? Must it go the same road? Must it have the same history as the old civilization? Not necessarily. Then civilization was working out its destiny, so to speak, alone. Now it is going hand in hand with God's truth. The civilized nations are no longer the heathen nations. The civilized nations are the Christian nations, and it is because civilization and Christianity have been going on, and are still going on hand in hand, that we have hopes for modern civilization, especially that of the Anglo-Saxon race. Those that seek to separate the two, those that seek to undermine Christianity, to destroy its institutions, or to

weaken its influence, are the greatest enemies of the country. They are the enemies of modern civilization.

Coming now to the Sethite line in the fifth chapter, we have again to ask the reason why this one line among so many is chosen. Evidently in order to show the development of religious life (undoubtedly the special reason for the introduction of this complete line of descent is because it gives the genealogy of the coming Messiah, but we speak now of a more general reason). We have had the development of worldly life, with its arts and civilization, and progress: and now we have the development of religious life. Here it is very interesting to notice the title to the fifth chapter: "This is the book of the generations of Adam." Did not the line of Cain belong to the generations of Adam? Were not Cain and all the others descendants of Adam? To understand this clearly, it will be necessary to go back to that germinal verse, the fifteenth verse of the third chapter. Who are "her seed?" Many superficial readers think it is all mankind. In a certain sense of course, all mankind are the seed of the woman; but suppose you include all mankind, where do the seed of the serpent come in? Is it not quite obvious, that the seed of the woman can not mean all mankind, but simply those who are not only literally, but spiritually the seed of the woman, those who are found on the side of good, the side of God and of righteousness. Those who are of an opposite spirit are the seed of the serpent, "the children of the devil," as they are called in the New Testament. Here as so often, "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." Thus in the highest sense the line of Cain did not belong to the generations of Adam

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It belonged to the generations of the serpent, but "this," introducing the line of Seth, "*this* is the book of the generations of Adam." In the same way, when in the previous narrative we are told that "Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living," most readers take it in the sense that she was the mother of all mankind. But why give her a name to indicate a fact so obvious? On the other hand, when you take "the living" in the spiritual as well as the literal sense, in its spiritual sense as those "alive unto God," those who are to have the "life" which God gives through His Son, how beautifully all the references correspond: "the seed of the woman," "the mother of the living," "the generations of Adam."

Let us now run our eye along the line of Seth, and though there is not a great deal in it, apart from the genealogy itself, what there is, is very instructive and suggestive. We see life—spiritual, eternal life—developed in all its main features in these antediluvian times.

We have the beginning of it in Enos. The name of Enos is suggestive, indicating man in his weakness. Man in his weakness looks up to God in His strength, and calls upon His name (c. iv. 26). This is now as then, the beginning of spiritual life; realizing our own helplessness and calling on the name of the Lord.

Following the line down quite a distance, our attention is next fixed upon Enoch. He "walked with God." A prophecy of his is recorded in the book of Jude. Perhaps he uttered other prophecies of which we have no record; and undoubtedly he was widely known as a Christian teacher in that early age; but that to which special attention is called, is his pure and holy

life. "Enoch walked with God." There is true life. "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." Here we see the result of true spiritual life. It triumphs over death. May we not have here a representation of what would have been the destiny of all mankind, if Adam had not fallen? Perhaps the change that passed over Enoch was of the same kind that would have passed over Adam, after his probation was over, if he had retained his innocence. Whatever we may say about this, I think it is evident that Enoch's translation was intended to be a witness to the people of that early age, of the life beyond, the life with God, the life above. There has been such a witness in each of the great ages. In the first age, Enoch. In the middle age, Elijah. In the last age, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, "the Resurrection and the Life."

There is still a further development of life, along the line of "the generations of Adam." After Enos and Enoch, we come to Noah. We find it written of him also that he "walked with God." What was the result in his case? He passed safely through the great deluge. We have in the life of Noah a witness to the fact, that if one walks with God, if one really leads a spiritual life, he will not only be victorious over death as Enoch was, but over judgment. Just as Noah passed safely through the judgment of the flood, so you and I will pass safely through the judgment of fire, if, like Noah and Enoch, we learn to walk with God.

You see, then, over against the worldly development, which is good enough in itself, but not at all satisfactory in its issue, the development of spiritual life. You see how it reaches away into the beyond, and points up-

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ward, heavenward, homeward, God-ward. In this we find the main spiritual teaching of the book of the generations of Adam. But we can not pass on without saying a word about certain side issues to which altogether too great importance is sometimes attached.

First, there are questions of chronology. These are manifestly quite incidental. It is evident that such passages as this were not intended to be used for the purpose of settling definitively the chronology of history. In the first place, the record is sometimes quite vague in its language, as for example in the tenth chapter, the 15th to the 18th verse, "And Canaan begat Sidon, his first-born, and Heth, and the Jebusite, and the Girgashite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and Sinite," etc. It is quite obvious that whole races are referred to there, and not individuals. In the second place, and more particularly, every one acknowledges that there has been imperfection in the transmission of numbers throughout the Old Testament, and especially away back here. There has, indeed, been a wonderful accuracy in the transcription and transmission of the Scriptures, even the oldest. God in His providence has so ordered it, that we have these Scriptures almost identically in the form in which they were first given. Still remember, there is no infallibility or inspiration claimed for the copyists, and hence there have sometimes been errors in the transcriptions, almost exclusively, however, in the figures, for reasons which are readily perceived by scholars. And so there is a decided difference in the numbers given in the Hebrew and the Samaritan Pentateuchs, and in the Septuagint version. All three are different; from which it seems very clearly to follow that we can not be absolutely certain as

to any chronological system based on these numbers. A third reason why it is obvious that this record was not intended to be used for the purpose of settling the chronology of the world, is that our Saviour did not think it worth while to correct the Septuagint. There have been those who have said, "We have nothing to do with the Septuagint. It is the Hebrew Bible we have to do with. Its numbers must be taken as absolutely correct." But if so, why did our Lord continually use the Septuagint, which had so many wrong figures in it, and never correct it? The reason is obvious that He did not think it worth while, because it was not His mission any more than it was the purpose of the written word to teach chronology. What is the conclusion to be drawn from all this? It is that, within reasonable limits, questions of chronology ought to be considered open questions.

Another side issue is the longevity of these patriarchs. Some are staggered because this is so unlike anything we know of in these days. But in the first place, the fact is confirmed by ancient tradition. In the second place, a sufficient cause is quite conceivable even apart from miracle, as distinguished physiologists have admitted, considering man's original constitution and the circumstances in which he was placed in primeval times. And thirdly, there are evidently sufficient reasons why the life of man should have been prolonged in these early ages—to give opportunity for the increase of population, and for the transmission of truth before the invention of any other writing than that which was traced on the tablets of man's memory.

III. The next great subject is the intermixture of races—the intermixture of the seed of the woman with the

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others, and the consequences thereof. Here we get into the darkness again. We find indeed one result of this intermixture that seems satisfactory: the development of strength and genius. "There were giants in the earth in those days," and "men of renown." But what does it all amount to? The renown of these men has been brief. We have not even their names now. On the other hand, the effect of these intermarriages to which our attention is chiefly directed, was the spread of universal corruption. As long as the children of God, the children of life, the children of light, kept themselves separate from the others, there was a satisfactory development of religious life, as already noticed. But as soon as the children of God mixed themselves with the godless and profane, instead of raising those that were evil to their own level, they themselves were degraded to the level of those with whom they associated themselves. This is so always. Such alliances are not blessed of God. When you find the righteous entering into close alliance with the wicked, the effect of it is not the elevation of the wicked to the plane of the righteous, but the degradation of the righteous to the level of the wicked. So it was then. Corruption spread among all the lines until it became well-nigh universal; and then the dark and terrible judgment of the flood came and swept them all away.

Now look at this judgment of the flood. It is very obvious, as we read these thrilling chapters, that we have the account of an eye-witness. Especially when it is read in the original, is it manifest that the person who wrote it was one that saw it all, and was stirred to the depths of his being with the wonderful things he had

seen. The story is quite marvelous as a literary production.

We must here touch a little on the difficulties connected with the story of the flood. These difficulties are almost all founded upon the idea that the deluge was universal; that it covered the highest tops of the Himalayas in India, the Rocky Mountains here, and all the mountains over all the earth. It is but reasonable, then, to ask if there is good reason for insisting that it was universal?

I know of only three strong reasons that are given for this position. The first is the use of the term "earth" continually throughout the narrative, which only proves that those who translated the Bible into English, believed the flood to have been universal. As we have had occasion already to prove, the word "earth" in Hebrew means just as readily a limited district. Why do not those who insist so strongly on the wide signification of "earth" here, not insist upon the same interpretation in such a passage as Genesis xii. 1, and make it an article of faith that Abraham left the world altogether and went to another, when he left Ur of the Chaldees and went to Canaan? The second argument for universality is found in universal expressions, the strongest of which is Gen. vii. 19: "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered." Now remember that this is the account of an eye-witness, vividly describing just what he saw, water on every side, water all around nothing but water—even the mountains to the farthest verge of the horizon covered over with water. When, in the book of Job, we read of the lightning flashing



over the whole heaven, the meaning surely can not be that a lightning flash starts at a certain degree of latitude and longitude, and makes a journey right round the world to the point where it started. "The whole heavens" is evidently bounded by the horizon. The third reason which has led people to suppose the whole earth was covered with water, is found in the tradition that the ark rested on Mount Ararat. The tradition, we say, for that is all the authority there is for the idea. In Gen. vii. 4, we are told that the ark rested on the mountains or highlands of "Ararat." The word "Ararat" only occurs other two times in the Bible, and in neither place does it refer to what was only long afterward called Mt. Ararat. In Old Testament times Ararat was not a mountain at all, but a district, on some of the highlands of which the ark rested. A moment's thought will show that it could not be on the top of Ararat. It would require one of the hardiest mountaineers to perform such a feat as the climbing of Ararat. It would be the most inconvenient place you could think of for the ark to rest on. When you look fairly at these three arguments that are urged in support of a universal deluge, you will find that none of them really demand it.

On the other hand, there are things that seem to point the other way. In the eleventh verse of the seventh chapter we are told that "in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." There is no indication there of the sudden creation of such a body of water as would cover the earth to the depth of 30,000 feet above the old sea-level. The causes that are assigned are just such as could be most

readily and naturally used. It may be worth while to notice here in passing, an attempt which has been made recently to cast ridicule upon the story of the flood, by representing the Bible as if it attributed the deluge to nothing else than a long heavy rain, whereas the first importance is given to an entirely different cause: "the fountains of the great deep were broken up." That is just what would appear to one who was describing such a scene as we imagine this to be. Suppose there had been some great submergence of the land there, as has taken place in other parts of the world. There would be a rushing up of water from below, from "the fountains of the great deep."

Again, in the first verse of the eighth chapter, natural agency is made use of: "God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged." There is no reason why we should suppose a greater miracle performed than was necessary. Still further, turn to the tenth verse of the ninth chapter, where God says: "I establish my covenant with you, and with every living creature that is with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth." What were those beasts of the earth thus distinguished from those going out of the ark? Probably they were those that came from the area of land not covered by the flood.

Then again, attention is called to the purpose of the flood, which was simply to destroy the race of men, and it is not to be supposed they had traveled a great distance by this time, from their original place of abode. The extent of the flood need not have been any greater than was necessary to submerge that area.

Further, when we take this view, not only do geolog

ical and other difficulties disappear, but there is decided confirmation from modern scientific research. There is no evidence in geology that there was in any period of the earth's history, a flood great enough to overtop the Rocky Mountains, but there are evidences of floods as great as this one must have been, for the purpose of destroying the race. I do not know how it is in the immediate region where the flood is supposed to have been. I do not know whether geologists have explored it sufficiently; but this is certain, that there are evidences of similar floods in other parts of the world. Some of our own geologists have discovered evidences of them in this very neighborhood. You have not to go very far from Chicago to find such traces of sudden, powerful, and transient diluvial action. Then, finally, this view of the deluge removes, of course, all difficulty about the number of animals in the ark, because all that was necessary was, that the species more nearly connected with man, those found in the region that was submerged, should be represented in the ark.

But after all, the question of extent is of quite minor importance so long as it is conceded that it was universal in the sense of destroying all but the family of Noah. *The reality* of the judgment is the great thing, and of this we have abundant confirmation from tradition. We find legends of a flood everywhere. We find them among the Semitic and Aryan and Turanian races. We find them east and west, and north and south; in savage nations and civilized nations; on continents and in islands; in the old world and in the new. And if Egypt is a solitary exception, which is very doubtful, but if it is, the exception is accounted for by the

simple fact that in that country they have floods every year.

Here again, as in the traditions of the Fall, there is difference enough to show which is the original and true. Other traditions of the flood are polytheistic, whereas here we have the one living and true God. Those are full of mythological elements, whereas here is a plain narrative, with the impressive scene vividly, but quite simply, depicted. In heathen traditions, too, you find many grotesque items and exaggerations, as for instance, when the ark is described as three-fourths of a mile long, and drops of rain the size of a bull's head; and, generally speaking, a conspicuous absence of that moral purpose which is so impressive and all-pervading in the narrative before us.

Still one thing more before we pass—the difficulty that some have on account of the severity of the judgment. But in the first place, terrible things are happening all the time. Is there any difference in principle between a famine that destroys hundreds of thousands, as recently in India and in China, and the old judgment of the flood? And then, in the second place, are not all generations swept away by death? It is true that, in the ordinary course of nature, they are taken away one by one; but when we consider the height to which sin had grown, and the necessity of marking the Divine displeasure against it, we can see a sufficient reason why, instead of taking that generation off one by one, according to His usual procedure, He should visit the earth in judgment and take them all away at once.

And herein we have a lesson for all time, and one especially needed in these times. The tendency nowa-

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days is to make far too light of sin. People hate sin sufficiently when it comes in the shape of personal wrong; but looking at sin in itself, they are disposed to regard it with a very great deal of indifference. We want more of the Bible way of looking at sin as infinitely hateful, and deserving of God's wrath and curse; we want to realize that it is indeed "that abominable thing which God hates."

IV. But while we seek to learn the solemn lessons of the judgment, let us not overlook the mercy which relieves its darkness. In the first place, we see the Spirit striving all the while with man. Then we find that after it appears that, notwithstanding the striving of the Spirit, man grows worse and worse, there are one hundred and twenty years of respite given; and then after the time has expired, and the ark has been built and Noah and his family have entered into it, still seven days are allowed to intervene before the deluge begins. You can imagine how the people would laugh at Noah and his family during these seven days of waiting in the ark, while as yet the sky was clear, and no signs of rain apparent. Again, while only Noah and his family were saved, there was an open door for all. They were all told the deluge was coming. They were all informed as to the purpose of the ark. You can not imagine any of them coming to the door of the ark and being sent away. The reason why they were lost was simply because they would not be saved.

Then when we come to the judgment itself, we see mercy there in the ark, which has been universally recognized as an impressive picture of the great salvation. And then at the close, the sun of mercy shines out

bright and clear. After Noah and his family came out of the ark, God renewed His covenant, the already old covenant of grace. It is evidently the old one, because He says: "I will establish my covenant with you." "Establish" it: literally, make it to stand; "my" covenant, not a covenant merely: as a "covenant of eternity" (v. 16), where the word used is that interesting Hebrew word "olam," which signifies the past as well as the future, as in the 90th Psalm, "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." It is very important to bear this in mind. There are those who mistake the mere negative addition, "neither shall there any more be a flood," for the whole--which certainly reduces the covenant with Noah to very small dimensions. Not at all. It is the old covenant of salvation in all its fullness, with an appropriate negative addition.

And appropriately enough, too, there is a new sign. The old sign had been the cherubim and the flaming sword "to keep the way of the Tree of Life." That was sufficient for the time in the beginning of man's history, when there was comparatively a small population, and when none were at any very great distance from the centre. But now the population is to be scattered all over the earth; and accordingly, instead of the old local cherubim, there was given the sign of the rainbow, a sign to be seen all over the earth. And then the new sign was not only universal, but perpetual. Belonging to the fixed system of nature, it will abide to the very end of the ages, as a sign and witness of God's faithfulness. Still further, it was a singularly appropriate sign of "the covenant of Olam," inasmuch as it pointed backward to

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the past as well as forward to the future. It was new as a sign, and yet old as Nature herself.

There are those who not only fail to see this, but make their want of penetration the occasion of an objection. They represent the Bible as responsible for the assertion that the rainbow was created after the deluge, whereas any one that is acquainted with the laws of light must believe, that whenever the conditions were present, as it is to be supposed they must often have been before the flood, a rainbow would be seen. But what does the Bible say? "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token." Even in English the tenses in the two clauses are different, but in the original it is still more marked; for the tense of the first is past, and of the second, future, so that to express the difference we should rather render: "I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a token." The bow was set in the cloud in past time, and in future it shall be a token of the covenant. Where is the objection now? As usual, it only serves to bring out the wonderful consistency and accuracy of the inspired record. And now that your attention is called to it, do you not see how the existence of the rainbow from the beginning made it all the more suitable as a sign of that covenant, which had come down from the old times before the flood?

Let us now look at the sign itself and see how exceedingly beautiful and appropriate it is. We might spend an hour in dwelling on its beauties; but we have time only for a few suggestions. The suitability of the sign in connection with the promise that there should be no more flood, is very obvious. But notice also its

general appropriateness. Clouds are the natural symbol of sorrow. When we see the beautiful bow spread upon the clouds, and arching the heavens, immediately the thought is suggested, that however darkly the clouds have gathered in the sky, the sun is shining still; and we learn that however the clouds of sorrow may gather around us, God does not forget us. Heaven is not closed against us. The sun is shining still amid the gloom. Then how is the rainbow formed? It is formed from drops of rain. It is "the smiling offspring of the weeping cloud." Whence comes its beauty? Out of the natural darkness and dreariness of the cloud. "There may be a cloud without a rainbow, but there can not be a rainbow without a cloud."

Therein we see the value of sorrow. Without sorrow we may lose a great deal of heavenly beauty and grace and loveliness. It is quite possible to have our darkest sorrows so transfigured that they will shine in heavenly beauty in the sunlight of God's face. And there is not only the transfiguration of our sorrow, but the assurance that very soon it will pass away. When you see the rainbow in the sky, although the rain is still falling, you know it will soon clear. The sun will soon be shining all the brighter after the rain. And so shall it be in the experience of those who have taken hold on that covenant of which the rainbow is the enduring sign. Their afflictions, however heavy and interminable they may seem, are really "light and for a moment" when brought into comparison with "the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

This has been a dark, sad chapter. But, thank God, at evening time again it is light. Judgment passes;

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mercy remains. No more flood ; but the rainbow forever. Turn to the last book of the Bible, so full of darkest prophecies of judgment, and the lovely sign of never-failing mercy still is there. "There was a rainbow round about the throne." Blessed be God for the enduring sign of the old and everlasting covenant of mercy. "O, give thanks unto the God of heaven ; for His mercy endureth forever."

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## LECTURE VII.

### THE SECOND AGE.

Gen. ix. 15.—xi. 26.

**W**E come now to the second age of conflict, the record of which extends from the 15th verse of the 9th chapter to the 26th verse of the 11th chapter of Genesis. The episodes of the 14th and 19th chapters really belong to the same subject, as we shall see. It is the second era of conflict, but the third of probation. We may call it the third dispensation, in which God deals with all mankind. The first is where He deals with Adam and Eve in Eden. There we see a history which follows the line of goodness on the part of God, trial, failure on the part of man, and judgment, with mercy appearing at the close—the promise coming, as it were, out of the bosom of the curse. The second dispensation is where God deals with all mankind during the centuries of antediluvian history. There, again, we see a similar development on a larger scale, beginning with mercy, and going on through trial, failure, and judgment with mercy again shining out in the rainbow at the close. Here we have the third dispensation, in which God deals in mercy with all mankind; and again we find the same general history of trial, failure, and judgment, with mercy reappearing at the end in the call of Abraham. “The mercy of the Lord endureth forever.”

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It is interesting to notice, in connection with these three dispensations, the special symbols employed in each, to typify the goodness and the grace of God. In the first is "the tree of life," the symbol of the covenant of law; and that symbol disappears, as we have already noticed, at the close of the dispensation in Eden. It passes out of sight, and keeps out of sight all through the history of the Bible, and only reappears just at the close—at the very end of the book of Revelation, where, after sin and weakness, and all the consequences of sin, have passed away, and man again stands before God in purity, "the tree of life," the old symbol of sinless Eden reappears. The symbol of the second dispensation was the cherubim and the flaming sword. That symbol was connected with the covenant of grace, and so it is kept before us all the while in the Bible, and has passed into the language of the Church. You will find the cherubim prominent all through the Old Testament, reappearing again in the New, and familiar to every Christian at the present day. Then the symbol of the third dispensation is the rainbow. That is before us all the while. It, too, reappears in the book of Revelation, where we see the rainbow round about the throne.

In this second era of conflict, or third of probation, we have again a long space of time; not indeed so long as in the former, but still very long—over five hundred years. To get some idea of the length of time, think for a moment what the state of the modern world was five hundred years ago. That is a good deal more than one hundred years before America was discovered by Columbus. It is very nearly one hundred years before the beginning of modern history, as distinguished from mediæ-

val history. The entire volume of modern history is included within a narrower compass than the time of the period we are to consider to-night, the records of which are contained in a couple of chapters. So again we have, not a continuous history, but only fragments. Yet these fragments are very important, and valuable, and interesting, as I hope we shall see.

I. The first great subject that comes before us, as we read this record, is the unity of mankind. We are told (Gen. ix. 19), "these are the three sons of Noah, and of them was the whole earth overspread." Now you know there has been a great deal of opposition to the doctrine of the Bible, that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth;" but the old difficulties that were raised in connection with this subject are rapidly disappearing, and confirmations of the Bible doctrine are coming to the front. For example, there was much made, not long ago, of the great physical differences between the races of man—between the negro and the white man, between the Hottentot and the Anglo-Saxon. We do not hear much about this now. As long as it suited infidelity to make a great deal of these differences, they were constantly held up as an objection to the Bible. Now, infidelity has shifted its position, and those who are opposed to the Bible, instead of wishing to exaggerate these differences, want to reduce them as much as possible. Instead of making a great deal of the difference between the white man and the negro, as they used to do, they want to make almost nothing of the difference between man and the beasts. They want to bridge all these chasms, and show, not only how the different races

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of men, but how all the different species of animals have come from the same parentage! Thus unbelief is continually shifting its base. It is only the word of the Lord that endureth forever.

Then again, there are the differences in language. Before the study of comparative philology arose, the languages of men were thought to be so radically different, that it was impossible to get any explanation of the variation that would be consistent with the unity of mankind. But in the beginning of this century, the researches of Sir Wm. Jones in the Sanscrit, followed by those of Schlegel and Bopp in other languages, opened up the way for a solution of the difficulty. In 1833, Bopp's "Comparative Grammar" was published, setting forth the then wonderful fact, that the Sanscrit, the Zend, the Greek and Latin, the Lithuanian, old Slavonian, Gothic and German languages were all derived from the same stem. About the same time Prichard published his work on "The Eastern Origin of the Celtic Nations;" and the Indo-European or Aryan group of languages was complete, extending all the way from India on the east, to Ireland on the west, all coming from the same stem. Then, as the study of comparative philology progressed, it was discovered that the Semitic languages, which seemed to be so vastly different from all the Aryan group, had close relations with them. The two great departures of the Semitic on the one hand and the Aryan on the other, come together when you trace them back far enough. Still more recent investigations in the Turanian languages, which seemed at first to be so utterly diverse from all the rest, have shown their affiliation also with the others.

The ethnologist Latham, than whom none is more impartial as an investigator, and who betrays no leaning toward the Bible, in his book on "Man and his Migrations," based especially on linguistic considerations, traces back all the races of men to one origin. He works geographically from the extremities to the centre, and is constrained, by following the affinities of languages, to follow the races of man back to the same region of the world where the old Bible puts man in the beginning. And even Haeckel, than whom none is more bitterly opposed to the Bible and all Christian ideas, is constrained to take substantially the same position. But when he finds his investigations pointing exactly in the same direction as the Bible does, viz., to the neighbourhood of the Euphrates valley, what does he do? He will not carry his lines there. He traces them a little further south and runs them into the ocean, and then says, "We must suppose there was a continent here!" There is not one particle of evidence to show that there was ever a continent there; but he tells us we must suppose a continent there, now sunk into the ocean, on which continent, if you could get down to it, you would find the remains of the ape-like men, and the man-like apes, which form the missing link between man and the beasts! We have not anything now to do with the convenient place to which Haeckel refers us for the proofs of his wild theories; we only note his unwilling testimony to the substantial correctness of the Biblical ethnology. Still we can not help raising the question, what would be thought of any Christian apologist who would advance such an idea, who would try to answer objections made to the early history of the Bible by

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saying, "You must suppose all these events took place on a continent now under the ocean, and if we could only get down to it we should find all the evidence any reasonable man could desire?"

The unity of mankind is further proved by the widespread and universal traditions of the deluge, for example. How comes it that wherever you go, north, south, east, or west, to the ends of the earth, and to the uttermost isles of the sea, you find still these traditions of the deluge? It can be explained only on the supposition of the unity of mankind, and their unity in the family of Noah.

The question of the antiquity of man has been associated with that of unity. It is too large a subject to enter upon here, especially as we do not meet it so directly as we do the question of unity. Suffice it to say that, as research progresses, there seems less and less reason for the idea that tens of thousands of years have elapsed since man began his career. Old dynasties in Egypt, once supposed to be successive, are now proved to have been contemporaneous. The so-called Stone, Bronze, and Iron periods are found to be not so sharply defined as they were thought to be. It is found that they do not demand so much time for their development and transition as was once supposed, as Dr. Schliemann's recent researches on the site of Troy have demonstrated. And even the geological argument, which was the stronghold of the extreme antiquarians, now seems to point the other way. Witness the calculations made by the State geologist of Minnesota in regard to the recession of the Falls of St. Anthony, leading to the conclusion that less than 9,000 years must have elapsed

since the glacial period. Then again, we have the similar researches of our own Dr. Andrews, based on the wasting away of the western shores of Lake Michigan, and the piling up of sand on the southern shores, on a careful study of which he bases the conclusion that the interval between the close of the glacial period and the present time can not be more than 7,500 years. A corresponding series of calculations was made independently on the shores of Lake Huron, which confirmed the results reached by Dr. Andrews. Thus the very waves of our magnificent lakes and the spray of our falls lift up their voices and bear witness to the truth of God as against the wild theories of man. I have already said the Bible does not undertake to determine questions of chronology. Within reasonable limits questions of chronology ought to be open questions. But in view of the wild ideas of man's antiquity so widely prevalent in recent times, and utterly at variance with the Bible history, it is satisfactory to note, that all the lines of evidence are pointing in the direction of much shorter periods than science was supposed at one time to demand. So much on the unity of mankind and the related question of the antiquity of the race.

II. We come next to Noah's prophecy—the second great subject—in which the future of the three great races is outlined. Just as in Gen. iii. 15 we had the germ of saving truth, so here in this little prophecy we have the germ of history. The background is dark. It is the doom of Canaan: "Canaan shall be a servant, and a servant of servants unto his brethren;" a doom which was quite literally fulfilled, as subsequent history shows. But is there not also a general foreshadowing of the

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destiny of the Hamitic nations? Here, everything seemed to be contrary at first. Nimrod, a grandson of Ham, was the founder of the first great empire that arose in the Euphrates valley, and Mizraim, a brother of Canaan, goes to the south and founds the great empire of Egypt. Thus the two great nations that first arose in history were of Hamitic stock. Yet follow the long course of history, and see how it agrees with this prophecy. "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small." God can afford to wait, and prophecy can afford to wait. By and by, the sceptre passes entirely away from Ham, and comes first into the hands of Shem, and finally into the hands of Japheth. You find all the Hamitic nations degraded, many of them in servitude, and none of them cutting any figure in the world's history, after a few centuries have passed away.

From the dark background of doom we now turn away and look at the foreground of blessing. "Blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem." This is evidently the great blessing. The very form shows it. It is not so much a benediction as a hallelujah. "Blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem!" This, then, is to be Shem's portion, the knowledge of the one living and true God. The Hamitic nations first, and afterward the Japhetic races, became great and powerful; but only in the Semitic line do we find the original Monotheism faithfully preserved. Further, it is not only, blessed be the God of Shem, but: "blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem," Jehovah, the covenant name, indicating God's relation to His own people. So you find the covenant is kept in the line of Shem, and along that line you have the development

of salvation, and at the end of its most highly favored branch, the Saviour of the world, Jehovah Jesus. "Blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem."

What about Japheth? "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." He can not have the great blessing of Shem. The promised seed can not come in both lines. So his blessing must be less; but "God shall enlarge Japheth," a mere providential blessing in the first instance, conferred by the Supreme Ruler of the world, not as Jehovah, but as God. "Blessed be *Jehovah*, God of Shem," but "*God* shall enlarge Japheth." There was not, indeed, very much enlargement for a time; just as we found, that for a time the history of the Hamites seemed to augur any thing rather than a doom of servitude. But here again, the sure word of prophecy vindicated itself in history. The Medes and Persians, who ruled in the East, on the ruins of the ancient Hamitic and Semitic monarchies, were descendants of Japheth; and all the great monarchies which have figured conspicuously in the world's history from that time to this, have belonged to the same great family: the Greeks, who filled the world with their words and their wisdom; the Romans, who subdued it by the force of their invincible arms; and those ancient German and Slavonian races, who, mingled with the remnants of the Greek and Latin empires, have given birth to those great nations of modern Europe that now sway the destinies of the world, and people it to its remotest bounds. This enlargement has been most wonderful, not only in point of geography and territory, but in respect of material and intellectual progress. It is not too much to say that "the metaphysics of the

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Hindoos, the philosophy of the Greeks, the military prowess of the Romans, and the modern science and civilization of the world, are due to the race of Japheth." And when the stationary character of the families of Shem, and the contraction and degradation of the families of Ham, are taken into account, it is truly wonderful to note the contrast in the families of Japheth, in fulfillment of that wondrous word of ancient prophecy, "God shall enlarge Japheth."

But this is not all; "he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." This has been literally and very obviously fulfilled in the progress of both conquest and colonization. The history of the colonization of the lands of Shem by the sons of Japheth is one of the most interesting and instructive chapters in the history of the ancient world; and it is continued in the history of the modern world too. But there is much more than this in the prophecy. It points to a time when the house of Shem shall be opened to admit the descendants of Japheth, when the covenant, which was the peculiar heritage of Shem, shall become the heritage of Japheth too. This dwelling in the tents of Shem thus points to a future sharing in the blessing of Shem—the great blessing of having Jehovah, the God of the covenant, as their God. Need I say how signally and gloriously this too has been fulfilled? Look back along the vista of the past, some eighteen hundred years, and you will see some Roman soldiers knocking at a Jew's door in Joppa. They are from Cæsarea, the messengers of the centurion Cornelius. What do they want? They want a Jew to open the door and let them in. They bring a message from their master to the apostle of the circumcision, to

ask if he, their master, a son of Japheth, may come into the tents of Shem. The apostle hesitates. He thinks it is a hard thing to open that door that has so long been shut. But a heavenly vision comes and tells him it must be done. The time is come. The door is opened, and Cornelius enters in. And sons of Japheth follow him, first in little companies, and then in crowds. And here are we to-night, far away beyond the Pillars of Hercules, far away beyond that mighty ocean, which seemed to them the world's boundary, sitting in the tents of Shem, erected where stood so long the forest primeval or the boundless prairie, worshipping the God of Shem, studying the prophecy given of old to Shem, and praying in our time that the wandering sons of Shem may be brought back again to Jehovah, God of Shem, to enjoy those covenant blessings to which we unworthy sons of Japheth have been made so welcome. "Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: To whom be glory forever, Amen." No wonder the apostle Paul burst into such an ascription of praise to God, when he saw how wonderfully this old prophecy had been fulfilled in the long course of tedious history.

III. The next great subject is the World Register in the tenth chapter. Here we are to distinguish between the Church Register and the World Register; between the register of the nations of the earth and of the special line along which salvation is to run, and from which the

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Messiah is to come. In Gen. x. 21, the sons of Shem are introduced. "Unto Shem also were children born," and so on. But further on, in the eleventh chapter and tenth verse, "these are the generations of Shem." In the one case you have the sons of Shem all mentioned, and in the other you have the "generations of Shem," introducing the line of the promised Messiah.

Now, looking at this world register, it is just a list of names apparently, but it is of very great value. It is of great historical value, as some few scholars that have devoted themselves to its study have found out. In connection with this study it is interesting to notice how old difficulties disappear as discoveries are made. For example, one of the great difficulties used to be that Nimrod, a grandson of Ham, is set before us as the founder of the first kingdom in the Euphrates valley. Now, according to our historical records, there was a Semitic people there all the while. How were the Bible and history to be reconciled? The lovers of the Bible believed it would be reconciled some day, they did not know when or how. Meantime Sir Henry Rawlinson goes on with his researches, and by and by publishes to the world the long-delayed historical evidence for the existence of a Hamitic Nimrod. Later on we are favored with George Smith's wonderful discoveries in the old brick and stone library of Assurbanipal. There, have been found not only some of the very names in this register, but—most interesting of all to Bible students—some old bilingual tablets, showing side by side a Semitic and a Hamitic inscription, the latter the older of the two: thus completely clearing away a long-standing difficulty, and turning a stock objection of

infidels to a remarkable confirmation of the truth of the Bible.

But we must not dwell on the mere history. Let us try to catch the spirit which gives life to these old letters and names. The Bible is not a book of archæology or ethnology. What then is this list of names here for? It is to show that though these nations must be suffered for a time to walk in their own ways, yet God will not loose His hold upon them. Three times has God dealt with all mankind. Three times they have rejected Him. Now, He intends to let the prodigals go. But He will not let them stay away. He will keep their names in His book. Suppose you had some prodigal son that had wandered away, and you had not seen him for a long time. From time to time, there come messages that he is getting worse and worse, until you feel almost like disinheriting him. Yet you would hesitate a long time before you would take the old family Bible and strike out his name. The prodigal may come back, and when he comes, his name shall be there still. So God in His mercy, will not strike out the names of any of those poor prodigal nations. They will all return to Him some time. These nations that were scattered abroad in the Dispersion will, as we shall see, come together again and be gathered around the Cross, and around the Throne.

Here we see, as we shall have opportunity constantly of seeing, how broad the Bible is. There are those that speak as if the heathen were outside altogether, and their religions of falsehood all compact. The Bible does not speak in that way. The Bible is as broad as the world; as broad as mankind. It is not Jew-

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ish. Even when the river of the water of life has to be narrowed down into a Jewish channel for a while, still the outside world is acknowledged, and most kindly acknowledged whenever it deserves it. No word of toleration for a place like Sodom; but when a man like Melchizedek comes on the scene, what respect is shown him. He was out of the regular line, but he was a good and pure man, a priest of the "Most High God," an olden type of the coming Saviour, and he is so acknowledged and treated. Or, think of Job. He does not seem to have had a place in the line of promise and covenant; yet see how the Bible speaks of him as "perfect and upright; one that feared God and eschewed evil." And even Balaam—how kindly and charitably is he dealt with, though he proved to be so bad a man. Herein we see that we of the nineteenth century are not at all ahead of the Bible in the new position we are taking in regard to heathen religions. We are but following in its wake, now that we are beginning to recognize some good in Buddhism, in Parseeism, in Confucianism—in all the old religions, however much covered up and concealed by masses of corruption. Why should we not expect, that in addition to what nature teaches, and in addition to the light that shines in mind and conscience, there should be some remnants of the old universal revelation that is spoken of in the book of Genesis? When our Saviour says, "Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold," He has these nations in view. Again, what is the reason that after appointing the twelve, "the Lord appointed other seventy also," as Luke, the evangelist for the Gentiles, tells us? Just as the twelve represent the twelve tribes, so these seventy represent the whole

heathen world. Count the names in the 10th chapter of Genesis; you will find the number seventy. "God so loved the WORLD, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

IV. The next great subject is the Dispersion, consequent on the great Babel enterprise as recorded in the 11th chapter. First, where was the harm? Evidently there was nothing wrong in the thing done. There was no sin in building a great tower, and getting it up as high as they chose. It was not the thing done, but the motive in doing it. It was the thought of man's heart which the tower represented. So, if we want to understand the story of Babel, we must find out the idea of the builders.

On the face of the narrative it is manifest, that the enterprise meant opposition to the will of God. Perhaps it was in connection with God's favor to Shem, because, in consulting about it, they said: "Let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad on the face of the whole earth." "Let us make us a *name*." The Hebrew word for "name" is "Shem." Perhaps there was some jealousy of Shem, inasmuch as he was the chosen one, and received the main blessing. While Ham had the greatest power, Shem seems to have had the greatest honour. Nimrod, a Hamite, was the founder of the first great monarchy; and so this is quite likely to have been a Hamitic movement.

Perhaps there is something in Dr. Candlish's idea, that there was a division of territory and some dissatisfaction on the part of the others with the portion of Shem.



The evidence that he points to as a reason for this is such as you find in the last clause of the fourth verse, "Let us make us a name, *lest we be scattered abroad* on the face of the whole earth." Perhaps Shem was given the Euphrates valley, and Ham must move further away. The powerful family of Ham objected, and allied themselves with the family of Japheth, and those of the Shemites who did not care for the covenant blessing. Then followed the building of the tower as a rallying centre. Dr. Candlish, who elaborates this view, refers to Gen. x. 25: "In his days was the earth divided"—in the days of Peleg, whose date seems to correspond with that of the tower building; and to Deuteronomy xxxii. 8: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance; when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." But I do not insist on this.

Again, there is some evidence that idolatrous ideas were connected with this tower. The word Babil in the Hamitic language means the "gate of God": which suggests the thought of worship, and the comparison of some modern heathen temples. But Babil of the Hamitic dialect, when its letters are transferred to the Semitic, has an entirely different meaning. It means *confusion*. Hence the stress laid upon the name. That which was meant for Bab-il became Babel, or babble.

This brings us to consider the confusion of tongues. The word translated "language" is literally "lip," and some have supposed it means "confusion of worship," and others, "confusion of counsel;" but the general supposition that it was a confusion of language, seems the

most natural and consistent. The subject of language is too wide to enter into now. Suffice it to say that there are difficulties connected with all attempts to explain the affinities and variations of language, but it is admitted by those who have studied the subject most thoroughly, that the phenomena of language adjust themselves more easily to the facts of this history than to any hypothesis that has been invented. You will find the subject very ably and satisfactorily discussed in the Excursus of Tayler Lewis, incorporated in the American edition of Lange's Commentaries.

It is worth while here to pause again, and notice how a second rival of the great salvation is disposed of. We saw before, when we were dealing with the line of Cain how the important lesson was taught, that good as civilization is, important as it is, valuable as it is, it does not meet the wants of man as a sinner. Here we meet another rival in political organization. Just as there are many who have faith in civilization as the hope of mankind, so there are many who have faith in political organization as the hope of mankind. When their attention is called to the evils of society, they hope to find a remedy in legislation, in governmental appliances. Now, legislation is good—that is, it may be. Good government is very valuable. Its value can not be easily exaggerated. But it can not save men from sin; it can not purify society nor raise it to its true ideal. All such hopes may be fitly styled "Utopian." You may have the best theory of government and the most approved institutions the world ever saw, and yet the goal will not be reached. It will be found, however good the government may be in theory, it can not be any better

... practical workings than the mass of the people. As is the people, so must be the government; especially under those institutions that are recognized as theoretically the best. So we can not raise ourselves from degradation and sin by any legislation or governmental appliances. The top of that tower can never reach to heaven. Never.

In ancient times the attempt was made, again and again, to build up a vast political organization, that would be self-sufficient, and advancing civilization came along with its powerful aid. But in vain. Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, rose, flourished, fell. Even the great Roman Empire, that colossus of government, fell to pieces in utter decay, and the stamp of failure was set upon it. Must the existing nations decline and fall in like manner? Again, as before, when speaking of civilization, we answer that the only hope for the future is the preserving salt of Christian principles, the life-giving light of Christian truth. And that man is the enemy of his country, and the enemy of good government, who seeks to separate Christianity from politics, who makes it of no account whether the principles of the Bible are wrought into the structure of our political organization, and exhibited in our political and social life. No matter how high may be our conception of liberty, and no matter how good may be our theories of government; if the leaven of Christianity, if the salt of divine grace is taken away, the result will be Babel in the first instance and Sodom in the last. There will be confusion first: capital arrayed against labor, and labor against capital, confusion getting worse confounded all the while; and unless the power of divine grace comes to

heal these distractions, there will be some sudden and disastrous end—first Babel and then Sodom. But there is no reason why it should be so, if we can have our civilization and legislation, and all our political and social life purified and hallowed and ennobled by the principles of a true and living Christianity; for then might we look forward to a glorious future for our government, for our country, for the Anglo-Saxon race, and for the world.

Here again we have a sad end of our period. We find the nations scattering—scattering away into the darkness—to be lost sight of, many of them by history; most of them to lose sight of God and of the way of the Tree of Life; and some of them to go down into such terrible ruin as overtook Sodom, on which God rained fire and brimstone because of its sin. But they are not lost sight of with God. They are all to be gathered again.

This idea of the gathering of the nations runs all through the Old Testament. When Abraham is called, we read: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed;" and again, Gen. xlix. 10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes, and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be;" and so all through the Bible. In the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah for example, "Lift up thine eyes and see: all they gather themselves together. They come to Thee. Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Surely the isles shall wait for me; and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them unto the name of Jehovah thy God and to the Holy One of Israel, because He hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall

build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee," and so on. Then again, when we come to the New Testament, our Lord Himself says: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them also will I bring, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." Then we have the prophecy of Caiaphas that "Jesus shall die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." Then you remember, when certain Greeks came to Him with the request, "We would see Jesus," how it thrilled His soul and led Him to exclaim, "Now is the hour come that the Son of man shall be glorified." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." Why this unusual emotion? These Greeks were the first fruits of the gathering of the Gentiles. These are the sons of Japheth coming to ask for entrance into the tents of Shem; and so, glancing with prophetic eye over the wide earth and the great future, He cries: "I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto Me." And when He is crucified between the two thieves, the inscription on the cross is appropriately written, not in Hebrew alone, but in Greek and Latin also, representing the chief Gentile nations of the time. When the Spirit descends on the day of Pentecost, we have the reversal of the Babel confusion and dispersion. Here we have people gathered together "out of every nation under heaven: Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia and in Judea, and in Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear

them speak in our own tongue the wonderful works of God!" They heard these Hebrews speaking, each in his own tongue. Well may they ask: "What meaneth this?" It meant a great deal. It meant the reversal of the Babel scene. But it was only a picture after all, a slight foreshadowing of what was to be in the glorious future, as so thrillingly described in the book of Revelation, where we read: "Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand; of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand," and so on through all the tribes. "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Sin scatters, but the Lord Jesus gathers to Himself. May we all gather here around His cross, and there around His throne!

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## LECTURE VIII.

### THIRD AGE—PATRIARCHAL ERA.

#### I. THE FATHER.

Gen. xi. 27—xxv. 10.

**T**HE third age begins with the call of Abraham. We find universal or almost universal corruption again. There is some indication of it in the book of Genesis, but we know it for certain by referring to Joshua xxiv. 2, where we are told that even the family of Terah served other gods. What is to be done then? Must there be another flood as before? There can not be, for the promise has been given that there shall be no more a flood to destroy the earth, and the rainbow in the heavens is the enduring sign of it. What then? Abraham is chosen to be the head of a new dispensation, as Noah was; but with this difference, that the world is not taken away this time, but only left out. God has promised there shall be no more flood, and so the world is left. The nations are left to walk in their own ways. But while the world is not taken away from Abraham the coming man, Abraham the coming man is taken away from the world. Thus a new dispensation is begun. We shall find here the same covenant of Grace as that which was made with Adam and Eve, and renewed with Noah; only the new principle of separation is brought in. Abraham and his descend

ants are to be separated from the world, separated to the life of faith and hope and holiness, separated to "walk with God."

The new age begins then, with the call of Abraham. Where does it end? In a certain sense, it is going on still. With Abraham begins the continuous history of the Bible. Up to this time we have only had fragments—fragments of the first age of the conflict, and fragments of the second age of the conflict, but now we come to the third age, and the history is almost continuous up to the present time. Practically, it is the same age throughout; for is not Abraham called in Romans iv. 11, the "father of all them that believe"? Or, as it is in another place (ver. 16), "the father of us all," where the apostle Paul is speaking in his own name and in the name of the Roman believers. Moses was the head of the Jewish nation, but Abraham is the father of all that believe. The Mosaic economy comes in really as a kind of episode, as you will find in certain passages of the New Testament. For example, in Galatians, where we may read a few verses (iii. 7): "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed.' So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." "And (v. 17) this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. Wherefore then serveth the Law? *It was added because of transgression, till the*

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*seed should come to whom the promise was made.* It came in as a kind of episode, or parenthesis. The same idea is expressed in Romans v. 20, where the word translated "entered," conveys the idea of "entered parenthetically." I might also refer to the fourth chapter of Galatians, where the law is represented under the figure of Ishmael, who came in as a son to Abraham's house and was there for a while. But Ishmael was a mere episode. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Isaac was the heir of the promise. Just as Ishmael represented the law, Isaac represented the Gospel. Ishmael came and stayed a little while, and went away. Isaac came and remained in the house forever. So in the deepest sense of the term, the dispensation which commenced with father Abraham, continues right on to the present day, the Mosaic law coming in the centre, as it were, as a kind of episode or parenthesis.

This long age on which we now enter is very conveniently divided into three parts. There was first, the era of the separate family; then the era of the separate nation; thirdly, the era of the separate church, the era to which we belong. The family, the nation, the church—these are the three great divisions.

First, we take the family, which gives us the patriarchal era, the records of which extend from the 27th verse of the 11th chapter of Genesis to the end. I had hoped to be able to take the entire patriarchal era in one evening, as we did with the eras preceding; but I find, after condensing as much as possible, that it will take too long. Therefore, I propose to make this division: first the father of the family, and then the sons; the father to-night, and the sons next evening. First,

then, Father Abraham, from the 11th chapter of Genesis to the 25th chapter and 10th verse, where the death of Abraham is recorded.

In dealing with the history of Abraham there are two great things to look at. We have seen that Abraham was a separated man—separated from the world unto God. We may apply the same term to him that the apostle Paul applied to himself when he spoke of himself as “separated unto the Gospel of God.” The Gospel that was proclaimed in Eden had become of none effect through the corruption of humanity. Now the Lord finds it necessary to introduce the principle of separation, and to call Abraham from out the world as a separated man—separated unto the Gospel of God. Thus we get the two subjects, Abraham’s separation in the first place, and the Gospel of God unto which he was separated in the second place. These two leading thoughts may afford us a comprehensive grasp of the history of Abraham, and some idea of his position in the development of the great salvation.

I. We shall find that God trained him by separation; by a series of separations. This is a key-thought of Abraham’s life. We are accustomed to consider faith as the key to Abraham’s life. Certainly it is; but did not his faith manifest itself in just this, that he was willing to separate himself from all for the Lord’s sake?

You find him first called of God to leave his country and his father’s house. He separated from Ur of the Chaldees at the Lord’s command. Chaldea represented the world at that time. It was the great nation in man’s primeval home, in the valley of the Euphrates; and Abraham belonged to that great nation. God called him

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out to a land of which he knew nothing. "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia and said unto him: Get thee out of thy country," etc. Abraham, without any question, at once left his country and his father's house, and went forth, not knowing whither he went—one of the grandest examples of faith the world ever saw. Still this was only the beginning of Abraham's separation.

A considerable company went along with him: his father Terah among the rest. They traveled on and on, and by and by came to Haran. It seems to have been a fertile land, and they dwelt there for a while. But it was not the land the Lord would show him. Terah, however, did not want to go any further. Abraham was not as yet prepared to separate from his father, so he stayed with Terah; we do not know how long, but probably quite a while. All this time God had no communication with Abraham. Before he is ready to follow the Lord fully, he must be separated from his father Terah. So after a time, for the Lord is very patient with His servant, He takes Terah away. "And Terah died in Haran." There is something very significant in this little statement. I do not believe Terah was a lost man. I believe Terah was saved under the covenant with Noah; still no one can tell what Terah lost by stopping half-way. You remember that the Saviour said concerning John the Baptist, "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist. Nevertheless, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." It is better to be least in the new dispensation than even the greatest in the dispensation that is passing away. So, while Terah was

really a saved man under the old dispensation, yet if his faith had been strong enough to carry him the whole way, he would have had the honor of being with Abraham in the founding of the new dispensation. No one can tell what old Terah lost, and no one can tell what the hosts of younger Terahs lose, who yield only a half-way obedience when the Lord calls them to sacrifice and usefulness and honor. But when Terah died in Haran the last link that bound Abraham to the old country was broken, and now he is ready to go the whole way. So the second separation is from his father Terah.

The next separation is from Canaan itself as a home. We are told that when Abraham came into the land of Canaan, he pitched his tent and built him an altar unto the Lord; and indeed the whole history of his sojourning in Canaan is summed up in these two words: the tent and the altar. He did not find his home in Canaan. The Canaanite dwelt still in the land. It was his, not as a possession, but only as a land of promise. He had his tent there and his altar there. No more. His tent, as a pilgrim and a stranger in the land: and his altar, from which the eye of faith descried the heavenly home on high.

Fourthly, separation from Egypt. As Chaldea was the great world power in the north from which he came, so Egypt was the rising world power in the south; and by and by when he was pressed by famine, he went down to Egypt. Now, I have no doubt, God had a purpose in letting him go down to Egypt. But that is not at all inconsistent with the idea that it was because his faith failed him that he went. If he had had faith in God, he would have been willing to stay in the land to which

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God had called him, until the same voice which had called him to come should tell him to go. But it was evidently his own idea to go to Egypt, and so we need not wonder when we find into what trouble he gets there; into what sin he falls; how glad he is to get out of Egypt again; and what a happy day it is in his life when he comes back "unto the place of the altar which he had made at the first." "And there Abraham called upon the name of the Lord." He had learned a good lesson. He had been separated from Egypt.

The next thing we read of is his separation from Lot. Lot was one of those that had gone along with him from Chaldea. He did not die in Haran like Terah. He went all the way to Canaan. But Lot was not a separated man like Abraham. Lot had separated from the Chaldees, but he was not separated from the world as Abraham was. This comes out very clearly on the occasion of the strife between the herdsmen. Abraham gave Lot the choice, and Lot chose the well-watered country where the cities of the plain were. It is beautiful to see how unselfish Abraham was here. He acted like a truly separated man, a man separated unto God. He did not care very much what his lot was here on earth, so long as he had a firm hold on God and His covenant. You find Lot, on the other hand, guided by selfish considerations only, first pitching his tent toward Sodom (xiii. 12), attracted by the fertility of the region. Soon after (xiv. 12) you hear of him dwelling in Sodom, and by and by we find him (xix. 1) sitting in the gate of Sodom, the place of public concourse. He gets deeper and deeper into the society of Sodom, and more and more sadly associated with the sin of Sodom.

It is worth while, in passing, to note some of the points of contrast between the thoroughly consecrated Abraham and the worldly Lot. Both of them belonged to the new dispensation; both of them were under God's guidance; but the one chose God as his portion, and set the world aside altogether, while the other tried to serve both God and Mammon. Now, mark the contrasted experience. When trouble arose, the war of the kings of the vale, Abraham is altogether unaffected, but Lot is involved. Again we find Lot carried away a helpless captive, and all his property seized by the victorious kings; but Abraham and his trained servants go forth in the strength of the Lord and rescue him with all his substance. Further, while Lot's righteous soul is vexed from day to day by the filthy conversation of the people of Sodom, Abraham's soul is refreshed continually, as when Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God, meets him and sets forth bread and wine before him, and blesses him; or when three angels come to his tent, and one of them, the Angel of the Covenant Himself, talks with him as a man with his friend, so that the patriarch earns the noble title, "the Friend of God." What a contrast to "the filthy conversation of the wicked!" Here, too, it is most instructive to notice how willingly the Lord and His two angels accept of Abraham's hospitality (xviii. 5), while the two angels who went on to Sodom, when Lot asked them in, said "Nay, but we will abide in the street all night" (xix. 2) The Lord Himself is a willing guest of the consecrated man, but the angels hesitate to accept the invitation of even a "righteous soul" if the world is in the heart. And when at last the judgment falls, what a difference.

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Abraham is there standing apart interceding with God for Sodom and its Lot. He does not think of himself at all. He is "at leisure from himself" to pray for others. And there is poor Lot involved in the ruin of Sodom, and finding it hard work to intercede for himself (xix. 20); and when he is saved, it is for Abraham's sake he is saved: "And it came to pass when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that *God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow.*" Poor Lot was saved so as by fire, and in answer to Abraham's pleading. No wonder God found it necessary to separate Abraham from Lot.

After separation from Lot, comes separation from Ishmael. The Lord has promised a son, and Abraham is waiting and wearying, and his faith begins to fail. He begins to think it impossible that he can have a son by his wife Sarah; and so he takes Hagar to wife, again following the device of his own and Sarah's heart, for it is her own proposal. Ishmael is born, and the full tide of the father's affection flows into the life of the young child; but the Lord acknowledges him not. For many years the Lord has nothing to say to Abraham. There is an interval of thirteen years between the 16th and 17th chapters. Abraham was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born, and he was ninety years old and nine when the Lord appeared to him the next time. He was left thirteen years alone on account of the failure of his faith. And after Ishmael grew up, instead of being the comfort he expected, and being accepted as the heir of the promise, there was trouble in the house, and Ishmael had to be sent away. It was a sad day for Abraham when Hagar and Ishmael had to leave the home

but it was necessary. Thus Abraham was separated from Ishmael.

Passing over what may be called Abraham's separation from himself in the 20th chapter, we come to his separation from Isaac. Isaac was given him as the promised seed. A second time a loved son grew up in that home. Isaac was the joy of Abraham's old age, and the light of his eyes, and the hope of his salvation too. And yet the command came: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee unto the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains I will tell thee of." Thus God tested Abraham to see whether he was willing to separate himself even from Isaac, the son of promise. And Abraham stood the test; for we read that "he rose up early in the morning and took Isaac his son and went unto the place of which God had told him." The sequel belongs rather to the history of Isaac, so we leave it now, only noting Abraham's separation from Isaac. Dearly as he loved Isaac, and had his soul bound up in him, he will give him up if God so ordain! His trust is not in the gift, but in the Giver; not in the promise, but in the Promiser.

The next thing we learn of Abraham is his separation from Sarah. "And it came to pass after all these things that Sarah died." What a sad day that must have been for the aged patriarch; and how beautiful it is to see how he demeaned himself in his great sorrow. It is most interesting in many points of view to read of his dealings with the sons of Heth for the purchase of the cave of Machpelah to bury Sarah in. But we can only notice what seems the leading thought. You would have ex-



pected now, seeing he did not own a foot of this land, and seeing it was not his at all, except as the land of promise away in the future, that he should wish the bones of Sarah, and by and by his own bones, to be carried back to the old home and buried there. He is only sojourning in this land a pilgrim and a stranger, but he is a separated man, with a firm faith in the promise of God and so he will *buy* a piece of land to bury the remains of the loved Sarah in. So, though he has not owned a foot of the land all along, now he owns as much as is needed for a grave. He bought that land as an "earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." His buying that land showed his faith in God. His buying that land showed his faith in the fulfillment of God's promise. His buying that land showed his faith in the resurrection; for what was the future to Sarah or to Abraham himself, apart from the resurrection? The promise of the land would have been to Abraham a mockery had he not looked forward to a better Land, where he and Sarah should at last inherit the promise.

In connection with this significant transaction, one naturally thinks of this earth which now belongs of right to the Lord Jesus Christ, and which has been promised to Him, even to the uttermost bounds thereof; and yet after all, he can scarcely be said to own a foot of it. Even those lands that are called Christian are so overrun with worldliness, that it seems as if they can not be said to belong to the Lord. Can we say that in this city of Chicago "holiness to the Lord" is written on its streets? Can we say that in any proper sense of the term its acres belong to Christ? But there

are little spots of this Western land that belong to Christ in a very special sense. Away out there in Grace-land and in Rosehill there are Machpelahs, over which the name "Gottes Acker" may most truly be inscribed. The dust of those who are precious in His sight, and who shall be owned as His on the resurrection morn, is laid there. And there we, too, have "the earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." Just as the Spirit is the earnest of the spiritual inheritance, these sacred spots, these Machpelahs may be considered as the earnest of the material inheritance promised to the Lord. "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession."

Then finally we find Abraham separated from all. In Gen. xxv. 5, we are told that "Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac." Abraham had been a rich man, but his heart had not been set on his riches, as was evident whenever questions of property came up. His dealings with Lot, already referred to, are an evidence of this; and another very striking proof of it is given when the king of Sodom comes and offers to recompense him with the booty taken from the defeated kings. The king of Sodom says to Abraham: "Give me the persons and take the goods to thyself." Abraham replies: "I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet." Abraham was willing to take all the riches the Lord would give him, but he would not condescend to touch the riches of Sodom. I fear there are a good many fortunes in Chicago that Abraham would not touch, "from a thread to a shoe latchet," for the same reason, because there is too much of Sodom about them.

"Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac." It was not a hard thing for him to do. His heart had not been set on his wealth. Soon after, Abraham dies and is buried in Machpelah. His separation is complete at last; separated from his country; separated from his father; separated from the very land in which he sojourns; separated from Egypt; separated from Lot; separated from Ishmael; separated from Isaac; separated from Sarah; separated from all. What remained? All that Abraham lived for remained. The Gospel remained; God remained; He who said, "Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward," remained. That was enough for Abraham. He was willing to let all the rest go, if he only had God for his shield here, and for his exceeding great reward hereafter.

II. This leads us to the second great subject: the Gospel unto which Abraham was separated—the blessing of Abraham—the "Abrahamic covenant" of Theology. It is, as already remarked, the same old covenant of grace, *plus* the idea of separation and consequent restriction.

And here, as we are entering upon this period of restriction, this narrowing of the channel of blessing to the line of a single family first, and a single nation afterward, it is important for us to remember three things: In the first place, this policy of restriction was not adopted until after the offer of mercy had been thrice made to all mankind, and thrice rejected. In the second place, this restriction of the blessings of grace to a single family and a single nation was for the sake of all. It was the only way by which the blessing could be secured finally to all. Abraham was called, not for his own sake, nor for his

descendants' sake only, but for the world's sake,—  
 'In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed  
 (xii. 3); and again (xxii. 18): "In thy seed shall all the  
 nations of the earth be blessed." There is no real nar-  
 rowing. It is still, "God so loved the WORLD." In the  
 third place, even though in the meantime the channe  
 must be narrowed to a single family and nation, "who  
 soever will" may come. The door is open all the while  
 "The sons of the stranger" have simply to leave their  
 country and their family, and come and join themselves  
 to the family of Abraham, and to the nation of the Jew,  
 and they are made welcome. You can not instance a  
 single case all through the Old Testament where admis-  
 sion to the Jewish family with all its privileges, was ask-  
 ed and refused. All were made welcome, who chose to  
 leave their old associations and cast in their lot with the  
 people of God. After the "middle wall of partition"  
 was thrown down, the Gentiles were received without  
 leaving their national associations, without ceasing to be  
 Gentiles; but even while the wall was standing, it was a  
 wall with gates on every side, and "Welcome" written  
 over them for all who chose to cease to be heathen and  
 enroll themselves among the chosen people.

These things are important to remember as an answer  
 to the objections so often made against God's limiting  
 His grace for so long a time to a particular family and  
 nation.

Now, looking back to the beginning, we recall that  
 there have been three great promises made. First to  
 Adam and Eve there was the promise of the seed: "The  
 seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent."  
 To Noah there was the promise of the land, safe forever

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against the encroaching waters. Then thirdly, there was the promise to Shem, that Jehovah should be his God. These three things, the Seed, the Land, and God, are just the three great items in the Abrahamic covenant, only with the new and distinctive idea of separation.

I need not dwell on the last-mentioned, because it is so plain that nobody mistakes it. "Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." But we must dwell a little on the other two, the Seed and the Land, because there it is that so many go astray in their reading of the Old Covenant (Testament).

There are three chapters in which we are especially told of the covenant made with Abraham, representing in fact three stages of the covenant; these are the 15th, 17th, and 22d chapters. Look now at the promise of the Seed in each of these chapters. In the 15th chapter the promise is, "Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven." In the 17th chapter, "Thou shalt be a father of many nations," on which occasion the name was changed from Abram to Abraham. Then in the 22d chapter the promise is, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Such is the threefold form in which the promise of the seed comes to Abraham.

Now here, as so often elsewhere, the promise is killed by those who will insist upon adhering to the mere letter, and thinking that all it meant was that Abraham would have a great many descendants. As if that was such a wonderful thing! Had not the ancestors of the Chinese the decided advantage of Abraham without a promise at all? But let that pass; what of the many nations? Where are they? Ishmael is expressly counted

out of the seed, so you can not reckon the Arabians, and then Esau sells his birthright and goes out, so you can not reckon the Edomites. And with these left out, Abraham was the father of only one nation, the nation of the Jews. Where are the many nations?

Pressed with this question, these painful literalists must find some way out. Hence the eagerness with which many urge the idea of the Anglo-Saxon race being the descendants of the lost tribes. They can not make out the many nations in any other way. So without historical evidence, and on the strength of a few isolated texts ingeniously pressed into the service, they work out the theory that the Anglo-Saxon race, represented by England on the one continent and America on the other, and scattered by colonization over the world, are the literal and lineal descendants of Abraham, and that in their history is seen the literal fulfillment of the promise. I do not wonder that those who feel constrained to keep to the mere letter should be driven to such a theory as this to get out of the difficulty.

But when you take, instead of the letter which killeth, the spirit that giveth life, all is plain. And here, instead of choosing some theorist or pamphleteer for our guide, we take the Scriptures. These taking pamphlets are devoured by people that never think of inquiring whether the apostle Paul has anything to say on the subject. Surely the pamphlets found in the New Testament should be considered a little more authoritative than these flying leaves that are scattered around in these days of more than Athenian rage for novelty. Turn to the Epistle to the Galatians then, and you will find that the apostle makes it very plain what

was really meant by the seed. "Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed.' So then, they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (iii. 7-9), and so on all through the chapter, the last verse of which is: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The pamphleteers say, if you are of the Anglo-Saxon race, you are Abraham's seed. The apostle Paul says: "If ye be Christ's, ye are Abraham's seed." I prefer the apostle Paul to the whole tribe of modern pamphleteers. The same thing is taught in the Epistle to the Romans, where Abraham is called "the father of them that believe," and "the father of us all." And, in fact, the whole of the New Testament proceeds on the idea.

It is just as we found before with the seed of the woman. Who are they? the literal seed? Evidently not, because if you take the seed of the woman to include all mankind, there is no place for the seed of the serpent. The seed of the serpent are those that are of a different spirit from Eve regenerate. The seed of the woman are those that have her renewed nature. The same with the generations of Adam. Did not all descend from Adam? Yet it was simply the line of promise, the line along which spiritual life was developed, that is spoken of as "the generations of Adam." So when we come to the seed of Abraham, it is not the literal seed alone that is meant. It is the spiritual seed also, and mainly. Then the whole thing is made plain.

Then you see the great multitude, like "the stars of the sky," and "the sand on the sea-shore." Then you see "the many nations," the many nations that are gathering, even now, around the Cross. Then, too, you can look forward and see the "all nations," when the great multitude, that no man can number, out of every nation, shall be gathered round the throne. So, that instead of having a paltry promise of merely a great number of descendants that so many heathen have had without any covenant at all—instead of that, you have the promise of salvation on a mighty scale, on a world-wide scale.

So far, the promise of the seed has been taken in its collective sense, as a great multitude—many nations and many from all nations. But the personal sense is here also: "*In thy seed* shall all nations be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 18). Here manifestly, and all the more manifestly from the close connection with the sacrifice of Isaac, or rather of the ram in his place, which is the subject of the chapter, the reference is to the coming Saviour, the personal seed that shall bruise the head of the serpent. There was "the Gospel that was preached unto Abraham." There is the reason why the Lord Jesus said: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."

There remains to be considered the promise of the Land. Here again there is nothing in the promise of the land as a mere literality. Old Canaan was a very nice country. It is not a very desirable residence now but it was once a pleasant place to live in; yet it was scarcely worth making an everlasting covenant about. It was a very small country. As a country, Canaan was nothing to the dominion Nebuchadnezzar had. It was



nothing to the dominion of Cyrus. It was nothing to the dominion of Alexander. It was nothing to the dominion of Cæsar. It would have been a mere mockery to make a covenant with a nation for a little piece of land like that, when so many nations possessed so much more without any covenant at all. Is it not perfectly obvious that the blessing was not the gift of so many acres, but of a land separated from the nations, separated from heathenism, separated from the wickedness of a corrupt world, in order that there might be there an altar to Jehovah, that God might be worshipped there, and the great salvation for all mankind wrought out there?

Recall again how Abraham, as soon as he entered the land, before any mention is made even of the tent, "buildest an altar unto Jehovah" (xii. 7). What did the tent matter? The tent was simply *pitched*: the altar was *built*. When Abraham, after striking his tent and going down into Egypt, comes back again to the old place, he finds the altar there, the same altar he made at the first. The altar was everything; the tent was nothing.

When the title-deed was asked for the land, what was the response? Mark it well (xv. 8). Abraham says: "Lord, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" And the Lord said: "Take me a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon for a sacrifice." What is the title-deed of the land? A sacrifice: a sacrifice of all the sacrificial animals, so as to have as full a symbol as possible of the Great Sacrifice that was to consecrate the land as the Holy Land,

“Over whose acres walked those blessed feet  
That fourteen (now eighteen) hundred years ago were nailed  
For our advantage to the bitter cross.”

There is the true greatness of the land, and the value of the promise.

In connection with the title-deed of sacrifice, the earthly prospect was set before Abraham, and what was it? The heavenly prospect was all that could be desired. It was that which satisfied Abraham all the way through. It was that which induced him to leave Mesopotamia. “The God of glory appeared to him.” But while there was glory above, there was anything but glory below. There was trial and separation, as we have seen, and now when the future prospect, so far as the land is concerned, is set before him, what is it? “Lo, an horror of great darkness,” and the Lord tells him of the terrible times which his descendants shall have in bitter bondage in Egypt before they can have a foot of that land. And while that horror of great darkness is still upon him, behold a furnace and a lamp pass between the pieces of the sacrifice: appropriate symbols of the earthly prospect before him. The furnace and the lamp: the furnace signifying the affliction through which the people of God must pass, and the lamp signifying the presence of God to cheer them in their day of darkness. The furnace and the lamp symbolized the experience of the people of God all through their history in ancient times. And is it not so still? “Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom.” The furnace is here. But while we must pass through much tribulation, we are not left alone. “Though I walk through the valley of the

shadow of death, I will fear no evil." The lamp of His presence is our light in the gloom.

But while the earthly prospect was so dark and threatening, there was a heavenly prospect growing clearer and brighter and more glorious before the eye of Abraham's faith. In the 17th chapter he is told the land is to be for a perpetual possession; and no doubt, when such a revelation was made to Abraham, he was able to look forward to a land of which Canaan was the type—the Holy Land above, the New Jerusalem. We are told very distinctly in the Epistle to the Hebrews that these old patriarchs knew better than to set their affections on things below—on any mere land, however comfortable it might be. "By faith, Abraham sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he *looked for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*" "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire *a better country, that is an heavenly.* Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city." That was the reason why Abraham was willing to be a mere pilgrim and a stranger in Canaan. That was the reason why he was willing to own nothing more than a grave, and have Sarah's bones laid there, and his own bones laid

beside them, before a single item of the promise concerning the land had been fulfilled. He was content, because the eye of his faith was directed to that land above, the heavenly Canaan. He looked for a city whose builder and maker was God. He looked forward to that glorious prospect which is set before us in the book of Revelation: "I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying: Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God." There is the fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." The sacrifice is gone. It is needed no longer. The furnace is gone, for the people of God have all passed through it. The lamp, too, is gone, because "there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign forever and ever." There, my friends, is the fulfilment of the covenant with Abraham. Thus, when you leave the letter which killeth, and take the Spirit which giveth life, and the Bible for your guide, instead of reaching mere worldly matters of the Anglo-Saxon race that are just as transient as anything else, you get the Saviour, you get salvation, you get Heaven, you get God, you get eternal glory. Follow the line of the Scriptures. Leave the scribes of the day to themselves.

## LECTURE IX.

### PATRIARCHAL ERA—2. THE SONS.

Gen. xxv. 19—xlv.

I. **T**HE lives of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, as they are recorded here, are exceedingly instructive biographies, and very valuable as such. We can not take them up in this way. We can not enter into particulars. We can only give some general views to guide in the study of these biographies and the use of them. You will notice much variety.

In Isaac you have a striking contrast to the greatness of Abraham. Isaac is a very quiet man, a retiring, domestic man, contemplative in his disposition; living an obscure life, you might say. His life is longer than that of any of the other patriarchs; yet the Bible has far less to say of him than of any of the rest. And yet, quiet and retiring as he was, he takes his rank with the best of them. It is "Abraham and Isaac and Jacob." Here we have much encouragement for quiet Christians, those that pass their lives in obscurity and attract little attention. It is not the outer, but the inner life that God takes special notice of.

In Jacob we have a contrast, not only to the greatness of Abraham, but to his goodness; and to the goodness of Isaac too. When we read the life of Jacob, the first idea we get is the exceedingly painful one, that occupying such a position as he does in the kingdom of

God, he should seem to be so unworthy of it. Yet on second thought, we see how much there is to be learned from this very thing. In the first place, it strikes us how faithful the Bible is; how honest in telling us exactly what the man was, and not setting before us what he ought to have been. It is a most healthy contrast to the style of biography we are so much accustomed to nowadays, where men's virtues and excellencies only are held up to view, and nothing said about their faults. And then there is this special value in a life like Jacob's, that it shows how much God's grace can make of the very poorest material. The mean Jacob became the mighty Israel, a prince with God.

When you compare Jacob with Esau in their earlier years, your sympathies are all drawn toward the elder brother. You find him honest, open-hearted, amiable, brave; and you wonder why it is that Jacob has the position of honor, and Esau no place at all. But when you look at the entire lives of Jacob and Esau respectively, you find that while Esau was far better in the beginning, Jacob was far better in the end. There was very good material in Esau's composition, but what did he make of it? He sold his birthright. He turned away from God. Instead of going up, he went down. There was very poor material in Jacob's composition, but he accepted God as his God; and his path, though by no means straight, was nevertheless in the main an upward path. So Jacob grew better and better, and rose higher and higher, until we find him at last a veritable saint, a noble old man, before he dies. Bear in mind, then, that the question is not how many or how few faults we have. All of us have enough of

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faults and sins to condemn us. The question is not whether we have many or few of them, but whether we have that within us which is subduing our faults and sins, and will finally overcome them all. It is whether we are traveling upward, or allowing ourselves to be dragged downward.

So, after all, there is something peculiarly encouraging in the history of Jacob. There, as nowhere else, do we see illustrated the preciousness and the power of Divine grace. God is called the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. Abraham was a hero; Isaac was a saint; but Jacob was a sinner. The biography of Jacob comes closer home to many of us than the history of the others. There are few Abrahams; not a large number of Isaacs; but a great many Jacobs, to whom it is most comforting to know that however poor stuff we are made of by nature, God can make of us, if only we will yield ourselves to Him, "vessels unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work;" and are there not times in the history of us all when it is a peculiar support to our faith to be able to call on God as "the God of Jacob"?

As to the life of Joseph, it is one of the noblest in all history. In him we see the grandeur of the Old Testament, and the grace of the New. He was a noble example even of the distinctively Christian virtues. If we read the life of Jacob as an encouragement, we may read the life of Joseph as an inspiration.

It is interesting to compare Abraham, the father of the faithful, with the three representative sons of the succeeding generations. Abraham stands alone as the father—"the father of the faithful." He stands con-

spicuously before us as the man of faith. Yet how often his faith failed him. Joseph's faith was more universally triumphant than Abraham's. Why then is not Joseph held up as the man of faith? Because Abraham was the Columbus of the voyage of faith. Many a gallant ship has crossed the Atlantic in grander style than did the *Santa Maria* in 1492. But after all, it is to Columbus we look as the man—the man that bridged the great Atlantic. And so it is here. Joseph had Abraham's experience behind him; and Isaac's, and Jacob's. Abraham had nothing behind him. He was called out from the world to go forth alone. He was the Columbus of the voyage of faith. So he stands ahead of them all, as the *father* of the faithful. The faith of Isaac was manifested in passive virtues, as distinguished from the activity and energy of Abraham's faith. The faith of Jacob is manifested in struggling with the flesh, and only after a long, hard contest, gaining the victory. The faith of Joseph is a faith which is triumphant all through: triumphant in adversity, triumphant in prosperity, triumphant especially in death (Heb. xi. 22). So that in Abraham we have the grandeur of faith; in Isaac, the rest of faith; in Jacob, the victory of faith; and in Joseph, the glory of faith.

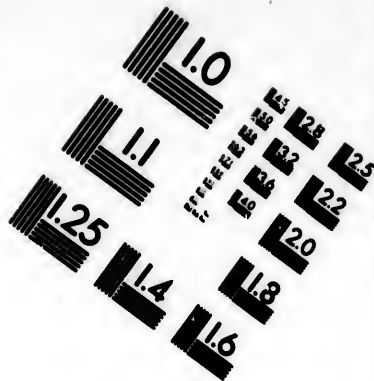
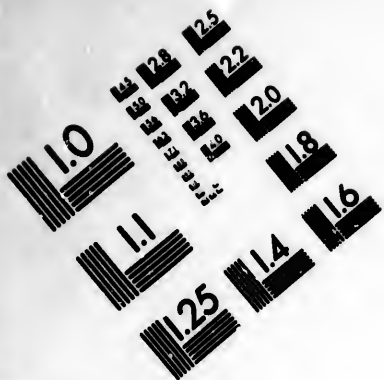
II. But there is a great deal more than biography here. These men stand all in their places as representative men. They stand in the great line along which Salvation is developed. It is very important that we should carefully recognize their position in that line. Here let us remember that on which our Saviour laid so much stress, that the Old Testament Scriptures testified of Him throughout: "They are they," he says, "which



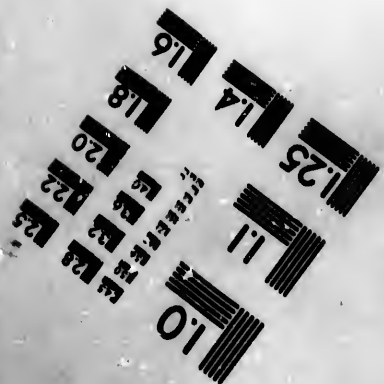
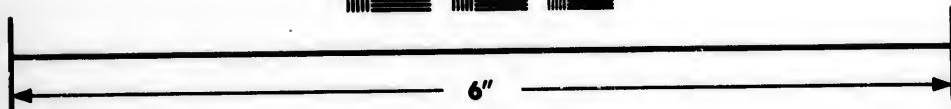
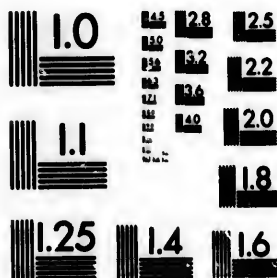
testify of me;" and again: "Beginning at Moses, . . . He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." How many are there that read Moses in these days, and find little or nothing about Christ; but surely, if the words of the Master are true, we ought to find a great deal about Him here.

These sons of the patriarchal era were all typical men. Now this idea of typical men is not fanciful. We have ample authority for it. We find Adam taken as a type of Christ, in his representative capacity as the head of the race, in the fifth of Romans, and also in the fifteenth of 1st Corinthians, where the Lord Jesus Christ is called "the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven." Then in the Epistle to the Hebrews we have Melchizedek brought forward as a type of Christ. There is very little about Melchizedek in Genesis—just a few verses. I do not think any of us would have discovered in Melchizedek a type of Christ, unless we had been told. And if it had been pointed out to us on other than inspired authority, it would probably have been rejected as fanciful. Read the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and see how every point is pressed: the name, meaning "king of righteousness," the title "king of peace;" the fact that his genealogy is not recorded, and not even his father's or mother's name mentioned; his abrupt introduction into the history, and his abrupt withdrawal, without note of his birth or his death, as was the custom in regard to those in the regular line—all these minutiae are claimed in the New Testament as part of "the testimony of Jesus," as typical of His royal and eternal priesthood. So you see we have the very best authority for typical persons in the book of Genesis.





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And if typical men are to be found in Genesis at all, here is the place to find them. Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph were all in the direct line leading on to Christ, and therefore much more likely to be types of Christ than Melchizedek, who was outside. And accordingly we do find striking types in all three. Not in character, remember. It is impossible to find the type of Christ in character. He stood alone in that respect among men, "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." So it is not in character that we are to look for typical foreshadowings. It is in circumstances, in the course of history.

And it is interesting to observe that all the typical facts are found in the youthful history of these patriarchs. For our Lord Himself was never an old man. He was always young. His youth is perpetual. Abraham, the father, is introduced to us an old man. He is seventy-five before we know anything about him. He is ninety and nine years old before the son of promise is born to him. But Isaac we know only as a young man. We are told of his birth, his youth, his marriage. Then he is virtually dropped; for in the long years that followed his marriage there is very little said of him. So with Joseph. The interest of his history belongs entirely to his youth. He was only thirty when he stood before Pharaoh of Egypt as the second in the kingdom. As to Jacob, it is to be remembered that he comes in both as a father and a son. Jacob had a rather peculiar position among the patriarchs. He was the father of "the children of Israel," and as such ranks with Abraham as a father; and so we have a great deal about the old man Jacob; but the typical facts in Jacob's history are all

connected with his earlier years, and his position as a son.

Let us now attempt a sketch of these three men in their typical characters. We might spend an evening on each, but there is an advantage in getting a view of all three together.

1. First, Isaac. In Isaac's history there are three things emphasized, and these very strongly, namely: his birth, his sacrifice, his marriage. First, his birth. Here notice that Isaac was in a very special sense the child of promise. The special promise that was given to Abraham was that he should have a son; and this promise was, as we have seen, connected with the early announcement in Eden concerning the seed of the woman. After long waiting the promise was fulfilled, and Isaac was born. May not this remind us how, after long waiting, the Child of Promise, the Seed of the Woman, the long-expected Jesus came? And it is perhaps worth while to refer in this connection to the name. It means "laughter." You remember what Sarah said on the occasion of Isaac's birth. "God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me." The birth of the Son of Promise in the New Testament was "good tidings of great joy for all mankind."

Notice further, that Isaac was in a special sense the son of God. Here is the reason why so much stress is put upon the peculiar circumstances connected with his birth. The age of Abraham is given, and the age of Sarah. Every attention is called to the fact that while his birth was in one sense natural, in another sense it was supernatural. In this respect he was a type of Him

who was "born of a woman," but in a special sense by the power of God.

Then in the Epistle to the Galatians (iv. 22—v. 1) Ishmael appears as a type of Moses, and Isaac of Christ, for Ishmael represents the law and Isaac the gospel in the Apostle's "allegory." So much for the birth of Isaac.

The next thing is the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. xxii.) Here the parallel is very striking. Consider first the sacrifice required of the father. The Lord says, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Can we read this without remembering that God gave His Son, His only Son, whom He loved, somewhere in the land of Moriah, as an offering for us? Here in Genesis we have an expression of the will of God, that the seed of Abraham, even Isaac, should be offered up in sacrifice. Can we contemplate this without remembering how in later ages, that same will decreed that the seed of Abraham, even Jesus Christ, should die? In this connection think of the name of the place, "Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh," which means, "Jehovah will provide." If you ask what Abraham had in his mind when he gave the place this name, turn to the eighth verse: "My son, God will provide a lamb for a burnt-offering." "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." So much for the sacrifice required of the father.

Next notice the "obedience unto death" of the son. There you see Isaac, in obedience to his father, setting

his face in that same direction where afterward stood the city of Jerusalem. There he is nearing the place, his followers left behind afar off. And what is he carrying? He is carrying wood on his shoulder—the wood upon which he is to be bound for sacrifice. And when he comes to the place, and his father lays hold of him, he meekly submits. He allows himself to be bound on the wood which he has carried along the road and up the hill. Thus Isaac, the seed of promise, is obedient, "obedient unto death." Can we read all this without remembering the obedience of the Seed of Promise, even Jesus, who "steadfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem," though He knew, as Isaac did not, the fearful death that awaited Him there—without remembering how, as the hour drew nigh, He was to be seen carrying the wood on which He was to be bound, and how in circumstances far more trying, forsaken by His followers, forsaken, as it were, even of His Father, "He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Next, we have a figure of the resurrection, as we are expressly told in Hebrews xi. 19. The three days of sore trial have passed away: three days during which the son of Abraham has been as good as dead; three days, during the dark course of which the hopes of the promise and the blessings of the covenant seemed about to be buried in the tomb of Isaac; yet there again, coming down from the mount, you see the son of promise alive still—alive from the dead "in a figure," with all the blessings of the covenant in his hand, and all its hopes in his eye, hopes greatly confirmed by the issue of this fiery trial. Can we witness this again without thinking of that other Son of Abraham who, like Isaac, and yet unlike him, was



Son of God as well, after the three days of the darkness of death had passed over Him, appearing again alive from the dead, holding in His hand all the blessings of the covenant, and showing, in His resurrection from the dead, the strongest confirmation of its hopes?

Then, after the figure of the resurrection comes the reward. Read the sixteenth and seventeenth verses: "The angel of the Lord called unto Abraham the second time, and said: Because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." So, right after the sacrifice of the seed comes the renewed promise of the seed, the seed, the seed. In this connection read such a passage as you find in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; . . . it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. He hath put Him to grief: *When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed; He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, and by His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.*" You see how full the type is in the history of the sacrifice—extending not merely to the death of Christ, but also to the resurrection, and His vision of its glorious results.

Now, all this prepares the way for our looking somewhere in the detailed account of Isaac's marriage (Gen. xxiv.) for a corresponding typical representation. If we

had not found anything typical in his birth or in his sacrifice, we might justly regard it as fanciful to look for anything typical in his marriage. But we have Scripture authority for these other typical representations; and now we come to a long history of Isaac's marriage; and we can not help thinking of "the bride, the Lamb's wife," spoken of in other parts of the Scriptures, and especially in Revelation, and raising the question whether there may be anything here, intended to figure forth the bringing home of the bride of the New Testament. In dealing with a subject of this kind, it is quite necessary to enter, as far as is possible to a Western mind, into the Oriental imagery. The representation of the Church under the figure of a bride, does not strike us as at all natural; but it was quite so to an Eastern mind. And, as a matter of fact, it is so used in very many passages both of the Old Testament and the New. Let us by all means try to look at this charming idyll with Eastern eyes, and read it in the light of the New Testament. Look, then, at the main facts. Isaac remains at home, in the land of Canaan. The father sends forth a servant to the old land from which he came—the world he had left behind—to obtain a wife for his son. The messenger, having diligently and with much prayer accomplished his journey, delivers his message—all about the greatness of the father, and the rich inheritance of the son; and lays special stress on the fact that the father has given all that he has to the son. He is successful in his mission. Why? The reason is given again and again. Because the angel of the Lord goes before him and prepares the way. And so the bride, having heard the servant's tes-

timony, makes answer: "I will go." She travels away from her old world home to her new Canaan home, where she meets the bridegroom and becomes his wife. Can you read all this without remembering how, after His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ took His place in the heavenly Canaan and remained there, and now sends His messengers to call home the bride; how He commissions them to tell about the glory of the Father and the glory of the Son, and that the Father has given all things to the Son; how the success of the messengers depends entirely upon the Spirit of the Lord, sent by the Father in the name of the Son, to persuade the bride to come; how the bride hears the messenger, and, persuaded by the Spirit of the Lord, sets out for the heavenly Canaan to meet the bridegroom; and there in the book of Revelation we have the final scene—"the marriage of the Lamb." The bride is made ready, clothed "in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Then she is united to the bridegroom in the heavenly Canaan. These are all scriptural representations; and while it would be presumptuous to insist on any such allegorical use of the marriage of Isaac as a matter of faith, or to attempt to base any doctrinal views upon it, it nevertheless corresponds so perfectly with the unquestionable typology of Isaac's birth and (figurative) death and resurrection on the one hand, and with the familiar imagery of the bridegroom and the bride in the subsequent Scriptures on the other, that we consider those expositors fully justified, who have included it in the typical history of Isaac.

2. In regard to Jacob, the key to his typical history

is John i. 51, where Christ says to Nathanael: "Verily verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Here there is obvious reference to Jacob's vision at Bethel; the angels of God are ascending and descending, and the Lord Jesus puts Himself in the position of the Son of man at the foot of the ladder. The words of Christ Himself form our basis here. Just as Isaac was the type of Christ as the Son of God, Jacob was the type of Christ as the Son of man. Accordingly you find the typical history of Jacob connected with humiliation and suffering. Think first of the scene at Bethel. Jacob has left his father's house with only a pilgrim's staff in his hand. There is enough and to spare in his father's house, but he is now a poor wanderer, and there in that dreary place he has a stone for his pillow, while the darkness gathers fast around him. Can we read all this with our Lord's own words in view, identifying himself with Jacob, without remembering how the Son of God left His father's house, where there was enough and to spare, and became a pilgrim on the earth for us? He is born of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh; and now He is so poor, that "while the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." He too chooses the bare ground for His couch, and a stone for His pillow; and thus He passed through the dark night of His humiliation. But it is not all darkness. The heavens are open above Him. We see it at His baptism. We see it again and again, when the angels come and minister unto Him ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

Think next of the object of Jacob's journey. It is (xxviii. 2) to get a wife in Padan-Aram. And here again the history is given in full detail, as if to fix the attention. A great deal of space (chapters 28, 29, 30, 31) is given to it, and the key to these chapters will be found in Hosea xii. 12, where we are told, "Israel *served* for a wife, and for a wife he *kept sheep*." What a difference from Isaac! Isaac remained at home and the servant was sent forth for his wife. Jacob had to leave home and go to that far-away country himself and work there with the hired servants. Isaac was typical of Christ as the Son of God, and hence it was appropriate that he should remain at home, while a servant was sent to call the bride. And the appropriateness is all the more obvious coming as it does after the figurative death and resurrection on Moriah, referred to in Heb. xi. But there is another side to all this. There is the side of humiliation as well as exaltation. And as Jacob is a type of Christ as Son of man, it is this other aspect that is brought out in his history. The Son of man had Himself to go to that world as a servant, to claim the Church as His own. He had to go and keep sheep there, not exactly as Jacob did, but as the Good Shepherd, that gave His life for the sheep.

In this connection it is interesting to think of Jacob's sons. Away in that old country—in that country that represented the world to the patriarchs—the twelve sons were born. So, too, our Saviour had the twelve gathered around Him before He left the world. And as these twelve sons that were born there were the founders of the Jewish Church, so the twelve Apostles spiritually born to the Saviour when He was here on

earth were the founders of the Christian Church. But were there twelve born in Padan-Aram? Count, and you will find the number only eleven. Of course we can not help thinking of Judas—that there were only eleven apostles really born. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Judas belonged to the seed of the serpent—only eleven were really sons. And if we are reminded that the place of the twelfth was afterwards filled by the selection of Matthias, we remember also that the name of Manasseh was afterwards added, so that Joseph really counted two, making the complete number of twelve, eleven born in Padan-Aram, and one added afterwards to make the number complete. But read on, and you will find that another son was actually born in Canaan after Jacob came back again, Benjamin by name. And here we can not but advert to the coincidence, to say the least of it, in the call of the last of the Apostles, "born out of due time," as he himself expresses it, born after the Saviour had returned to the heavenly Canaan; and we remember too how such repeated stress is laid (Rom. xi. 1; Phil. iii. 5) on the fact that he was "of the tribe of Benjamin." Looking back now to the birth of Jacob's youngest son we find his mother calling him Benoni, "son of my sorrow," but his father called him Benjamin, "son of my right hand." And this again reminds us how the apostle Paul was born, as it were, out of the sorrow of the Church—its persecution nigh unto death. But while in that regard his name might well have been Benoni, was he not afterwards shown to be a Benjamin indeed, a son of God's right hand, the greatest of all the apostles?

One scene more remains connected with the pilgrim experiences of Jacob before he reached his Canaan home again. It is the scene at Peniel—the wrestling. His long sojourn as a servant and a pilgrim is nearly over. He is soon to cross the brook Jabbok, which still flows between him and the land of Canaan. At this juncture comes the scene of which the prophet says: "By his strength he had power with God; yea, he had power over the angel and prevailed. He wept and made supplication unto him. He found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us. Even the Lord God of hosts: the Lord is his memorial." Is there nothing in this to remind us of another, and far more sacred, scene of wrestling, of agony, when the Son of man was about to cross the river and return to his Fatherland; the scene referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where we read of One who "in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though He was a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." The New Testament Peniel is Gethsemane—the wrestling, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" and the victory in resignation:\* "Not my will, but Thine be done."

In his subsequent history Jacob appears no longer as

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\* It is very important to remember that Jacob prevailed, not by his wrestling, as is so often supposed, but by his yielding. Not till he was led fully to realize his own weakness, where he had felt the strongest, did he have power with God. The great lesson from Jacob's experience at Peniel is not on importunity, but on self-surrender, as a careful study of Gen. xxxii. will show.

2 son, but as a father, the father of "the children of Israel." The story of his later years will be considered in next lecture.

3. We come now to Joseph, the son in the third generation. The key to the typical history of Joseph is found in the two titles given him—the one by Jacob, the other by Pharaoh. The title given him by Jacob (Gen. xlix. 24) is the "Shepherd and stone of Israel." These words are put in parenthesis in our version, but the parenthesis is not in the original. It is far more natural to take Joseph, who is the subject of the whole passage, as the subject here, than to introduce a foreign subject, as some do. It is literally translated therefore, "from thence he (Joseph) became the shepherd, the stone of Israel," a fact which is very apparent in the history. The title given him by Pharaoh (Gen. xli. 45) is Zaphnath-paaneah, not "revealer of secrets," as in the margin, but "Saviour of the world" (see Kurz, "Old Cov." 88-2). You see how natural it was that Pharaoh should give Joseph this name. It was he who caused Pharaoh to gather corn into his granaries during the years of plenty, and thus saved the world from famine. So he called his name Zaphnath-paaneah.

In Isaac and Jacob we have the types of Christ as Son of God and Son of man. In Joseph's history we have the type of Christ as the Saviour, and that both in His humiliation and His exaltation. Look first at Joseph in his downward course: envied, hated, rejected of his brethren; sold to the enemy for so many pieces of silver; tempted in Egypt, yet remaining firm against temptation; condemned and put in prison, and numbered with the transgressors for no sin of his; two common offenders



beside him in the prison, who were similar in their previous occupations, alike in their degradation and condemnation, and expecting each a like ignominious end; yet according to Joseph's word, one is raised to greater honour than before, while the other dies in shame and despair. Is there nothing in all this that calls to mind the path of humiliation and sorrow, which was trod by One, who was "despised and rejected of men," those "He was not ashamed to call His brethren," who was sold for thirty pieces of silver, who for no fault of His, was tried and condemned, and at last put to death between two thieves, one of whom was that day with Him in Paradise, and the other—had passed away into darkness? Is not the parallel as close as it well could be, stopping short only at the point of death; for the very same reason that the parallel in Isaac's case had to stop short there too, namely, because there was another side to the parallel, that of resurrection and exaltation.

Let us look next at Joseph's exaltation, and see if we do not find that other side of the parallel carried out too. Behold him then, taken from prison and judgment. Behold him raised to the right hand of majesty on the throne of Egypt. Behold him invested with plenary power for the good of those under him. Behold him in his intimate acquaintance, not only with the present, but with the prospective wants of his people. Behold him with his store-houses full. Behold him in the time of need opening those store-houses and dispensing blessings far and wide. Behold him gathering around him his father's family, that he may feed them and sustain them there, thus proving himself to be indeed the shepherd and stone of Israel, as well as the

Saviour of the world. Does not all this remind you of another "Prince and Saviour" who was "taken from prison and from judgment;" who was raised from the dead and exalted to "the right hand of Majesty on high," to whom "all power is given in heaven and on earth;" who by His own sad experience, has intimate knowledge of all our wants and woes; in whom "it has pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell," and who is ever ready to dispense of that fullness to those who come and ask it? Does it not remind us of One who, in a higher sense than even Joseph, is "the Shepherd and Stone of Israel"? One to whom the name of Zaphnath-paaneah, "Saviour of the world," of higher right belongs? When Pharaoh gave Joseph the name, "they cried before him, Bow the knee" (Gen. xli. 43), but the time is coming when "at the name of Jesus (Saviour) every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11). The provision that was made in Egypt was especially intended by the Lord for Israel, but the store-houses were open to all the world—to all that came and asked. So we are told that Christ is "the Saviour of all men," though "specially of them that believe" (1 Tim. iv. 10). The store-houses are open, and whosoever will may come, because "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

There are many interesting things that might be brought out in respect to the correspondence between Joseph and Christ as "the shepherd and stone of Israel;" and more particularly in those special dealings that are recorded in Gen., chapters 42 to 45, where are

found passages second to nothing in the whole range of literature in tenderness and pathos. Notice only one point. You see how hardly Joseph deals with his brethren at first—how roughly he treats them; but remember first, that it is quite as hard for Joseph to do, as it is for them to bear. And then think of the object he has in view, of the need-be there is for it all. It is necessary first of all to convince them of their sins (see Gen. xlii. 21, 24). But as soon as the work of conviction is deep enough, he lays aside constraint and speaks out those tender feelings which have so long been struggling for utterance. "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now, therefore, be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life."

So deals the Saviour with sinners still. And so dealt He with His own brethren who had handed Him over a prisoner to the Roman power. Read the terrible words of the apostle Peter to the people of Jerusalem (Acts iii. 13-15) as he drives the arrow of conviction deep into their hearts. But no sooner is the desired conviction produced than the encouraging words are added: "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all His prophets that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled. Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Thus wisely and tenderly does the Lord Jesus deal with every sinner. When a labouring soul comes to the Saviour for the first

time, his troubles may be even increased; and perhaps he may feel that he is hardly dealt with for a time. But it is all in mercy. The Saviour is "refraining Himself" for the wisest of reasons. As soon as the work of conviction is deep enough, the Lord Jesus will make Himself fully known, not only as a Saviour, but as a Friend and Brother. It is very touching to see how thoroughly awed these simple country people were when they found themselves confronted with the Governor of Egypt—and then to find in him a brother, as kind, as considerate, and as sympathetic as if he had been with them in the old home all the while. Even so it is with our Lord.

"Though now exalted up on high,  
He bends on earth a brother's eye."

And though He has a "name that is above every name; though at the name of Jesus every knee must bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord;" yet is He still the Shepherd and the Stone, the Shepherd beside us, the Rock of Ages beneath our feet. Son of God, Son of man, Saviour of the world, Shepherd and Stone of Israel, we put our trust in **THEE!**

## LECTURE X.

### CLOSE OF THE PATRIARCHAL ERA: ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

Gen. xlv. — 1.

**W**E come now to the transition from the Patriarchal Era to the National Era. The transition was made in Egypt, in the interval between the books of Genesis and Exodus. The children of Israel leave Canaan and enter Egypt, a family. They leave Egypt and return to Canaan, a nation. The family history ends with the entrance into Egypt. The national history begins with the exodus from Egypt. It will be worth while, I think, for one evening to dwell on this transition time—to think of "Israel in Egypt."

Israel in Egypt suggests bright thoughts or dark thoughts, according as you take it. If we understand by "Israel in Egypt" the old man Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, then all the thoughts we have about it are happy thoughts. In the first place, Israel is in Egypt because God has guided him there. There is no mistake about it. Abraham thought the time had come for him to go to Egypt when the first famine began to pinch him (Gen. xii. 10); but Abraham was mistaken. When he went there, he fell into serious trouble and sin, and was glad to get back again. The time had not yet come. Isaac thought it was time to go to Egypt, when a similar famine afflicted the land in his days. He set out to go down, as his father had

done; but the Lord appeared unto him and forbade him (Gen. xxvi.) Now, another famine has swept over the land, and again there is need to go to Egypt for supplies; but Jacob does not go. He is well schooled and disciplined by this time, and so he waits for the Lord's guidance. By and by the course of Providence makes it plain that it is time for him to go. "When he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent, Israel said, I will go" (Gen. xlv. 27). He saw the hand of the Lord in it, and so set out on the journey. And yet there appears to have been something in his mind that suggested a doubt, for the Lord met him on the way, and spoke to him in a very different manner from what He had spoken to Isaac. We are told in the forty-sixth chapter that "God spake unto Israel in visions of the night and said: Jacob, Jacob. And he said: Here am I. And He said: I am God, the God of thy father. Fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt." There would have been no trouble growing out of Abraham's journey into Egypt if he had had a message like that. "I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hands upon thine eyes." It is pleasant, then, to think that, following the guidance of Divine Providence, and in obedience to the direct call of God, Israel found himself in Egypt.

Another thing that is very pleasant to think of is related in Gen. xlvii. 7: "Joseph brought in Jacob his father and set him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh." What a contrast again to Abraham's experience. When Abraham went down to Egypt, unent of

the Lord, he brought trouble on Pharaoh and all his house. When Isaac went in the direction of Egypt, he got into difficulty with Abimelech, King of Gerar. But when Jacob, guided and instructed by the Lord, goes down into Egypt, he carries a blessing with him: "Jacob blessed Pharaoh." So, when we are in the line of duty, in the path that God marks out for us, we are sure to carry blessings wherever we go.

"Jacob blessed Pharaoh." It is a beautiful sight, a lovely picture to look at—old Israel blessing Pharaoh. Remember that "without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better." In what respect, then, was Israel better than Pharaoh? Was not Pharaoh on the throne of the greatest monarchy of the time? But Jacob blessed Pharaoh. It is true that throughout the Bible respect is always paid to gray hairs (pity it is not always so out of the Bible); and the age of the old man had undoubtedly something to do with the attitude in which we find him. But there is more than this in it. Jacob blessed Pharaoh as the heir of God; and the heir of God is far greater than the heir of Egypt.

Learn further from this picture the attitude of the Bible toward the world. When the world is referred to, the notice is always kindly, except when there is some special reason for its being otherwise, except where there is sin that needs rebuke or denunciation or judgment. Looking generally at the notices that are given of Egypt in these chapters, we see no disposition to treat the great world-nation scornfully—no denunciations of Egypt's wealth and culture and civilization. These things are rather spoken of, when spoken of at all, in an appreciative way. If some of our modern religionists

were in the same position, they would feel called upon to denounce everything. They would find fault with everything. They would condemn everything, simply because it belonged to the world. It is not so here. And now, looking specially at the picture which has given rise to these reflections, have we not in it a lesson for ourselves, as Christians, in our dealings with the world? True, we are to be separate from the world, strangers and pilgrims in it, as Jacob was; and as he was not ashamed to confess himself to Pharaoh to be, when he answered Pharaoh's question so beautifully (ver. 9). But separation from the world does not involve scorn of what is good in the world; does not justify rudeness, or harshness, or bigotry, or uncharitableness. Jacob's testimony as to the pilgrim life, is not hedged about with thorns, as is the testimony of too many of the more exclusive disciples of the present day. It is set in benediction. Before it there is blessing (ver. 7). After it there is blessing (ver. 10). More particularly notice how Israel, guided of the Lord, is ready to convey a blessing to Pharaoh without stopping to raise questions that might have made him pause. Jacob does not stand apart and think: "Pharaoh is not in the covenant. He does not belong to the chosen family. I must keep at a proper distance from him." He goes forward, without hesitation or question, and pronounces his benediction on the king of Egypt. Is it not like the great God Himself, "Who giveth liberally to all men, and upbraideth not?" Jacob blessed Pharaoh without any upbraiding. Still further, Israel is ready, not only to give to Pharaoh, but to receive from him. We find Joseph, while conveying inestimable blessings



to the king of Egypt, quite willing to accept what the king of Egypt had to give him—position and honour and emoluments. Joseph could accept them without any sacrifice of conscience. They were of the Lord, and not merely of Egypt. It was not like the case of Abraham, when he refused the riches the king of Sodom offered him. So, too, Israel received the best of the land from Pharaoh. He dwelt in Goshen, and ample provision was made for him and all his family by Pharaoh. He takes it, and is thankful for it. How different from those who have never a kindly word for worldly people, and who even think it a sin to accept anything at their hands. In all this we have another illustration—we shall find them, if we look for them, all the way through—of the breadth, the liberality, the charity of the Bible.

Another thing is very pleasant in the contemplation of old Israel in Egypt. It is that all his troubles are at last over. Jacob has had a very troublous life, for which he himself has been altogether to blame. His course has not been at all straight, hence his troubles and distresses; and as he nears the end of his pilgrimage in Canaan, with troubles still accumulating and darkness gathering around him, it is pitiful to hear the old man lamenting: "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away; all these things are against me; . . . if mischief befall him in the way, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." It was but a short time after, when he discovered, as many afflicted and anxious ones do in similar circumstances, that all these things had been for him, "working together for his good." And now he has

come into Egypt and is living in plenty and comfort, surrounded by his children again. How touching his words when Joseph brings his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, to receive their grandfather's blessing: "I had not thought to see thy face; and lo! God hath shewed me also thy seed."

But most delightful of all is the evidence we have that Jacob's better nature is triumphant at last over all the crookedness and wickedness of his old nature, as for example in chapter xlvi. vs. 15, 16, where "he blessed Joseph and said: God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk; the God which fed me all my life long unto this day; the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." Observe in the first place the beautiful humility of the man. He does not speak about his own walking before God, but: "God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk." He knows that he himself has not walked very closely with God. It is a good sign to see humility in the beginning. Then his faith and gratitude appear: "the God that fed me all my life long unto this day." The word *fed* is scarcely wide enough to express the meaning. It means God, who has *shepherded* me: who has been my shepherd all my life long unto this day: who has been guiding me and restoring me and controlling me, as well as feeding me. The faith of the patriarch is seen especially in his acknowledging God as his shepherd through all his wanderings, and through all his sorrows too. He has recognized at last that all these things have worked together for his good. In the next clause he speaks of God as his Redeemer—"the angel which redeemed me

from all evil." The form of the expression shows that Jacob had a consciousness of the presence of God close beside him; that he did not simply look upward to heaven and think of God as there, looking down on him, but he thought of God as having been present with him all the while (see Isaiah lxiii. 9), as "the angel of the covenant," redeeming him from all evil. Jacob knew, just as well as we do that read his history, and probably a great deal better, that there had been very much of evil within him; but, having committed his way to the Lord, he followed, however feebly and waveringly, the path that God would have him walk in. So we find him at the last a saved man: saved from all his sins, saved from all his crookedness and selfishness, saved from everything that was low and mean in his character—"redeemed from all evil."

And now that he is truly a sanctified man, we find also that his spiritual vision has become wonderfully clear, as is apparent in his dying benediction. In this respect it is worth while to contrast him with Isaac. You remember a similar scene in Isaac's life, when his eyes grew dim and he was about to pass away, and his children came for their father's blessing. You remember that Isaac was exceedingly dim-sighted spiritually as well as naturally. He did not understand God's will, did not really know that Jacob was the chosen son, and wanted all the while to give the special blessing to his favorite Esau. Perhaps Isaac may have got a little away from God in his old age. Perhaps Isaac had not had changes and troubles enough to keep him near to God; had not been "emptied from vessel to vessel" as Jacob was. Taking the lives of Isaac and Jacob on the whole, Isaac's seems the bet

ter. But take them at the close, and Jacob has decidedly the advantage. When his two grandchildren are brought to him for his blessing, he knows exactly what the will of the Lord is, while their father, Joseph, does not. Joseph wants the special blessing given to Manasseh, and thinks his father prefers Ephraim because he does not know which is the elder. But the old man said: "I know it, my son; I know it." God will bless this one also, but the special blessing is for Ephraim. We see the same clearness of vision in the blessings he pronounces on all the twelve, in the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis. So there is a peculiar light and glory around the closing scenes in Jacob's history. The mind is entirely relieved from all those painful feelings it had in following his earlier career. When we followed Jacob in his youth, it seemed a sad down-come from the lofty ranges of Abraham's life to the low level of Jacob's. But while there was a descent so far as man was concerned, there was an ascent in the manifested glory of the Redeemer. The triumph of Divine Grace in the life of Abraham was glorious; in Isaac's history it was blessed too; but *the* monument of Divine Grace in the book of Genesis is the old man Jacob, Israel in Egypt.

"Wonders of grace to God belong,  
Repeat His mercies in your song."

You see then that "Israel in Egypt" suggests quite bright and happy thoughts, when you understand it as referring to the patriarch Jacob there.

But Israel in Egypt as it is generally understood, presents a very different picture, and suggests very different

thoughts—very dark and sad thoughts. Old Israel in Goshen was one thing. Young Israel in Egypt was another. At eventide in the patriarchal era, there was light; but very soon the light fades away, and darkness settles down, the darkness of Egyptian night. Jacob dies. Joseph dies. The children of Israel disappear from view. And when we find them again in the first chapter of Exodus, we find them in the degradation of slavery. True, they have been increasing in numbers, and in wealth and influence (Ex. i. 7); but all that, instead of being a blessing to them, has proved a curse; because while they have been gathering the good things of Egypt about them, they have lost their standing as children of God and heirs of the promise; they have now in consequence become slaves to that very kingdom over which the patriarch Joseph had ruled, slaves to that world-power over which they ought to have been lords. This is the picture that rises to our mind most naturally at the mention of "Israel in Egypt."

And in this connection some very serious questions are suggested. Where are the promises now—those glorious promises that were made to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob? Where are they now? Not only are they unfulfilled, but there is no sign of their fulfillment.

Where is the promise of the land? There is not a patriarch's tent in the whole of it now. The Canaanite has undisputed possession of every part. Where are the altars that were raised by Abraham and Isaac and Jacob? The Amorite may desecrate them as he will. There is no one to guard them, or enclose them from sacrilegious tread. Even the grave at Machpelah, that Abraham bought for a large sum of money, is deserted

and dishonoured now. There is no one to plant even a flower on the once sacred spot. Where is the promise of the land?

And where is the promise of the seed that was to bring salvation? Joseph seemed as if he were to fulfill the promise, when he came into power in Egypt, and had all things under his control. He did become in a certain sense the Saviour of the world. But Joseph is dead now; and another Pharaoh has arisen who knows not Joseph, and cares not for Joseph's race. As to the promise of "the great nation" and the "many nations," there are no signs of any nation at all. Israel is sinking into abject slavery and hopeless degradation.

Where is the promise that God will be a "God to Abraham and to his seed after him?" What has become of that declaration that seemed so blessed at the time: "Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward"? Has God shielded His Israel? Is He their shield in Egypt, the shield of these people that are crouching in slavery? He has ceased to speak to them now. Not only so, but He seems to have ceased even to hear them.

Thus all the promises seem gone, and what is left? A few words and a few bones. That is really all that is left of the rich promises of Genesis—a few words of Jacob and a few bones of Joseph: words of Jacob that have gone out into the empty air and seem to be lost forever; bones of Joseph that are dead with no appearance of a resurrection. That is the end. What a miserable ending of all the sacrifices and the hopes of "the father of the faithful!" Miserable wreck of the Gospel in Genesis! Of all that has interested us and excited expect-

tation, nothing now remains that can be seen but Joseph's bones.

But with these bones is linked a word of God, on the faith of which the dying Joseph had spoken these words of calm assurance: "God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." The bones were dead; but the word was living. It was that Word of God, which "liveth and abideth forever." And therein lay the hope of the covenant. When we come to the close of this book we are looking into a coffin, the narrow grave of Genesis (Gen. 1. 26). But as we look we see it opening into the wide portal of Exodus (Ex. xiii. 19). It is with this old tomb of Joseph, as it is with the new tomb of him of Arimathea. The one seemed the grave of the old covenant, and the other seemed the grave of the new. But while the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea *seemed* the grave of Christianity, was it not indeed the gate of all its glory? "Ought not Christ to suffer these things and to enter on His glory?" And so it was with the embalmed remains of Joseph in their narrow Egyptian coffin. Here we have the link between Genesis and Exodus. Joseph's bones bridge the dark chasm between them. There on the Genesis side, they mark the end of the Beginning, and a miserable end it seems; but they carry us over on the Exodus side, to the beginning of the End, and how glorious that end is doth not appear, until, after the long development of the ages, we reach the consummation in the glowing imagery of the Apocalypse.

Let us here observe in passing, the lesson which comes from comparing the directions given by Jacob concerning his bones with those given by Joseph. Jacob

says: "Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burial place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah." These are Jacob's directions. It was a very natural thing in the old man, as all his holiest feelings were with the Canaan of the past. Canaan was to him a memory and a grave. But Joseph's Canaan was different. Joseph's Canaan was the Canaan of the future—not a memory and a grave, but a hope and a home. And that is the reason why the directions of Joseph concerning his bones are spoken of as a special exercise of faith in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. Joseph says in effect: "Keep my bones in Egypt. Ye shall carry them indeed to Canaan, but not in a mere funeral procession, as the bones of my father have gone. In triumph, not in sadness shall they go; not as to a grave in a cave, but as to the broad and beautiful land of promise."

Each charge was beautiful in its time. When Jacob died, all was bright. Witness the gorgeous funeral and the mourning among the Egyptians, of which we have the record in the 50th chapter here. When Joseph died, on the other hand, all was getting dark. Years had elapsed. The night of slavery was already settling down. No notice seems to be taken in Egypt of the death of the old and almost forgotten Joseph. The lesson of each is appropriate and memorable. When



the world is at its brightest, forget not the grave. Such is the lesson of Jacob's dying charge. When the world is the darkest, forget not the home. Such is the lesson which the dying Joseph teaches. On the farthest verge of Genesis, we see two figures disappearing from our view: the one with his eye on the past, the other with his eye on the future. What is there in the field of vision? On this side, the memory of a tent, the prospect of a grave. On the other side—the side that Joseph looks to—God and His Word, Life, Heaven, Eternity. Compare the fleeting and the enduring. Abraham's wealth is gone. Jacob's sorrows are over. Joseph's greatness is forgotten. The Word of God alone endureth, and by their faith alone the patriarchs have laid hold of immortality. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

"These all died"—(Heb. xi. 13). Abraham died. Sarah died. Isaac died. Jacob died. Joseph died. They all died. That was the end of them here. But "these all died *in faith*," so it was not the end of them. When a man dies in the faith of God's word, it is not the end of his hopes. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth—that they sought a better country, that is an heavenly. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God." And as our Saviour reminds us, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

"These all died in faith." Let us study their faith a little more closely. It will repay us well. Think first how telescopic it was. "Having seen them *afar off*." Yes:

afar off indeed. Four hundred years! Some of us would find it hard to look ahead four hundred days, or even four hundred hours. How many of us would be willing to identify ourselves with a cause, which must be a miserable failure in our lifetime, and in the time of all our descendants that we had any prospect of ever seeing, and which could only begin to succeed two or three centuries or more, after we had gone to our graves? Why, the hearts of Christians in the present day of little faith, will begin to fail them if they have to wait ten, twenty, or thirty years before they see the fruit of their labours in heathen lands. If signal success does not at once attend a new and difficult enterprise, there are many of the degenerate sons of the Father of the Faithful, who wish at once to sound a retreat, and abandon the work as useless and hopeless. We need a revival of patriarchal faith in these days—days of so many and such wonderful far-off things: telescopes, telegraphs, telephones; but little or nothing of the far-off faith and hope of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

Think next of the dark gulf their faith had to traverse. It was not only the length, but the blackness of the interval. Remember Abraham's "horror of great darkness" (chap. xv.), and the terrible prophecy of the coming Egyptian night. But it did not disturb his faith. And Isaac must have learned it from his father. But it did not disturb his faith. Jacob not only knew of it, but he went down into Egypt himself; and perhaps, before he died, he saw some signs of the approaching darkness. Yet his faith faltered not, even in his dying hour. Israel said unto Joseph, "Behold I die; but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto

the land of your fathers" (Gen. xlviii. 21). "Bury me with my fathers in the cave,"—that cave of Machpelah which to him, as to his father and grandfather, was "the earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." In this particular, the faith of Joseph is more conspicuous still; because when Joseph died, the darkness, the prophecy of which had been attended with such horror when announced to Abraham, must have been shaping itself into an impending reality. Yet how distinctly and clearly he speaks. "Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel saying: God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." When you think of this, you can see how natural it was that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews should single out this as the most signal manifestation of Joseph's faith. He might have found very many illustrations of his faith all through his chequered history, both in his dark days and in his days of power and glory; but he singles out this one at the close, because then everything was dark—in Canaan, in Egypt, everywhere. His position there at the end of Genesis is not unlike the weird fancy of the poet, who describes the closing moments of "The Last Man." Remembering the unfulfilled promise in the very name "Abraham" (Gen. xvii. 5), we might say:

"The skeletons of nations were  
Around that lonely man!"

. . . . .

"Yet prophet-like that lone one stood  
With dauntless words and high."

**And apostrophising the dying Sun :**

“Go tell the Night that hides thy face,  
Thou saw'st the last of Adam's race  
On Earth's sepulchral clod,  
The darkening universe defy,  
To quench his immortality,  
Or shake his trust in God.”

There was nothing for Joseph to attach his faith to, but the simple word of God. And yet, when he is dying, and sees all hope dead around him, he calmly says, “God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.” Well has the inspired writer chosen his illustration—from the zenith of faith and the nadir of sight.

If the bones of Joseph form the link between Genesis and Exodus, the words of Jacob afford a link between Genesis and the Gospels, especially that of Luke, the wonderful Shiloh prophecy bridging the long chasm. We might find much to interest us in all these words of Jacob, in the forty-ninth chapter, where he pronounces blessings on the heads of the tribes, and speaks with absolute certainty of the time when they will be settled in their own land. He marks in some cases even the details of their future, as they appear before his prophetic eye. But the great interest to us is where, in pronouncing his benediction on that son of the twelve who had the honour of being the ancestor of the promised seed, he looks away into the far future of the latter days, and takes hold by faith of the coming Saviour. “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.” But this most

interesting prophecy must be reserved for a separate study. (See next Lecture).

A practical lesson for ourselves to close with. We ourselves may have to go far down into "the valley of the shadows," where everything seems dark; when one hope after another has given way, and there is nothing to hold by, save the simple word of God. In times like these, let us remember the faith of the patriarchs. It will be a great help to us. We can never be left in a more desolate condition than Abraham was when called to offer up Isaac his son. We can never be in a position darker and more hopeless than Joseph's, when the night of Egyptian slavery was settling down upon the people, and the night of death gathering round himself. Then let us be inspired by the example of these patriarchs, to trust in God to the last, to trust as Job trusted: "Though He slay me, yet I will trust Him." It ought to be far easier for us now that we are "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." All down the ages there have been those who have been led into the deepest waters of affliction, into places as dark as the Egyptian night itself, and who had nothing to trust to but God's simple word. Let us, then, be followers of those who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises. Let us be followers of their faith. Let us be followers of their patience too. Let us be willing to *wait* on the Lord. "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

## LECTURE XI.

### THE SHILOH PROPHECY.

Gen. xlix. 8-12.

**A** GAIN we feel constrained to depart from the general plan of these outline lectures, and examine a particular passage with closer attention, as we did in the case of the great germinal prophecy in Gen. iii. 15. The blessing pronounced by dying Jacob on his son Judah, is so rich and so full of the "testimony of Jesus," and withal of so much importance in the general scheme of the prophetic word, that we can not pass it by, without giving it a separate consideration.

We have traced the development of the Abrahamic covenant to the fourth generation. The promise to the "father of the faithful" to be a "God to him and his seed after him," has been made good in the history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. The promise of the land set apart for the worship of God and the establishment of His kingdom on the earth, still remains to be fulfilled, after the dark prophecy concerning Egyptian bondage shall have been accomplished. The promise of the seed—the great promise—has been carried down from father to son, from generation to generation. First, Abraham himself was the chosen seed of promise to the exclusion of all the other descendants of Shem, in whose line it had been foretold by Noah that the promise

should descend. In the same way Ishmael, eldest son of Abraham, was set aside, and Isaac was chosen, according to the Divine declaration: "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." In the next generation, Esau was set aside and Jacob was chosen. And now Jacob has twelve sons. Shall eleven of these be set aside and one chosen, and shall it so continue from generation to generation, till the promised Seed shall come, in whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed? No, that is not God's plan; for He has promised to make of Abraham a great nation; and this could never be if the blessing were to centre in one individual from generation to generation continually, as had been the case in the times of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So all the twelve sons of Jacob, now known as Israel, and his descendants as the children of Israel—all the twelve sons of Israel are to be included in the covenant. They and their descendants are all to have in a special sense Jehovah for their God; they are all to have a portion in the land set apart from the rest of the world for the worship of Jehovah and for the development of the great Salvation; they are all to be included in the seed who are to be heirs of the promise. But the Seed in particular—"the Seed of the woman"—the Seed of whom Isaac, supernaturally born and figuratively offered up as a sacrifice, was a type; the Seed through whom the glories of Jacob's vision at Bethel were to be realized; the Seed in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed; this Great Deliverer, who is to bruise the serpent's head and bring salvation to all the rest of the seed, He can not come through all the twelve—He must come through one.

And who is this favoured one of the twelve sons of

Israel? He is clearly pointed out in the dying words of Jacob. In the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, we are told that the aged Israel gathered his twelve sons around him, and in a few brief sentences foreshadowed what should befall them in the last days. He calls them up in order: and first comes Reuben. Is the promised Seed to come through the eldest son? Let us hear: "Thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power; unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Thus he is set aside. Then Simeon and Levi come together. Is the promised Seed to come through either of them? Let us hear: "Simeon and Levi are brethren: instruments of cruelty are in their habitations; O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel; I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." They too are set aside—not, you observe, in the sense in which Esau was set aside in the last generation, and Ishmael in the one before it; for they are to be "in Jacob," "in Israel;" but they are to be divided and scattered in Israel. It is very evident that from neither of these is the Great Deliverer to come. And now Judah steps forward. Is he to be the favoured son? Let us hear: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old



lion ; who shall rouse him up ? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine : he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." Yes ; it is in JUDAH that the Seed of Israel shall be called. It is from Judah that the Great Deliverer shall come.\*

This passage now before us is one about which volumes might be written, about which volumes have been written. There are undoubtedly difficulties in it, and there is much to be said for and against the various translations and explanations that have been given of some of the expressions in it. It would not be profitable, even if it were possible, to enter upon the controversies which meet us on our way. I shall, therefore, simply expound the passage in the way which seems to me to be correct, and which I am happy to say is in substantial agreement with the very great majority of interpreters, both of Jewish interpreters before Christ, and Christian interpreters after Him. It seems to me that this is one of

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\* See 1 Chron. v. 1, 2, for an interesting and suggestive explanation of the relative position of Judah and Joseph, the two favoured sons among the twelve. And it is especially interesting to observe, by referring to the Hebrew, that the term translated "chief ruler" ("of him came the chief ruler") is the very word translated "prince" in Dan. ix. 25, where the coming of "Messiah the prince" is so decisively predicted. The comparison of these two passages with Gen. xlix. 10, shows positively that in Old Testament times the Shiloh prophecy was understood as a prophecy of the coming of "Messiah the prince," the "Prince of Peace."

those numerous prophetic passages which, dealt with on rationalistic principles, presents insuperable difficulties, and at the best is flat and unprofitable; whereas it is rich and full and comparatively easy of interpretation, to those who hold fast by the Scripture principle that the "testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Bearing this principle in mind, we shall not be astonished if we meet Messianic references all through this blessing; not in the 10th verse only, where it seems impossible to avoid seeing the testimony of Jesus, but all through it.

There are, you perceive, three parts of the blessing, each taking up and repeating the happy name of Judah: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise," etc.: "Judah is a lion's whelp," etc.; and, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah," etc. Let us take these three parts in their order.

I. "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee." There are here two things: the relation of Judah to his brethren in Israel, and his relation to the enemies of Israel. His relation to his brethren in Israel is expressed in the first and last clauses: "thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise"—"thy father's children shall bow down before thee." Now that there is a general reference here to the supremacy of Judah among the tribes is beyond doubt; but I can not avoid the conclusion, a conclusion which has been strengthened by a very close examination of the principal words in this verse, that a greater than Judah is here, even Jesus, whose praise is sung by all the true Israel of God,

before whom all the children of Abraham according to the spirit bow down and worship. This is supported by several considerations. The name "Judah" means "Praise of God," or, "Glory to God." And there is (I can not help thinking) something more than curiosity in the fact, that if Hebrew equivalents were given for the Greek words in the hymn which was sung by angels over Bethlehem's plains, when the great Son of Judah was born there, a Prince and a Saviour, it might read thus: "Judah in the highest, on earth Shiloh;" "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." This view is still further strengthened by the fact that the word here rendered "praise"—"thy brethren shall praise,"—is used almost exclusively of praise to God. And there are other verbal details that might be mentioned; but I do not wish to take up time with them, as there are so many great things yet before us. I hope, however, enough has been said to show that in the spirit even of this first part of the prophecy, we may find the testimony of Jesus.

And if we are right in our view as to the clauses which refer to the relation of Judah to his brethren in Israel, it follows that in that clause which refers to his relation to the enemies of Israel, we see not only the victories of Judah over the nations around him, but the victories of the great Son of Judah over His enemies all over the world. We have in fact here the germ of those numerous prophecies of which the 2d Psalm may be taken as a specimen: "I have set my king on my holy hill of Zion (*i. e.*, the political and religious centre of the royal tribe of Judah). I will declare the decree: Jehovah hath said unto me: Thou art My son; this

day have I begotten thee. Ask of Me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron. Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." In such passages as this we have the development of this early prophecy: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise. *Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies.*"

II. "Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up; he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion: who shall rouse him up?" We have here Judah's supremacy and strength set before us in a lively figure, the figure of a lion. You observe of course the gradation in the prophecy: first the young lion rejoicing in his growing strength; then the adult lion in the full development of his power; and lastly, the old lion reposing in quiet majesty, satisfied with former triumphs, enjoying the fruit of them, but retaining his terrible strength, so that even the boldest dare not rouse him up. Here again we have the basis and explanation of not a little of subsequent prophecy. We find the Lion of Judah again, in Balaam's prophecy (Num. xxiv. 9: also xxiii. 24). We find it in prophecies, where perhaps we little expect it: *e. g.*, Is. xxix. 1, 2, where Ariel, you must remember, is the Hebrew for "Lion of God." So too the Lamentation of Ezekiel 19th, is all founded on this prophecy. The reference throughout all these is obvious, to the lion strength and prowess of the royal tribe of Judah. But is this all? Perhaps some of you may be ready to say: "Yes, it is all." Surely it can not be said that there is any of the testimony of Jesus in a passage like that. It

certainly seems as unlikely as any other prophetic passage in the whole Bible. Yet even here, if we take the Scripture for our guide, comparing Scripture with Scripture, the testimony of Jesus is not absent. And if you wish proof, follow me to two passages far apart from each other and from this, and yet evidently related to each other and to this. First, let us turn to that chapter about Ariel, "the Lion of God" (Is. xxix.) Read especially verses 11 and 12, and compare them with Rev. v. 1-5. The Ariel of the Old Testament here appears as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" in the New. Who is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah?" No one reading that chapter in Revelation can hesitate about the answer. After all it is Jesus, the meek and lowly, and yet the great and terrible Jesus, the Lamb slain, and also the Lion slaying. He is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah!" We may not forget that there is such a thing as "the *wrath* of the Lamb."

III. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." Here we have an assurance that Judah shall maintain his individuality and theocratic position till the advent of Shiloh. We have already seen that all the twelve sons of Israel are to share in the blessings of the covenant of Abraham. But though they are all to share in common, they are not to be indiscriminately mixed. The twelve tribes shall all have a separate portion; and one, at least, shall

continue separate and distinct,\* distinguished from the rest by the continuity of its history and the preservation of the theocratic "law," until Shiloh shall come.

Who is Shiloh? Most clearly he is "the Seed of the woman." I set aside the translation, "until Judah come to Shiloh," *i. e.*, the place where the tabernacle was set up after the conquest of Canaan; I set it aside, because though grammatically possible, it is contrary to the scope of the prophecy, Judah having no more relation to the place long afterwards called Shiloh than any of the other tribes, and less than Joseph, in whose territory the place was; because it exhausts the prophecies in the early history of the

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\*It ought not to be forgotten that this is essentially a *tribal* prophecy. The word translated "sceptre" is the regular word for tribe. It is the word used in the 28th verse: "these are the twelve tribes (sceptres) of Israel." When we bear this in mind, instead of encountering serious difficulty, as those do who understand the sceptre to be the symbol of royalty here, from the fact that again and again the political sceptre did depart from Judah; we recognize a very striking correspondence with the facts of history. Before Shiloh came, all the other tribes had been blotted from the map of Palestine. There is Galilee on the north, Samaria in the centre, and Perea in the east—covering the territory that belonged to the ten tribes of the northern kingdom; and in the south, little Benjamin, and the remnant of Simeon, long before scattered in Israel according to Jacob's prophecy, are now merged in JUDEA, the historical representative of the old, and now the only separately surviving, tribe of Judah.

I do not deny, indeed, that this is a prophecy of the kingdom, as well as a tribal prophecy; but not in the political sense of the term. The idea of the kingdom seems to me to lie as much in the word "lawgiver" as in the word "sceptre," and the true conception of the kingdom to be that unfolded by the evangelical prophet (Is. xxi.iii. 22), and by our Lord Himself in John xviii. 36, 39. (See Appendix to this Lecture).

tribes of Israel, whereas the patriarch says at the beginning that he is about to speak of that which shall happen "in the last days;" and because the supremacy of Judah over the other tribes, and her lionlike conquests, are to be found after, and not before, the children of Israel came to Shiloh. Besides, there is no evidence that any place of the name of Shiloh was known at this time, and there was certainly no gathering of the nations (the word in the Hebrew is not the singular, "people," but the plural, "peoples" or "nations") to Shiloh. In fact, everything is against so lame an interpretation. It probably never would have been thought of had it not been for the great anxiety to get rid of one of the most remarkable of all the prophecies of the coming Saviour. Without any hesitation, then, we adhere to our own translation.

And then the question comes: if Shiloh be the Messiah, as He evidently is, what is the meaning of the name? Various meanings have been given; but it is interesting to find how appropriate every one of them is to the Messiah. The rendering of the Septuagint, or Greek translation of the Old Testament, is: "Until He comes, to whom the rule belongs," Shiloh being taken as the contracted form of the expression: "He to whom the kingdom belongs." There is a remarkable passage in Ezekiel which seems to favour this interpretation (Ez. xxi. 27): "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it to Him." The contraction of the expression, "He whose right it is," would give something very closely resembling the word "Shiloh." Now, suppose this to be correct, it is a beautiful description of

the Messiah, to whom really belongs the kingdom which was for a time to reside in the tribe of Judah. The rendering of the Vulgate, or Latin translation, is: "Until He come who must be sent;" and those who hold to this interpretation compare the passage in the New Testament, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam" (a word which, when written in Hebrew, is exceedingly like our word here), "which is being interpreted, Sent." This rendering is doubtful, because to get it, a change must be made, though only a slight one, in one of the consonants of the word; but if it were correct, this again would be a most appropriate designation of the Messiah whom God was to send forth "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Luther, Calvin, and others have translated "Shiloh," "His Son," being guided in their interpretation by a corresponding form in the Arabic language, from whose forms much light is often thrown on obscure Hebrew words. This view is almost universally rejected now; but even in this there would be an appropriate designation of the Messiah, the great Son of Judah, who was to come and redeem His people.

The vast majority of interpreters have always, and do still connect the word "Shiloh" with that well-known family of Hebrew words signifying "peace," "rest," so that "Shiloh" will signify "the One who brings peace," "the One who gives rest." There is almost everything in favour of this interpretation. It connects beautifully with the image of peace set forth in verses 11 and 12 which follow, and is strongly contrasted with the warlike metaphor of that which precedes (ver. 9). It agrees with the circumstances under which the name "Shiloh"



was given to the place where the Tabernacle of God was set up by the children of Israel, after God had given them rest from their enemies. Then in 1 Chron. v. 2, we find in explanation of the elder tribes being set aside, these words, "For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and from him the chief ruler (or the prince) was to come," which you may compare with that beautiful passage in Isaiah (ix. 6), "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, *The Prince of Peace.*" Then, too, the name which David gave to his son Solomon (a name closely connected with the name "Shiloh"—it does not appear in English so distinctly as in the original); in that name we can scarcely fail to recognize the expectation of David, that in his just and peaceful reign there would be a type of the reign of the Prince of Peace—a position which is fully borne out by those Psalms of the kingdom, of which the well-known 72d Psalm may be taken as a specimen. We have already referred to the angel doxology, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace," where the words "Judah" and "Shiloh" come into a connection with each other very similar to what we find in this prophecy. Then we can not help thinking of such precious words as these of Our Shiloh: "Come unto Me, ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." And not to multiply passages, for many more might be given, do we not find at the close of the Word of God,

in the book of Revelation, "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," and "the Lamb," the one the emblem of strength, and the other the emblem of gentleness and peace, close beside each other, and referring to the same glorious Saviour? We have already spoken of the "Lion of the tribe of Judah"—well, the Lamb is the Shiloh of our text. It is, then, the "Prince of Peace" whose coming is spoken of here.

"And unto Him shall the gathering of the peoples be." The meaning of this is surely very obvious now. The Shiloh is the Seed in whom all nations of the earth are to be blessed. Here is the culmination of the royalty of Judah. We have seen in this prophecy the basis of future prophecies in regard to the kingdom of the Messiah. Here is an indication already of its absolute universality. Some have supposed that the meaning of the prophecy is that the royalty shall remain with Judah till Shiloh comes, and then pass away; and, accordingly, they find in the present subjected condition of the Jews a fulfillment in part of the prophecy. We believe this to be a great mistake. The true idea is that the royalty is never to pass away from Judah, but is to culminate in the everlasting kingdom of the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," "the Root of David," "King of kings and Lord of lords." To show how utterly groundless are the opinions of those who say that the word "until" here used, implies that the sceptre is to pass away after Shiloh comes, let me ask you to turn back to the vision of Jacob (Gen. xxviii.) Are we really to understand that God was to leave Jacob after he got back to Padan-aram, because He says, "I will not leave thee until then?" (ver. 15). And in the same way does it follow

that the sceptre is to pass from Judah after Shiloh comes, because it is said, "the sceptre shall not depart till He comes?" Not at all. The sceptre is not to depart at all. The kingdom is to be an everlasting kingdom. The royalty of the tribe of Judah will last through all eternity, because the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," the "Prince of Peace," the Shiloh of God, in whom that royalty culminates, is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," "King of kings and Lord of lords" forevermore!

And here we get rid of those perplexing difficulties which beset the narrow interpretation of those who limit the royalty of the tribe of Judah to that which is "of the earth, earthy." And these difficulties are greatly aggravated by the narrow view of the design of prophecy taken by those, who suppose it to be given solely or mainly to prove the truth of Scripture by the correspondence of the event with the prophecy. Take this narrow view of prophecy in general, and of this prophecy in particular, and you are met with this startling difficulty: the sceptre did pass away from Judah before Shiloh came. Where was Judah's sceptre when the people of Judah were slaves in Babylon? Where was Judah's sceptre during the long years they were under the sway of Syria? Where was Judah's sceptre when the whole country and people were under the iron heel of Rome? According to the narrow view of the design of prophecy above referred to, we ought to have had the sceptre most conspicuously in Judah's hand all through till Christ came. But take the true view of prophecy as given, not so much to convince unbelievers (a mere incidental use of it), but to guide and

comfort and encourage believers; and light streams in at once. Why was the assurance given that the sceptre should not depart from Judah till Shiloh come? Because Judah was to be the lion, the royal tribe, the mighty conqueror all the while? Then the assurance would not have been needed at all. It would have been all sight. There would have been no room for faith. Why then was the assurance given that the sceptre should not depart? Because God foresaw that again, and again, and again, *according to human view*, the sceptre would depart; and this assurance was given to sustain the faith of those who should live in these dark and discouraging times. Again and again it seemed as if the promise were failing. Just with this promise as with others, God tries the faith of His people, and makes them wait; but then the promise does not fail in the end. And very often the fulfillment will come at the darkest moment, when it has seemed utterly to fail. And so here, it was when the Jews were under the resistless power of the Romans, when the sceptre of Judah had given place to that sceptre which ruled the world—then it was that God showed them it was only in appearance the sceptre had passed away from Judah, for “out of Judah,” even from a place which was but “little among the thousands of Judah,” came He that was to be “Ruler in Israel”—then it was that the promise was fulfilled: “In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, who shall stand for an ensign of the people—to it shall the Gentiles seek—and his Rest shall be glorious.” The truth is, that the sceptre properly refers to the kingdom of the truth, as Jesus Himself called His kingdom. That kingdom of the truth was

embodied in an earthly kingdom, from which the sceptre did pass away time and again; but the sceptre of Judah, the kingdom of the truth specially given to her, never did pass away, but remained until He came who was Himself "The Truth," and then it was firmly established under the Lion of the tribe of Judah forever.\*

And then began "the gathering of the peoples." It may be interesting to take a passing glance at this prophetic gathering, as actually realized already in history. To begin with, we have an earnest of it in the long journey of the wise men of the East to worship the child Jesus. There we have the first-fruits of the great ingathering of the long excluded Shemites. Then again you remember the Syrophœnician woman, who when Jesus came into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, fell down at His feet and worshipped Him and besought Him for a blessing for her child. There we see the first-fruits of the great ingathering of the Hamites. Yet again, you remember how when Jesus was at one of the feasts in Jerusalem, there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast, who came to Philip of Bethsaida in Galilee, earnestly asking: "Sir, we would see Jesus." There we see the first-fruits of the great ingathering of the sons of Japheth.

So much for the first-fruits; now for the harvest. And here we find that saying true: "The last shall be first, and the first last;" for when Shiloh came, the very Jews themselves refused to gather to Him; that very tribe of Judah, from which, according to the prophecy,

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\* See appendix to this Lecture.

He sprung, despised and rejected Him ; and accordingly, in the just displeasure of God, they were set aside "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. xi. 25). Thus it is that the very Jews themselves are the last of all the peoples to gather unto their own Shiloh. They are still keeping aloof from Him, and refusing to acknowledge Him, while almost all other nations on the face of the earth are gathering around Him. Time would fail to give even a sketch of the great gathering to Shiloh which have taken place during these eighteen and a half centuries, since Christ ascended up on high, and became the spiritual centre toward which "all people that on earth do dwell" should finally converge. First, we see the enlarged and multiplied families of Japheth dwelling in the tents of Shem—first the Greeks, then the Latins, then the barbarous hordes of the Teutonic and Celtic and Sclavonian races which first ravaged and ransacked the Roman Empire through all its borders, and then learned the arts of peace at the feet of Shiloh, the "Prince of Peace." Of this great gathering of Greeks and Romans and Teutons and Celts and Slaves in the early centuries, there was, unhappily, far too much of that which was merely outward and formal, the mere bodily without the spiritual gathering, so that corruption set in, followed by the night of the dark ages, and the dimming almost to extinction of the light of the Church of Christ. Then the great reformation came, and there was a breaking up of the dead, formal, outward unity of the Church, and a revival of that true spiritual gathering unto Shiloh of which the prophecy speaks. Following this hopeful era, there were indeed dark and troublous times of fierce contention and cruel persecu-

tion, carried on in the name of Christianity, but quite contrary to its spirit. And again, as might be expected, there were times of deep declension, during which the most of the gatherings which took place were merely outward and formal; but again there was a great revival throughout the Churches, the fruits of which are seen in the great gatherings to Shiloh which the present century has witnessed. Since the beginning of the century, Christian missions have taken root amongst almost every nation on the face of the earth, and how many happy gatherings to Shiloh have been witnessed among people who, until a very few years ago, were in grossest heathen darkness. We believe the greatest gatherings of all have yet to come; but have we not already, even in our own day, most signal and most glorious fulfillments of this old prophecy: "Unto HIM shall the gathering of the peoples be"?

And now I must dismiss, in a single sentence, the beautiful representation of the peace and plenty which is to be enjoyed in the perfected kingdom of Judah, as described in verses 11 and 12. It is a picture of peace and plenty, such as is quite familiar to our minds throughout the later prophecies, as representative of the peace and blessedness of the kingdom of Christ, where every one sits "under his vine and under his fig-tree," enjoying the rest and the wealth of the land. Keeping to the letter, interpreters have wondered why the comparatively hilly and unproductive country of the tribe of Judah should be so glowingly described. And well they might wonder. Is not this only an indication that their bare literalism is all wrong, that the reference is not to the politics and geography of Judah, but to the peace and

plenty, beauty and glory of Messiah's kingdom? So the later prophets understood it, as is evident from the remarkable prophecy in Zechariah—a prophecy remarkable not only for the way in which it takes up and hands down the general features of the old Shiloh prediction, but from the use it makes of such a mere matter (apparently) of detail, as the reference to the ass and its colt, so familiar now from the well-known fact in the life of Christ recorded in the twenty-first of Matthew—"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy KING cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and He shall speak PEACE unto the heathen: and His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." (Zech. ix. 9, 10).

And now, in conclusion, where is our place in the Shiloh prophecy? Are we among the brethren that give praise to the Judah of the New Testament, the King of Zion? If not, we are among His enemies, and "His hand is on our neck." And it is no weak hand. It is the Lion's paw. He is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," to those who will not have Him as "the Lamb of God." "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest He tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Kiss ye the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little."

Have *we* gathered ourselves to Shiloh and found rest in Him? There has been a great gathering to Him already. There will be a greater yet. But remember,



“many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness.”

Let us see, then, that we stay not without. Let us all gather ourselves to Him. Let us all yield Him a hearty, loving obedience, and then we shall enjoy His rest, we shall share His peace, we shall be satisfied with the goodness of His house, we shall revel in the riches of His grace, and we shall reach at last that Judah and Jerusalem which are above, where we shall join the company of those who “shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; but the Lamb (a Lion no more) which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

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#### APPENDIX TO LECTURE XI.

THERE are some considerations, bearing on what is given in the preceding as the true interpretation of Gen. xlix. 10, which were not embodied in the lecture delivered in the course. As he considers the subject of very great importance, the author ventures to reprint a few paragraphs from a Lecture on the Gospel of the Kingdom, which he published some years ago:—

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, till Shiloh come.” How constantly do we find this blessed assurance interpreted as

if it were a shred of political news, a piece of political prognostication? "The sceptre" is interpreted as an earthly sceptre, the "lawgiver" suggests no other or higher conception than the head of an earthly government, and the gist of the whole promise is made to be that a certain earthly state, of very small account among the great kingdoms of the world, shall continue to exist till the coming of a certain person, and then shall pass away. It might be suggested, by the way, that on this principle of interpretation we should rather call it a threatening than a promise. If the coming of the promised Shiloh was to be the signal for the passing away of the very kingdom which was the subject of the prophecy, then Judah and all true lovers of God's kingdom might well pray that Shiloh should be very long in coming. But let this pass, and look at the subsequent difficulties in which the political interpretation involves us. We have first a long period during which there was no political kingdom at all. Then, shortly after the setting up of the political kingdom, we have it rent in twain. Later on we find, first, the one part of it, and then the other, utterly subverted. Then we have hundreds of years, during the greater part of which it can not be said, with any honesty, that there was a political kingdom at all. And when Shiloh did come, there was no political kingdom in Judah to pass away. These difficulties have been felt to be of such magnitude, that endless ingenuity has been expended in the attempt to evade or surmount them. Some have tried to twist history to make it agree with the passage, and others have tried to twist the passage to make it agree with the history, and neither of the methods has been found satis-

factory ; whereas all becomes simple, natural, beautiful, and most true, when interpreted, not according to the letter which killeth, but according to the spirit ; when it is freed from those carnal, Jewish notions which have obscured it, when it is lifted out of the region of politics into the region of truth, where our Lord's conversation with Pilate, as recorded by John, might well lead us to look for the kingdom of the prophetic word. Then we find a beautiful consistency both with the history of truth, and with the truth of history ; with the former, as regards the inner reality, with the latter, as regards the outer form of the kingdom.

First, in regard to the inner reality. Did not the kingdom of the truth, the kingdom in its essential, spiritual reality, continue in Judah all the while? Was not the kingdom of God among the chosen people before either Saul or David was anointed, while as yet Jehovah was their only King? Was not the kingdom of God in Judah still, when her sons and daughters sat "by Babel's streams," and hung their harps upon the willows, and wept as they remembered Zion? There, in their remembrance of Zion, have we the evidence that, though the form of the kingdom had passed away for a time, the great reality remained in the weeping heart of Judah still. Truth to tell, the kingdom had much more nearly passed away, while yet the political "sceptre" and "lawgiver" remained both in Judah and in Israel, in those dark days of infidelity and idolatry, when poor Elijah thought God's kingdom, the true theocracy, was reduced to one solitary individual, till he was assured by Him, who "seeth not as man seeth," that He still had left remaining seven thousand loyal men. And was

there not in Judah, through all her captivities and all her sufferings from foreign oppressors, a true kingdom of God? A very little one indeed at times, and especially in the times which immediately preceded the advent of Shiloh; but small as it was, was it not there all the while? And when we seek for the fulfillment of the old promise as to the continuance of the kingdom till the coming in human form of the King, we are to seek it, not where so many interpreters of prophecy have sought it, in the political administration of that infidel and villain, belonging to Idumea, and not to Judah, who happened to sway a little sceptre, and give out his little laws under the great sceptre and mighty law of a foreign tyrant, but in the lowly loyal lives of the Simeons and Annas of the time, who had the sceptre and the law in their hearts, and who were waiting for the fulfillment of the kingdom in the coming of Shiloh. The *fulfillment* of the kingdom—for there is no evidence that these faithful ones imagined that the coming of Shiloh was to be the subversion of that kingdom, which, as true Israelites, they dearly loved, but every evidence that they regarded it as the firm establishment of Judah's throne, and the beginning of a triumphal progress which should not cease till every knee should bow before the sceptre, and every tongue confess that Judah's King was Lord. So much for the fulfillment of the promise in regard to its inner reality.

And now a moment's glance at the consistency of the prophecy with history, so far as form is concerned. Here we must bear in mind what principle Fairbairn has so clearly shown in his work on "Prophecy," that the great object of prophecy was to support the faith of God's

people—a support which would be especially needed in times of darkness. Now, if the outward earthly form, in which the kingdom was for a time embodied, had been predestined to be abiding; had nothing been anticipated in the process of history which would *look like* the passing away of the kingdom, there would have been no need of such a special promise as that in Gen. xlix. 10. On the other hand, the very fact that there is such a promise would lead us, *a priori*, to anticipate that there would be times, probably long times, when it would *seem* that the sceptre had departed from Judah—times during which it would be necessary for those who were waiting for the salvation of God, to have some assurance to rest upon, that, though the form had passed away, the reality was with them still. Thus we find that, when once we get rid of these carnal Jewish ideas of the kingdom, we discover not only an agreement between the prophecy and the true spiritual history of the kingdom, but also a correspondence between the expectations it suggests concerning the outward and formal history of the kingdom and the actual facts of the case, as seen in the external history of the political kingdom of Israel.

## LECTURE XII.

### GENESIS AS THE FOREGROUND OF THE BIBLE.

Gen. i.—1.

**G**ENESIS first: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis last: "So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt." After spending so much more time than we had intended on the first book of the Bible, we may well pause at the close of it. It is a good place to pause. There is quite a break in the continuity of the history between Genesis and Exodus. There is no such break again, until we come to the close of the Old Testament, and look across the long interval between Malachi and Matthew.

Now, observe that, while we have proceeded but a short distance so far as the amount of reading is concerned, we are more than half-way through the Bible in point of time; and that, even without counting the measureless eras of the first chapter. We may discount the dateless Apocalypse at the beginning, and the dateless Apocalypse at the end; and, leaving out these unknown spaces, we find ourselves already considerably more than half-way from Adam in Eden to John in Patmos. From Adam to Joseph, at the very lowest computation, there are considerably more than two

thousand years; and from Moses, to John in Patmos, there are considerably less than two thousand years. You see then how appropriate it is just at this point, to pause and take a look backward and a look forward. We have already had occasion to compare the opening chapters of Genesis with the closing book of the Bible; the heaven and the earth with the new heavens and the new earth; the paradise in Eden with the paradise of God, etc. We shall now look at Genesis as the foreground of the entire Bible.

I. From this point of view, looking comprehensively over the Bible, we may view it as under a threefold division. We have Genesis (or, if you choose, the first eleven chapters) on the one hand, Revelation on the other, and all the rest of the Bible between. We have the beginning of everything in Genesis. We have the conclusion of everything in Revelation; and between the two we have the vast development from Moses (or from Abraham) on to Christ and His apostles. Looking at it in this wide and comprehensive way, there are many interesting lines of development that may be suggested as worthy of special study.

You might, for example, study the long conflict of the ages with its beginnings in Genesis, its developments on through the Bible, and its consummation in Revelation. We have found the germ of it all in Genesis iii. 15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." And as we follow the long conflict on through its successive ages we find a sad record of defeat; defeat in the first age, defeat in the second age, defeat in the third age. But this is only so far as man

is concerned. There is failure, failure, failure, on the part of man; but the purposes of God never fail; the great Salvation marches steadily on to its great consummation. When we reach the New Testament, Christ the Captain of our Salvation appears in conflict with the great enemy, defeating him in the desert and triumphing over him on the cross. And then when we reach the last book of the Bible we hear the note sounded at the close of each of the seven letters to the churches, "To him that overcometh," "To him that overcometh," "To him that overcometh," seven times repeated with appropriate promises—thus preparing us for the conclusion of the great conflict, as in the stirring description of the twelfth chapter: "The great dragon was cast out; that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceived the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him; and I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, 'Now is come Salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night, and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.'"

The blood of the Lamb here referred to, suggests another line of study, which might be followed out in the same way. In the beginning of Genesis we find the origin of sacrifice. And following on from Abel's lamb, we come to Abraham's lamb, and to Moses' paschal lamb connected with the Exodus from Egypt; and then we have the morning and evening sacrifices, every morning a lamb and every evening a lamb, day by day continually (Ex. xxix. 38), all through the Old Testament



times until the coming of "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," speaking of whom Isaiah says: "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth;" and concerning whom the apostles speak in terms like these: "Christ our Passover (our paschal lamb) is sacrificed for us," and "Ye are redeemed, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God." Then turn to Revelation and what do you see? You see in the midst of the throne "a Lamb as it had been slain." And this is the favorite title of the Lord Jesus from that point onwards to the end. It is "the blood of the Lamb," "the wrath of the Lamb," "the song of Moses and the Lamb," "the marriage supper of the Lamb," "the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Or again we might take the study of the royal priesthood of Christ. The germ of it all is found in these few verses about Melchizedek (Gen. xiv. 18-20), so fully expounded in the seventh chapter of Hebrews. In the Mosaic era we see the development of it along the line of the Aaronic priesthood, and along the line of the kings of Israel; and toward the close of the Old Testament our attention is especially arrested by a striking prophecy of Zechariah (Zech. vi. 12, 13): "Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying: Behold the man whose name is the *Branch*; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and

he shall bear the glory and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be *a priest upon his throne.*" This prepares us for the full development of the royal priesthood in Christ when He comes. So when we turn to the New Testament we find it beautifully fulfilled in two ways: first in His humiliation, and then in His exaltation. In His humiliation, we see the priest there, offering up the sacrifice of Himself, and over the altar-cross is written, "This is the King." There you see the King upon the altar. When you come to the book of Revelation you see the Priest upon the throne: "In the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain:" the consummation of the royal priesthood, the beginnings of which are found in Genesis.

Now these are only specimens of the kinds of lines we may run through the Scriptures, making the most interesting of all "Bible Readings." We might refer to other leading thoughts, such as that of judgment, beginning with the judgment of flood and ending with the judgment of fire; or even symbolic names, such as Babel in the early chapters of Genesis, Babylon in the Old Testament, "the Church at Babylon" in the New, and finally in the Apocalypse: "Babylon, the great, is fallen, is fallen." Let these suffice as illustrations of the suggestiveness of the simple threefold division of the Bible with Genesis as the Beginning, Revelation the End, and the intermediate books the Development.

II. But restricting ourselves now to what we have called the third age,\* of which we have only the begin-

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\* There is no attempt in our use of the terms "age" and "era," to define Scripture terms. If there were, the objection might be offered that the Mosaic economy is spoken of in the New Testament

ning in Genesis—(of the first and second ages we have the close as well as the beginning), we find a fourfold division convenient and suggestive. First, the time of promise—the patriarchal era, the era we have already passed over in review. The characteristic of that era was promise. There was no fulfillment, and no sign of fulfillment even. Read what Stephen says about it in the 7th of Acts: "He gave him none inheritance in it; no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he *promised* that he would give it to him for a possession." So too in the well-known passage in the 11th of Hebrews. It is characteristically a time of promise, without any performance or any sign of performance.

The next era is the era of "shadow." This is not a term of my own invention. In the Epistle of the Hebrews you read (chap. x. 1), "the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things," and in Colossians, chap. ii. 17, speaking of the Old Testament observances, the Apostle Paul says: they are "a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ." The second era, then, was a time of shadow—covering all the rest of the Old Testament from Exodus onwards. And here we have something more than promise, though as yet no fulfillment. The promise was not fulfilled in the true sense of the term until the Lord Jesus came: yet we have in this era more than promise. What have we? I don't know of a better word than our friend Professor Tyndall's: the word "potency." Having had the promise in the patriarchal era, we have

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as one "age," and the Christian dispensation another. The terms "age" and "era" are simply used for convenience the former in a wider, the latter in a narrower sense.

the potency in the next era. It is something more than promise, and something less than fulfillment. There was actual deliverance from Egypt, and there was actual deliverance from Babylon; but neither of these was *the* deliverance. These deliverances showed what God was *able* to do. They were the potency of that which was to come.

The third is the era of substance, as distinguished from shadow—the good things that were to come, after the shadows and types of the Old Testament had served their purpose. It is the era of Reality, as we might call it. This is the era in which we are living, introduced by the first coming of Christ. It is the era of the Church, as distinguished from the era of the nation, and the era of the family.

Then the fourth era is “the time of the restitution of all things,” as the Apostle Peter calls it in Acts iii. 21: the same that our Saviour refers to in Matthew xix. 28, as “the Regeneration,” where he means not the regeneration of the soul, but the regeneration of everything. That is the era following the second coming of Christ.

So we have a fourfold division, commencing with Abraham and going on to the End. We have the era of promise, the era of potency, the era of reality, and the era of consummation. In the Old Testament we have the promise and potency, in the New Testament we have the reality and consummation of the great Salvation.

Here again are many interesting lines of development. Take first the general conception of Salvation, which is the great subject of the Bible. In Genesis you find only the promise—nothing else. In the benediction which the dying Jacob pronounces on the twelve, he breaks

forth with the ejaculation, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Jehovah." It was the time of waiting. The patriarchs did not receive the promises. They only "saw them afar off." They waited for the salvation. When we come to the next era, the era of potency, we find actual salvation. We find the people delivered from Egypt in the early part, and delivered from Babylon in the later part. Observe, in passing, that these two events, the deliverance from Egypt and the deliverance from Babylon, are the two pivotal events of the Old Testament, from Exodus on to Malachi. When we come to the New Testament, we get the reality of which these are the shadows—salvation from sin. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people"—not from Egypt, not from Babylon, but "from their sins." When at last you reach the book of Revelation, there you have the great salvation fully developed: "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ, for now He has come the second time without sin unto salvation."

In connection with the general thought of salvation, we might take the promise of the Land. Here again it was only a promise, in Genesis. They had "no inheritance; no, not so much as to set their foot on;" only a grave. But when we come to the era of potency, the land is actually given. The children of Israel are actually settled in Canaan. They are led out of Egypt into Canaan, in the earlier history; and back from Babylon to Jerusalem, in the later history. Correspondingly in the New Testament, it is out of the world into the Church, and up to the heavenly Canaan, the "better country" of Hebrews xi.; while in the book of Reve-

lation, it is "the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven."

We may deal in the same way with the promise of a Saviour. Here in Genesis we have only a picture. You remember we had a picture of the Saviour in Joseph; but only a picture—nothing more. When you come to the second era, you have something more than a picture. You have an actual Saviour in Joshua, who leads his people into Canaan, and in the latter part of the Old Testament, a second Joshua (or Jeshua, as it is in some places; but the name is the same, with a significant approximation to the Greek form Jesus) leading the people from Babylon to Jerusalem. Then we have the New Testament Joshua, or Jesus, who saves His people from their sin, and leads them to the "better land," finally set forth in the book of Revelation as "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; the first and the last"—*the* Saviour all the way through.

In connection with the general idea of a Saviour, it is suggestive to take the line of descent. And then we have in the first era, after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—not Joseph, but Judah, through whom Shiloh is to come. In the next era, the great representative of the coming Saviour in the line of descent was David, David the shepherd king; first the shepherd king, and then the enthroned king. David was altogether the most perfect type of Christ in the Old Testament. Remember, however, not in character. He was not, as no one could be, a type of Christ in character; but take his history throughout and he was the most complete type of Christ in the Old Testament; so much so, that the very name David is often applied to Christ, *e. g.*, Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24;

and in the same way the title Christ is applied to David. This is veiled in our version by the use of the word "Anointed," when David is referred to, but it is the very word Messiah or Christ (Messiah the Hebrew, Christ the Greek). Turn now to the New Testament and we find, first, the Shepherd King there, in the days when He was away from His throne, having laid aside His royal glory, and come as the Good Shepherd, obscure and almost unknown, to gather and feed His flock, and finally to give His life for the sheep. When we come to Revelation, we see the King on His throne, with a name above every name: "King of kings and Lord of lords."

In connection with Judah we might take the subject of priestly Intercession, of which we have a beautiful picture in Genesis xlv. 18-34. Look at it closely and you will find it a beautiful picture of the intercession of Christ. In the next era we have Moses (Ex. xxxii.-xxxiv.) interceding for his people. This is more than a picture. It is with God (not with Pharaoh) that Moses intercedes, and in his intercession there is potency indeed. But after all it was only a shadow, as was that of Aaron and of all the priests of his line throughout the Old Testament, of the effectual pleadings of the Great Intercessor who, when on earth, lifted up His eyes to heaven and poured out His spirit in such pleadings as are recorded in the 17th chapter of John, and who, now in heaven at the right hand of God, "maketh continual intercession for us."

These are some of the thoughts connected with the idea of the Saviour. We might take the "Saved People" in the same way. In Genesis, as before, there

are simply promises—the promise of the seed, of the many nations, and that in the coming seed all nations shall be blessed. There was no sign of fulfillment then, and not only so, but all human prospects seemed against it. When we come to the next era, we find, not fulfillment yet, but the potency of it. We find in Deut. xxxiii. 29, such a passage as this: “Happy art thou, O Israel who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency.” This idea of a saved people, as represented in a people saved, first from Egypt and then from Babylon, runs throughout the Old Testament. When you come to the New Testament you find there “the few” and “the many” of the days of fulfillment; the few of the earlier era, beginning with the first coming of Christ, and the great multitude of the later era, of which the second coming is the point of sight; the few, beginning with the very few, that gathered around our Saviour here on earth, extending in numbers as the time advances, greatly multiplying as they are to-day; and yet, after all, so few compared with what shall be, when the promise is at last fulfilled. But the time of fullest fulfillment is certainly coming, when “the great multitude, which no man can number, out of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, shall stand before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.”

These are some of the great things that originate in the patriarchal era in Genesis, are developed throughout the Mosaic and Christian eras, and are brought to their final issue in the era of the “Regeneration”; but we might even take particulars, and find interesting lines of study there too. For instance: the lion in the Shiloh



prophecy in Genesis, the lion in Balaam's prophecy, the lion of God in Isaiah (Ariel), and in the book of Revelation, "the lion of the tribe of Judah," pointing back to the old Shiloh prophecy in Genesis. But it is not our purpose now to enter into details. The illustrations we have chosen may serve to give some idea of the relation of Genesis to the rest of the Bible.

III. Now let me call your attention in conclusion to the book of Genesis as a whole, as a suggestive picture of the world in which we live. When we read over this book of Genesis we find great expectations and great promises in the beginning and throughout its progress, and in the end disappointment and great darkness. "In the beginning, God!" what expectation does not this grand exordium awaken, when we remember who God is, and what He is; what His glory, what His power, what His love, what His grace! "In the beginning, God"—How does it end? "A coffin in Egypt!" That is the end. So, too, with the great promises made to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob. "I will be a God to thee." "I will be thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." What glorious expectations are excited there, and what is the end? A coffin in Egypt.

Now, this seems to me to be just a picture of this world, so far as we can see, and so far as we can know. It is this world, as it is to sight and as it is to science. There are glorious expectations here. We look back to the origin of things, and we find wonderful preparations. We can trace back the history of our earth through the geological epochs, and find extraordinary development, wonderful evolution—rising, rising, rising up through inanimate creation, and then through the animate creation, until

at last it reaches its crown and consummation in Man ; and now what glorious prophecies are there in man's nature, and what magnificent expectations in connection with his work and destiny ! But, after all these hopes are so excited and stimulated, and we soar as high as heaven in our skyward aspirations, the end is *a coffin*.

In Egypt perhaps. Yes, in Egypt. Egypt is a great country. It is the land of the pyramids. It is the land of the Sphinx, of science and art, of culture and civilization. In this nineteenth century civilization, of which we are so proud, we have better than Egyptian culture. We have better than Egyptian art. We have lordly magnificence all around us. There is wonderful progress in inventions and discovery—there seems no limit to the possibilities of inventive art and genius—the Egypt of the future bids fair to throw the Egypt of the present as far into the shade as it has already cast the Egypt of the past ; but what is your portion and mine in the Egypt of the future ? A coffin in it. Yes, that is the end for you and me and every one of us, so far as this world is concerned : a coffin in Egypt.

In this world, as in Genesis, there is much blessed light. There are many beautiful things in it ; many things to admire, many things to impress us and inspire us ; but it all ends in darkness. Hope springs exultant at the outset. Then it is " the evening and the morning." But when you reach the end you find the order has been sadly inverted. It is now the morning and the evening and the night. Can it be of God then, of Him who calls Himself " the Father of Lights ?" Can it be that the development which commenced, " In the beginning, God," shall end with a coffin ? No, it can not be.

If it had been, "In the beginning, Fate," or, "In the beginning, Chance," or, "In the beginning, Law," it might have been. But seeing that it is, "In the beginning, God," it can not be.

But is it not the end? Yes; but of what? Of *Genesis*. It is only the end of the beginning. That is the explanation of it all. Here is the key by which we can get out of the dark dungeon. "Now we see through a glass darkly." Now we know in part. Now we see only the beginnings of things. That is the reason they sometimes look so dark and so dreadful. And though to sight, and even to science, death seems to be the end of all our hope, remember that to Faith it is the end of the beginning only. What a cheering thought it is to think that this life, that seems bounded by a grave, that seems to have so dark an end, is only the Genesis of our history. All the rest is yet to come, beyond the coffin in Egypt. It is because this life is only our Genesis that there is so much of prophecy in it, and so much of promise in it, and so little of fulfillment here. But beyond the coffin in Egypt there is an Exodus, without any wanderings. There is Joshua, the captain of the Lord's host in the heavenly places; and Judges too (Matt. xix. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3), but no desolating wars. There are Kings, but no Prophets ("whether there be prophecies; they shall cease"). There are Psalms, but no Lamentations. There are Gospels without a cross. There are Acts of loving service without a dungeon. And whether in that world beyond the grave there be any need of Epistles, I can not tell; but this we know, that there shall be a glorious Apocalypse, when the veil

is drawn and the glory is seen. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear"—He on whom all hopes are centred; to whom all the types did point; of whom all the prophets spake; in whom all the promises have been fulfilled—when He shall appear, the second time, in His glory, "we shall be like Him." And what our surroundings shall be then we can not tell; but we know that there will be the fulfillment of every true desire and longing of the sanctified soul. All these promises, all these expectations, all these aspirations of our Genesis life, will be fulfilled in the coming Apocalypse of glory.

"Jerusalem the Golden,  
Methinks each flower that blows  
And every bird a-singing,  
Of thee some secret knows.  
I know not what the flowers  
Can feel or singers see,  
But all these summer raptures  
Are prophecies of thee.

"Jerusalem the Golden,  
When sunset's in the west,  
It seems thy gate of glory,  
Thou city of the blest!  
And midnight's starry torches  
Through intermediate gloom,  
Are waving with their welcome  
To thy Eternal Home.

"Jerusalem the Golden,  
Where loftily they sing  
O'er pain and sorrows olden  
Forever triumphing;

Lowly may be thy portal  
And dark may be thy door,  
The Mansion is immortal—  
God's Palace for His poor."

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.'

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