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**THE PROPHET OF GLORY.**



THE  
PROPHET OF GLORY;

OR,

*ZECHARIAH'S VISIONS*

OF

*The Coming and Kingdom of Christ.*

BY

J. DENHAM SMITH.

"Above the dissonance of time,  
And discord of its angry words,  
I hear the everlasting chime,  
The music of unjarring chords.

"Glad song of this unburdened earth,  
When holy voices then shall sing  
Praise for Creation's second birth,  
And *glory* of Creation's King."—BONAR.

LONDON:

JAMES E. HAWKINS, 17, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.;

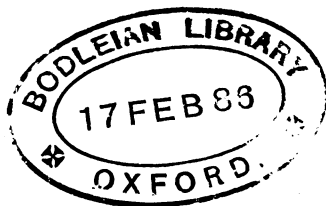
AND 36, BAKER STREET, W.

S. W. PARTRIDGE & CO., 9, PATERNOSTER ROW.

DUBLIN: 10, D'OLIER STREET.

PARIS: J. BONHEURE ET CIE, RUE DE LILLE.





" My joy, my life, my crown !  
My heart was meaning all the day  
Somewhat it fain would say ;  
And still it runneth muttering up and down  
With only this, my joy, my life, my crown !"  
— GEORGE HERBERT.

## PREFATORY NOTE.

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“Speak, lips of mine, and tell abroad  
The praises of thy God !  
Speak, stammering tongue, in gladdest tone !  
Make His high praises known.”

THIS is not a book hard to be understood, but one which a child, being a Christian, may easily read. I have called it *The Prophet of Glory*, because the prophet, in almost every page of his prophecy, is bright with the majesty and beauty of the coming Messiah. Some of the grandest lineaments of His person and glory are unveiled to us here. He has come, and He will come, is plainly seen. He has come as Saviour, in humiliation, to die ; He will come, as King in His glory, to reign—events so plainly stated, that the man who runs may read.

The several subjects are arranged in the order in which they appear in the prophecy, which begins with predictions of the coming glory, then goes on to what has since occurred, the humiliation and

sufferings of the Messiah, concluding with the glory to follow—reminding us of Hebrews xii., “Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God ;” and of Hebrews x., “Henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool.” Many of the truths relate to Israel's national and political condition, but the principles involved are of far wider application than merely to the Jew.

Zechariah, if not the most, is one of the most beautiful of all the prophecies—beautiful to read, and beautiful with brightening hope, which it sheds over the future of Israel and the world. It will be obvious that we have no sympathy with those who say they never so much as read prophecy, as if God would indulge us with the secrets of His breast, the vast, eternal counsels of His mind, and not mean that we should read. Not stranger would it be for a musician to neglect some of the sweetest chords of his lyre, or for an astronomer to shut his eyes to some of the brightest orbs which occupy and adorn illimitable space. No, we search the Scriptures; for they are they which testify of Christ. Mysteries there are, sublime heights and depths of wondrous things, many of which we cannot fully understand; yet are they presented to our faith. The Lord Himself said to His disciples,

and through them to us, "I call you not servants . . . but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

What fulness of favour! Blessed be His Holy name! The gospel is for the sinner, and we find the full glow of the blessed light of it here, which the sinner needs to show him the rest for his wearied soul. The gospel tells of the Door by which he must enter. But these secrets of God are for those *inside*, as the Lord has said—His "friends"—for those who have *believed*; the one for life, the other for food, for guidance, for our joy in God, and for our hope of glory.

Let us think how especially, now, should prophetic scripture be viewed with deepening, yea, deepest interest, and for this reason—the greater part of the prophecies, and in a certain sense, all the prophecies, will have their accomplishment at the expiration of this dispensation.

We would emphasize this; for what is near and coming to pass—events at once solemn and glorious—ought to be well known and pondered by us. Let the indolent think that when they do occur it will be too late then either to be convinced of their truth, or to use them for the conviction of others. Alas! the terrible judgment which will come upon those who despise them will then be sufficient

demonstration of their truth. To the Jew especially we would commend these pages, that he may see how a Gentile views the promises made to his fathers, and what reason there is for believing that the Messiah of the prophets, and the crucified, risen, and ascended Son of Man of the Evangelists, are one and the same ; moreover, that with confidence he may look for the coming again of his Messiah. Let him ask, Why has prophecy been given? Certainly not for the future merely, but to direct us now in our true knowledge of the Lord ; and to be our comfort and stay in enabling us to see that it is God, not man, who is controlling and disposing all events.

It will be seen how freely the thoughts of others have been made available for united testimony on the great truths of doctrine and prophecy. They unitedly own that it is only by revelation God has shed light on the world, or on ourselves—the immense love He has for us, the ruin He has seen us to be in, and the salvation He has provided ; and that it is only the believer who can confidently affirm, “ *I know whom I have believed ;*” or of these prophecies can say—

“ Sweet, for they are the channels  
Through which His teachings flow ;  
Sweet, for by these dark secrets  
His heart of love I know.”

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I.

**Prelude to the Prophecy.**



## PRELUDE TO THE PROPHECY.

---

"OH, be my theme a hidden stream which silently may flow  
Where drooping leaf and thirsty flower in lowly valleys grow,  
And often by its shady course to pilgrim hearts be brought  
The quiet and refreshment of an upward pointing-thought,  
Till, blending with the broad bright stream of sanctified endeavour,  
God's glory be its ocean home, the end it seeketh ever."

## First Part.

### PRELUDE TO THE PROPHECY.

“Turn we to listen to the wondrous theme,  
And from the world, and the world's sin removed,  
In sweet retirement with this book of God  
To cherish contemplation on each line,  
Replete with meanings high and wonderful,  
Indited by the Lord, the Comforter.”

WE have no minute memorials of the prophets. They lived, it would seem, simple lives; and, as to possessing any real sympathy with the unbelieving generations around, they died lonely deaths. Not that they were alone; around their lamps were gathered those who were Israelites indeed, the true friends of God. They were not therefore without their brightness of communion with others, as some would picture them. Their minds, notwithstanding abounding gloom, were filled with hope while they lived; and, concerning their departure they “all died in faith” of a coming Saviour and Deliverer. They knew He would come. It was only a question of time. For the present, Israel and Jerusalem may have

no standing in the earth, no king, and no throne ; but the Lord had said, "Behold, thy King cometh." They had troubles and sorrows, and often hatred and wrong from man ; but wonderful, to gladden their souls, was the sure light of the revealed mind of God. They were led into a region of glorious hope. That hope was as *history pre-written* to the Old Testament saints ; they knew a Redeemer would come—one rich in names and wonderful in deeds ; and whatever the upheavings and overturnings of the nations, and however vague the notions respecting Him, to which they attained, they found "enough that was glorious to lift them above present sufferings, and convey to their hearts the strongest consolation. They got grand glimpses of the close relation in which they stood to that great and gracious Being, which filled their souls for the moment with ecstatic delight, and prevented them from ever again sinking into those depths of despair, of which they had previously so painful an experience."

No prelude to the prophecy would be complete without a reference to

#### THE PROPHET.

Zechariah was a post-captivity prophet. Why he is called one of the *minor* prophets, it is difficult to see.

His times and work were alike remarkable. He had been in Babylon, but was selected by God as one of those who would prophesy of things pertaining to Israel and the world long after that captivity had ceased.

His name is suggestive. It tells of the special favour conferred upon him by God. It signifies "*Remembered of the Lord*," which truly he was, not only as to himself personally, but through him in this, that God showed how, although Israel was in the deepest humiliation, He could never forget, but ever remember them for coming blessing.

It is interesting to think of him as young; God having taken him up early in life, as a fitting vessel for His divine treasure. In chapter ii. 4 we read, "Run, speak to *this young man*." The word "young man" is the same as that spoken by Jeremiah, when he pleaded "*I am a child*." Age is of no count with God. The great thing is the treasure and not the vessel. Hence, a child, being a Christian, under the teaching of the Spirit through the truth, may be as wise as a Daniel on the history of the world, or as a Zechariah on the coming kingdom, or as Paul on the Church, or as John on the glory of the kingdom.

#### THE PROPHET'S ANTECEDENTS

are remarkable. He was born in the city of the

world's first great empire. His father, whose name *Berechiah* signifies "*Blessed of God*," had been with those who sat by the rivers of Babylon, and who wept when they remembered Zion. It is in the earlier years of life that our memories are made; hence, if we could only think of it, the need of our living a careful childhood and youth, and a guarded subsequent age. Our memories and our tears, how nearly are they connected!

"How strange," writes a friend, "that our highest enjoyments should find their physical expression *in tears*! We feel a holy thrill of supernatural joy, and immediately the eyes are suffused with tears, as if to remind us that it was through those organs the fall occurred, and not until our eyes shall see the King in His beauty can our frame be capable of receiving a divine 'fulness of joy.' Our sorrows find expression in the same way. These exiles 'wept when they remembered Zion.'"

Touchingly and tenderly they said—"We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" With such as Daniel, Ezekiel, and others, our prophet had felt the sins and sorrows of the enslaved nation, to whom, notwithstanding all

vicissitudes, pertained the promises that, in time to come, would fill the whole earth with blessing. What a remembrance according to his name was this prophecy of God's faithfulness to these promises.

#### THE PROPHET'S TIME

was remarkable. "All around was Persian;" which nation in its great supremacy had caused all wars to cease, so that the whole earth was at rest, still as a stone, with none to pity Israel or care for Jerusalem in her ruin. Hence our prophecy was opportune. It was not one of tears, like that of Jeremiah; nor of gloom, like much of that which pervades Hosea; nor of dark predictions and times of perplexity, like that of Daniel. For the most part it is bright with the coming glory. To speak of Israel at all, the minor key must of necessity be there, yet might he be called the prophet of the glory, or, with Isaiah, "the evangelical prophet."

But I would especially note that in all prophecy there is nothing more remarkable than

#### THE PROPHET'S IMAGERY,

of which he might have said—

"Before me, as a darkening glass,  
Behold, what glorious outlines pass  
Of love, and truth, and holiness, and power!"

B

Every vision formed an image; and every image became an object by which the Angel who speaks to the prophet sought to instruct him. He is more phenomenal in his prophecy than any other prophet. We shall seek to unveil this imagery, not by any devices or ingenuity of our own, but in accordance with a principle running all through prophecy—namely, that wherever there is *a symbol* there is uniformly *a saying*. How else could we understand Daniel's imagery? or the imagery of the book of Revelation? where, for example, we have the red, the pale, and the black horses. The sayings explain the symbols—the red horse being war; the pale, famine; the black, death. Each image, to drop the figure, stands out to view clearly and definitely, having its own individuality of interest; and each one may be easily seen connected with or gliding into another, as the features of a landscape may be seen, forming a magnificent whole. Thus "the measuring line" comes after the destruction of "the four horns," and the crown and the mitre, and the bearing the glory, after the measuring line; *i.e.* after Israel is in the land, and Jerusalem is rebuilt and seated in her glory. Figure upon figure, some opulent with richest splendour, tell of the Lord Jesus Christ. Taking the wounds in the hands with their divine meaning, and the crown telling of a coming kingdom, we may hear it said,

"This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest ; and this is the refreshing." (Isa. xxviii. 12.) The same also with His Person as the "*Branch*," under whose royal shadow and protection the world will yet dwell. Each figure seems to say—

"He who has spoken to thy soul  
Hath many things to say ;  
He who hath gently taught,  
Yet more will make thee know ;  
He who so wondrously hath wrought,  
Yet greater things will show."

Imagination, like all the other powers of our nature, has its passions and its wants. Accordingly, how must the prophet have fed on such remarkable images as the four horns, the four carpenters, the flying roll, and the ephah. He saw in these how God would fill up the history and the destiny, not only of His own people, but of the world ; in fact, the past, the present, and the future of things on the earth lay before His meditative eye, reaching from the settlement of the few antediluvians who survived the flood, on through all the great kingdoms and dynasties of the earth, to the time when, under Israel's Messiah, they would all become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ.

Wonderful was the knowledge which thus the mere imagery would give. How one can imagine



the prophet's deductions therefrom. They were encouraging as wonderful; for though the crown had passed from the house of David, and Jerusalem was the prey of the spoiler—the city a ruin, and her people carried away captive—yet, like a river of Life running through a world of barrenness and misery, must the magnificent prospects appear, as taught by the crown on the head of Joshua, the daughter of Zion glad, the feet of Messiah on Olivet, with the enemies of Israel utterly slain.

In his closing vision he saw the Lord and His saints reigning *on the earth*, holiness inscribed on all, and the Canaanite, the foe, or the mere trafficker, as the word means, no longer in the land. The prophet, as we have said, was born in an evil day, and could only know of his people as their history and prophecy told him, or as his elders had taught him; but all that had been taught of the past was verified by these images, and all that was still future was made to pass definitely before him. The days of David and Solomon, with all their glory, had long since gone; but here was a greater than Solomon, whose kingdom would never end, whose peace was not to be broken with the broken bonds and covenants of man. It was to be what the world had never known, *an everlasting peace*, the glory of which would

never fade. But next to the interest of the imagery was

## THE PROPHET'S AWAKENINGS.

It was on lifting up his eyes that he became so absorbed with their sight. (See chap. i. 18.) We read, "*Then lifted I up mine eyes;*" and again, in chap. ii., "*I lifted up mine eyes.*" In chap. iv. 1, he is as one whose eyelids are fast down, either in silent contemplation, or heavy with sleep; but he is awakened by the angel. In chap. v. we find his eyes lifted again. Remarkable it all is, as if impossible for him not to be overcome, either with deepest contemplation or by inglorious slumber. Naturally we think of Paul's word of exhortation to the Romans (chap. xiii. 11, 12), "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep;" for truly the sinner sleeps, and Christians sleep. But, oh, what an awakening when the day of the Lord shall have come! For in that we are deeply and nearly interested for sorrow or for joy. The means employed to awaken the prophet was the angel. We have the Word and Spirit of God. Near two thousand years have rolled away since Christianity began. The prophet opened his eyes far back in the early years of the first world-power. We live where the fourth power yet is, and near when Israel will be

saved, and nearer still to our own hope, soon to be realized, the hope for which we have been saved. "*Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*" Not that we are nearer being saved, or nearer to the knowledge of it, but nearer the blissful consummation when Christ shall have come. (1 Thess. iv.)

But remarkable as these images and symbols are, they are not the highest form of divine communication; they are not the incarnate WORD. The ancients understood by the term *Logos* "a complete idea," or "a completed idea expressed." This Christ was—a completed idea expressive of God, far more complete than creation; for "the Word *was* God, and the Word was made flesh . . . and we beheld" (have contemplated) "His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Elsewhere John says, "The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father: He hath declared," or, as some read, "explained Him." None should fail to notice

#### THE CHARACTER OF THE PROPHECY.

It is the future of *time*, of which it speaks—the future of this world. There is no notice whatever of heaven, or of those heights far above all others, to which, along with the risen Christ, we of this dispensation by faith have come; there is no

minute delineation, not a thought even, of that better country which formed the desire of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who "looked for a city, whose builder and maker is God." The city celestial of Rev. xxi., which is yet to come down from God out of heaven, and which in the eternal state will be the tabernacle of God with men, where all tears shall be wiped away from all faces, comes not to the prophet's mind. Other Scriptures tell of its glories, but that of which he treats is the futurity of this world, of Israel, God's people in it, of the nations, and of the Messiah, God's beloved Son. A wonderful future truly, into which God leads us, taking us into His confidence as to His own counsels, spreading out for us His knowledge, where we have special discernment of His grace and goodness all unchanging and unchanged. He could not give us a more tender place in His love and confidence (Gen. xviii. 17), nor anything having a holier tendency as regards ourselves. But it is on

#### THE MORAL EFFECT OF THE PROPHECY

in our souls that I would now dwell. From such a field we ought to reap a harvest of true personal benefit. It has been well said that "men are known by the ends they are pursuing. If this be so, our conduct in the present life will have the impress and bearing of that futurity we are expecting. Our

life here will be coloured by the foretaste of a life there. Those whose ambition is dignity and power, those who dream only of riches, those who have no other aim than the pleasures of this world, act according to that which is in their heart; their habits bear the mark of what they long for. So is it with us; if the faithful understood their calling, which is no less than participation in a coming heavenly glory, what would be the consequence? Nothing less than viewing themselves as strangers and pilgrims on the earth. They would judge the spirit of the age, and would preserve their hearts from being engrossed by human objects, and from many a care and distraction hurtful to the life of a Christian. They would exercise a happy dependence upon Him who has ordered all things, and who knows the end from the beginning, and would yield themselves entirely to that hope which has been given them, and to the discharge of those duties which flow from it. Our passions, instead of being unduly perturbed and anxious, let loose in a world of politics, would be quieted, as we observed what God has said. We should be tranquil. Living practically separated from the world, we can study beforehand the profound and perfect wisdom of God."

## II.

### **The Four Horns.**

## THE FOUR HORNS.

---

“How long shall that dear land  
Lie low and desolate,  
Its cities in the dust,  
Silence in every gate?

“Must the hard Gentile heel  
Still tread their city down,  
While from afar they see  
Its bulwarks overthrown?

“To Thine own chosen flock  
The great deliverance bring ;  
Show this astonished earth  
That Thou art Israel’s King.”

## Second Part.

### THE FOUR HORNS.

“Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns.”

AS the disciples enquired of the Lord concerning the meaning of His parables (which indeed were spoken pictures), so the prophet sought explanation from the interpreting angel as to the meaning of this imagery. We need none other. By means of his interpretation we are enabled to penetrate the darkness into which the world has yet to enter, and see the light and blessedness which lie beyond. This whole passage supplies us with an example of how the sayings in this book explain the symbols. The four horns are the four great world powers which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. The four carpenters show that they who destroyed Jerusalem are themselves to be destroyed. Nothing need be plainer. Remarkable it may seem, but Jerusalem is the centre of all God's dispensational



arrangements. The land of Israel is called "Immanuel's land." "*The land*, saith the Lord, *is mine*;" and again, "*Thy land, O Immanuel*." (Isa. viii. 8.) All other lands are dealt with in relation to it. No Gentile empire was ever allowed to rise into universal sovereignty—all were held, as it were, in check—until Israel, God's elect people, and Jerusalem had been sufficiently tried, and had fully manifested their unworthiness. They received their pre-eminence that they might chasten Jerusalem; and when they have fulfilled this purpose they themselves in judgment will be set aside, and made, because of their own evil, "like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors." This is God's programme respecting the politics of the world. The course and doom of the four horns the prophet plainly delineates. The four horns, as we have said, are

#### THE FOUR GREAT WORLD POWERS.

That prophetically in view is their hard, warlike character. The horn is the symbol of power. "I said to the wicked, Lift not up the horn." (Ps. lxxv. 4.) In the vision of Rev. v. the Lord, the Lamb, is seen as "having seven horns," the perfection of power. These four horns, we are told, are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. Each is named, because each in turn

for thousands of years has been wasted by them. Jerusalem yet lies in heaps, and the land is desolate. Far back as the prophet Jeremiah it was foretold, "The Chaldeans shall fight against this city, and burn it with fire." (Jer. xxxvii. 5, 8.) And the fourth empire, we know, made it a melancholy monument of its devastating power. How minute thus is the display of the divine foreknowledge! Man can tell only what *has* occurred; God tells us what *will* occur. Who can look at this imagery, which fills up the history of the world, and not see His foreknowledge? The kingly head of gold, surmounted by its imperial diadem, how suggestive of the great glory and magnificence of the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar! Then the breast and arms, ample and strong, in which are set forth the greatness of the Medo-Persian power. Farther down are the thighs, firm and stable, upbearing the weight of it, telling of the great Grecian power which next bore up the empire of the world; whilst standing amidst its ten kingdoms, the feet partly iron and partly clay, is Rome—the mistress of the earth. Thinking of this image, and looking down the long line of centuries which it represents, we see how faithful to His design have been the dealings of God with the world.

The other images in Daniel of the wild beasts, telling of the same powers, are far different from

the serene golden head of the first. They are ferocious, destructive-looking creatures, answering more to the carpenters, whose work it was to fray and destroy. It is sufficiently awakening and absorbing to the mind only to look at them—the Babylonish empire, a lion with wings, at rest in its greatness, or waiting to devour its prey; the Medio-Persian, a ferocious bear lying, yet lifted up on one side, fierce of countenance, with three ribs, the wreck of some other in its mouth; the Grecian, a leopard with four heads, and four wings ready at any moment to seek what it can to devour; the Roman, more dreadful than all—a ten-horned ferocious beast, wild, and awful to devour. Who can see them without bowing with awe before the Supreme Ruler whose images these are, telling of the nations and doings of this sin-burdened earth, how they have ruled in sin, each the enemy of Israel, without God and without hope in the world? As we live close to the terminating extremity of these images, or the times they represent, our interest deepens in them. To know their doom is one thing; but to know our own place, as saved from it, should be with us a great concern. Our prophet doubtless had full knowledge of Daniel's prophecy, and would compare it with his own. He would see these horns as hard, relentless, destructive horns, which could easily uproot cities and

countries, and Daniel's wild beasts as fitted for the same. Once the government was transferred by God to them they became the oppressors of His people.

It is interesting to trace out the beginning, and observe the issues, of these times of the Gentiles. The kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar rooted as far back as Babylon or Babel, which had its beginning in those who descended from the ark, which, while it saved Noah and his family, became the cradle of the new world. They came from Ararat to Shinar. Shinar was the ancient name of Chaldea or Babylonia, of which Babylon was the metropolis. It was founded by Nimrod 2233 years before Christ. Its greatness under Nebuchadnezzar takes its date 680 years before Christ. Empires, like great rivers, can be traced to their source. Thus Babel was the scene of the first fathers of the new world. Mesopotamia, where idolatry soon took the place of the true God, was where Abram was born—an idolater.

"Between B.C. 2000 and 500," remarks Dr. Delitzsch, in his interesting *Walk Through Ancient Babylon*, "Babylonia was the garden of the world! The land—surrounded like an island by two of the finest streams in the world, the Euphrates and Tigris, the rivers of Paradise, is truly the gift of both. They flowed with swift current from the

Armenian highlands into the sea now known as the Persian Gulf."

Herodotus, in his writings, leaves off abruptly when he comes to speak of the fertility of Babylonia, since no one, he says, who has not been there would credit his words. Its richness in corn and palm-trees surpassed that of all other countries; its fields bore even more abundant fruit than Egypt. It was an inexhaustible garner, and a palm-grove too, as far as the seashore; besides, there were gathered sesame and apples and other fruits in abundance, whilst wheat and barley gave the labourer two, and even three, hundredfold. Verily a happy clime, under beautiful skies! Large cities were there guarded by wall and tower. The moment you had one behind you, a second and third rose on the horizon; especially the temples, proudly towering in ether, with their gradually receding terraces built on gigantic foundations, arrest the eye. In the early morning the first rays of the rising sun, falling on the pinnacles of those temples, covered with white marble, or shining with gold or bronze, presented a fairylike spectacle, while all around a thick fog was spread over the scenery. The wide streets were enlivened by vehicles of every description; slender bridges stretched across the canals; and these, running like arteries throughout the country, intended at first merely for irrigating purposes,

allowed traffic to be established from city to city ; and between towns and villages spread richly-cultivated cornfields, well marked out by boundary lines, also fertile meadows on which grazed extensive herds of cattle and flocks of sheep.

City after city, separated by palm-groves or other plantations, met the eye. There lay Dur-Kurigalzee, the double city of Sepharvaim, older than the deluge, Sippar, the city of the sun-god, and Sippar, the city of the morning-star. The Greek and Roman writers, charmed with its truly heavenly beauty, paint in glowing terms this land so highly blessed by nature and by art.

To the south of this spot, and therefore in the very heart of the land, lay Babylon, "the gate of God." The streets and roads situated towards the north of the town led to the cities just mentioned, and further up the Tigris to Assyria, to Armenia, and to the mountain passes of Media, whilst southwards they ran in the direction of Middle and Southern Babylonia, and of the ancient cities of Nippur, Erech, and Larsa. Babylon's position, too, greatly enhanced its commercial advantages. While the river communication allowed it to trade with the royal Assyrian cities, such as Karkemisch, and from these with the Mediterranean, traffic was maintained by means of vessels sailing southward, with the town of Ur and the shores of the Persian

Gulf, from which, on the other hand, were imported the products of Arabia, and perhaps also of India. In this way the whole commerce of Western Asia flowed into Babylon, bringing the inhabitants of the giant city riches upon riches.

Yes ; Babylon became more and more of a giant city, and especially so in Nebuchadnezzar's reign, and still more when the Persian monarchs took it for their winter residence ; and this continued until after its seizure by Alexander the Great. The population, which certainly attained to the number of two or three millions, was nourished by commerce and trade.

Concerning the king's palace, the same writer remarks: "Bathed on one side by the Euphrates is situated the king's palace, forming the central point of the city. This palace, which Nabopolassar had built and surrounded by a strong wall, needed repairing even in Nebuchadnezzar's time, the foundation having in some places given way through inundations. Nebuchadnezzar, however, more solicitous than any other Babylonian prince for Babylon, the 'city of Merodach,' had not only repaired the damage, but gave it a new foundation, and raised it 'mountain high.' He also enlarged it and filled it with the spoils of his enemies. This palace is built on a high terrace. But whilst Esagila consists of a principal building around

which are collected the priests' dwellings, the palace, divided into countless apartments and galleries traversed by numerous courts, forms a small town. The walls of the rooms and corridors, longer than they are broad, are partly covered with alabaster, and partly formed of finely-varnished tiles, which are merely painted with blue, red, dark yellow, white or black colours, or ornamented with arabesques, or with gorgeous hunting or battle scenes. Within this roomy palace, or as the Babylonians call it, this 'palace city,' dwells, surrounded by a brilliant courtier throng, Nebuchadnezzar, King of kings, King of Babylon, the August, the Sublime, the daily Provider, the 'Faithful Shepherd of mankind,' whose sceptre sways the whole of Western Asia, as far as Egypt and the boundary of Ethiopia. Here, in the 'dwelling of pleasure and joy,' congregate all nations; and 'mankind' humbly lays before the all-powerful monarch its heavy tribute, approaching him through the gates of the palace, guarded by gigantic bulls with human heads. But other kings, pining in darkness, dwell within the lofty palace walls. Two of them are well known; the Jewish kings, Jehochin, who was ultimately to be pardoned, and Zedekiah, that unhappy prince of the house of David, whom, after he had seen his children massacred before his eyes, the red-hot iron consigned to the night of despair."



In keeping with these palaces was the splendour of Babylon itself. At our feet spreads in endless length the wondrous city, "the city of life;" over its noisy and ceaseless bustle the colossal buildings of the walls and palaces tower, still and majestic, memorials of victory, erected by the sweat of the vanquished foe. Below stretches the carefully-kept park of Esagila, from which projects the palace of Nabopolassar, the pinnacle of the temple mirrored in the tranquilly-flowing Euphrates, animated by hundreds of ships, whose masts form a boundless forest. Below Esagila we descry the large Euphrates bridge, built by Nebuchadnezzar himself, supported by columns of hewn stone, also a monument of extraordinary labour and art. Not far from the river, towards the south-west, arise in the wonderfully clear air the pyramids of Borsippa.

And wherever the eye ranges, we see on all hands houses and gardens, fine fields and palm groves, towns and villages.\* Now we understand how Nebuchadnezzar, wandering upon his palace walls, exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?"

Such was the magnificence of the first great

\* From the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, January, 1885.

power of the Gentiles. We truly are astonished by the size and the magnificence of its royal city, built as for eternity. But of all its pomp and splendour, it has left only three mighty heaps of ruins.

It is interesting thus to see the kingdom concerning which God had said, "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon . . . that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand." (Jer. xxvii. 5-8.)

In Daniel iv. he is likened to a tree of magnificent foliage, whose appearance extended to the ends of the whole earth. His mightiness had reached the skies, and his dominion unto the end of the earth; but he knew not that the heavens do

rule. How he dealt with Jerusalem, the horn rooting it up, is told in 2 Kings xxv. 9. The city was in flames, burnt by Nebuchadnezzar. Nothing was too sacred or too costly to be destroyed. "He burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house [those palaces of the princes and nobles of Judah, symbols of Israel's byepast glory] burnt he with fire." How the carpenter wrought on Babylon may be seen when "in that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain."

The next horn, as told by Daniel, is that of Medio-Persia, the same as the second wild beast in Daniel's vision, which, as we have seen, lifted itself up first *on one side*; *i.e.* Media first, then Persia was incorporated with it. This power, having had its day of worldly supremacy and great glory, was in its turn destroyed. Next followed the Grecian. The third horn answers to Daniel's third image, which was, as we have seen, a leopard, powerful and swift of movement, such as Alexander was. It had "four wings and four heads," answering to the four divisions of the empire after the death of Alexander, when his four generals took possession. But Greece also is gone. It had its day, filled the world with its exploits, and was, like its predecessors, of vast resource and wide dominion; but it too is gone. The place which knew it (the

cradle of the arts and of Christianity) knows it now no more.

The fourth horn is the marvellous Roman power. That empire took its name from Rome. From small beginnings and slow progress history tells us "the Romans conquered almost every nation, and became mistress of the world. Their empire extended 2,600 miles from north to south, and 5,000 miles from east to west. For upwards of 200 years before Christ they were governed by kings, afterwards by consuls, tribune, and dictators in turn. In the year 328 they were divided into two distinct empires, subsequently into ten kingdoms, and subsequently again the Bishop of Rome became prince of Rome.\* But by both Pagan and Papal rulers the Jew was the subject of supreme hate. Jerusalem and her land were alike trodden down and desolate. How one thinks of Daniel, of the truth of Him who was Daniel's God, and who saw all from the beginning. When one sights the ten kingdoms the image of the last beast, with the ten diadems, at once comes to mind. Marvellous was the great Roman power with the Roman world it created. It put down all other powers, and is especially noted for this, first, that it crucified the Son of God, and next its awful massacre of the Jews. "It was," says Daniel, "dreadful and terrible and strong ex-

\* See Introduction to BAGSTER'S *Comprehensive Bible*.

ceedingly, and it had great iron teeth ; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it." Besides "ten horns," which we are told are ten kingdoms, there was a "little horn," a simple feature, but of awful import ; for it shall "pluck up three of the ten horns." Its eyes were "like the eyes of man," and a mouth speaking great things." This fourth beast in Rev. xiii. is seen to have revival.

Many stumble at this, but Rev. xvii. explains it where it speaks of the beast that "was" (in the past), "and is not" (as now). "He is the eighth that is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." Meanwhile all around us is Roman. Our laws, politics, jurisprudence, &c., are all the continuation of what Rome once was. It is well to ask, How far now, down the stream of time do these four kingdoms bring us? For upon the revival of this last "a fiery stream issued, and came forth from before Him ;" *i.e.* before Christ, the Ancient of Days, who will have come. "Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him ; the judgment was set, and the books were opened. . . . The beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." What wondrous history in these words ! Let us think how time has been running on, and how near the world is to this. The first

three of the great powers are gone ; the last, compared with the time allowed to its predecessors, has grown old, and its doom on its revival is next when its very *being* is to be destroyed.

In the meantime, what are these powers but instruments in the Lord's hand. "He only," writes another, "is the supreme Judge, witnessing the actions and presiding over the destinies of nations and of men. Little did the great actors in violent collision think of Him. Yet it was He who elevated or deposed them from their thrones, and precipitated nations to the dust. They intended their own will. He did His. In this respect how true it is, "Out of the eater came forth meat." Little did Cyrus think when he came along the tide of conquest to great Babylon that he was led by the hand of God to fulfil prophecies, and realize the visions of the prophets. Little did Alexander think when he subdued the thrones of the East that he was only following out the course that had been chalked out for him ages before, and thus verifying the inspired Word. Little did the Romans think, in their career of ambition and conquest, breaking down one kingdom after another, till the whole earth became one country and empire, that they were only fulfilling the same." Still Jerusalem lies in the dust. One reason, I believe, why England for so long has been favoured by God is, that more

than any other nation on the earth, she has favoured the Jew. England's own national greatness, so-called, dates from the time when the Jew was so specially taken under the protection of one of her greatest rulers.

Moreover, through God's sovereign goodness she has become the fount whence the written Word of God has been issued to the tribes and kingdoms of the world.\* Let anyone think of this world *without* the word of God, what a ruin with no clue to its misery! what darkness and death! for "where there is no vision the people perish." The nation's sins have been, and are, many. It is surely on these two grounds that the secret lies of her still continued height, as seen in her vast colonies and dependencies.

#### ENGLAND'S WORLD-WIDE EMPIRE.

One writing of the envoys that visit her says, "They come laden with petitions to the lady whose

\* Who can think of more than 100,000,000 copies directly issued by it in more than 260 languages and dialects? or who can think of a number not much smaller issued by societies to whose birth and life this society has given impulse, without acknowledging the boon thus conferred upon mankind? The great need, alike of heathen lands and of Christendom itself, is the enlightening, emancipating, saving word of God. And wonderful, now, the issue of the Revised Version! Tons upon tons of copies have gone forth, as if the Divine Being would flash forth His Light and Truth anew over an age deepening in its need. Who can estimate what to our world is the value of the written word of God?

favour has extended to the far-away courts, where their masters hold a savage sway."

It is indeed one of the responsibilities of this world-empire that all the year through we should be receiving a continuous succession of ambassadors from distant sovereigns, who have discovered that even they are not beyond the ever-extending circle within which our influence may be felt, or crownless kings who are buoyed up by the hope of regaining their own if they can but once lay their plaint at the foot of the English throne. Rome in the height of her splendour had nothing corresponding to this, and even Byzantium, which aimed at cultivating the friendship of the barbarian chiefs whom the Basileus despised, never saw at the Imperial Court so varied an assemblage of Plenipotentiaries as those who, either permanently or on extraordinary occasions, assemble round our QUEEN on a Levée day. Parthians and Medes are there, Elamites and the dwellers in Mesopotamia. Beside the representatives of the Great Powers range, with the rights of ambassadors from sovereign states, the ministers of nationalities the very names of which were unknown when this century was young. Hawaii and Hayti, Liberia and the Orange River Republic, are creations almost of yesterday; and though Monaco, San Marino, and the ancient Republic of Andorra do



not consider their interests so weighty as to require the aid of an Envoy—Siam, China, Muscat, Japan, and Morocco, which were, until recently, in much the same case, are now either permanently or at frequent intervals present with us in the person of most accomplished representatives. Every now and again the list is being extended. We have already consuls in Samoa and Tonga, and it is certain, should the inevitable annexation not intervene, that before long some swarthy diplomatist from these far away islands will apply for his *exequatur* to the court of St. James's.

But what is the tenure of it all? Its tenure rests, not on the power of man, not on past success, but on the Divine will. All the Powers at one time appeared to be permanent; and it was His will to set up one and put down another. The vast states of the world, their multitude or their resources, were nothing to Him. The millions who formed the great Assyrian, and the greater Roman Empires, how have they melted away!

So now of the younger nations. What of the fifty millions across the Western Ocean? or the vast empire now at the head of the world's military Powers? or the millions that tenant these islands of the West? When they have answered the Divine purpose they will be set aside. No will

of man could save them. Pre-written was the fate of the nations long since in their graves, and pre-written is the history, as we have seen, of those yet to be destroyed. Ground to powder!—according to the truth-telling image—will be what now remains of those feet partly iron and partly clay; and it is on these when they have done their work of chastening the Jew, and treading down Jerusalem, the stone will fall. Would that the kings of the earth and the judges were led to the study of this image, and to an understanding of the word of God, that they may be instructed as to the true politics of this world, and see that they themselves are only serving a temporary purpose in its government! The true judge is God, whose purpose is to set all other governments aside, and place His own Son “King upon His holy hill of Zion.”

In order to this the stone breaks the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold—all like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, which the wind driveth away. The stone striking it becomes a great mountain, filling the whole earth.

And now let us not forget, but specially remember, that here and there in the midst of the kingdoms indicated are the true children of God. They are now for the most part just where the stone will fall. Taken up out of this present evil

age, they are not to be of it, or to be in the judgment coming on the earth. Some may ask, What of the day of grace? It began after the times of the Gentiles had their beginning, and it will cease ere those times come to an end. It is a day which had its commencement at the cross, and will end ere the last great Gentile head is cast into his fiery doom. The world is a rebel world; but (as in a time of amnesty) God on the ground of grace reigning in righteousness can save the rebellious also. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

Blessed Lord! Nations die, but their peoples live for ever! Oh, give Thy Church in this the day of salvation, to carry the lamp of the Word into all the world, and to every creature! The time is short. Man's breath is in his nostrils, ready, as it were, to depart at any moment. It is but a little time. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

### III.

## The Measuring Line.

## THE MEASURING LINE.

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**"HER shining palaces will teach the world  
That God is faithful, and His promise sure."**

### Third Part.

## THE MEASURING LINE.

"Behold a man with a measuring line in his hand to measure Jerusalem. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord."

ZECH. ii. 1, 2, 10.

THERE are three wondrous things ascribed to God in Psalm cxlvii. First, that notwithstanding all the innumerable worlds that stud the firmament, "He telleth the number of the stars," "He calleth them all by their names." The second is, "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their griefs" (see margin), a word indicating the knowledge, tenderness, and power of Him who can know, feel for, and heal all the sorrows of His redeemed from the beginning of this grief-worn world to its very end. The third is, "He doth build up Jerusalem; He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel."

It has been said "dead nations never live again." An exception will be made here. "I do not ex-

pect," writes an aged Israelite,\* "that all Israelites will quit the lands in which they are happy; but that Jerusalem is destined to become the seat of a Jewish empire is the dream of my life, which will be fulfilled when I am no more." With the Jewish Scriptures in his hands, how else could he conclude?

#### JERUSALEM RESTORED

is a paramount idea in the Word. He who was crucified in Jerusalem will reign on its throne. Jerusalem, more than any other city on the earth, has had a wonderful past. It was chosen by God to be His own, the head and centre of all nations. It was the scene of vast political and national glory. It was visited by angels, and by the Son of God as the Angel of the covenant. There He lived and died, and lived again. Trodden down by the Gentiles for the present, it is to be restored to far more than its ancient greatness. Rebuilt, it will be the capital of the world. Momentous events, the re-appearing of the Son of man, the descent upon it of myriads of His saints, together with other august things, will yet occur there. Incredible this may be to some; but incredulity will not prevent the truth. The return of Israel to their own land is thus spoken of, "And it shall come to pass in that day that *the Lord*

\* Sir Moses Montefiore, now deceased, in his 101st year.

*shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left from Assyria and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall . . . assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."* Nothing could be plainer. This is a return utterly unlike that from Babylon, which was a return of Judah only, and not Israel. The return from Babylon was brief in its duration, whereas Scripture says, "*They shall no more be pulled up.*" (Amos ix. 15.) Moreover, their seed and their land shall remain for ever.

The time of their return is decisive. In that day, a day obviously from the context not yet come. For since Eden there has been nothing like what is described of Creation, or rather the creature in verses 6-9. It will be a day when the nations shall seek the Lord, which as yet they have never done. It will be a day, moreover, in which Christ will be here, and His rest shall be glorious.

People speak of difficulties, but I know of no difficulty when God decides to do a thing. Seas open, rivers are driven back to their source, dead men live again at His behest. The power of their great enemy, who rooted them out, extended from the Euphrates to the Thames; that it should



have gone from the face of the earth is not less wonderful than that Jerusalem should be supreme again. What were all the four empires we have considered but a long-continued expression of the divine indignation against Jerusalem? But Daniel tells of that indignation coming to its end. (Dan. vii.) What a change will then ensue! The programme is before us. Singular picture for the imagination is this measuring-line, which indicates possession.

Some speak as if this were accomplished. But what was done by Zerubbabel was only a faint image of what the prophecy describes. Words such as these have never yet had their fulfilment: "*My house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Ferusalem,*" to measure and rebuild. "*My cities through prosperity*" (divine goodness) "*shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Ferusalem. I will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.*" (Zech i. 16, 17; ii. 5.) "*Rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day. . . . The Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Ferusalem again.*" What nations were there under Zerubbabel, or after his time, that joined themselves to the Lord? Did the

Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, or Roman? We trow not. "What," said an old writer, "is the highest of all earthly good? what the sweetest solace in life? what the sweetest of joys? what the oblivion of all past sorrows? It is the Son of God upon the earth again; Jerusalem illuminated with the brightness of His light and heavenly discipline." For position and power she will be

#### A SUPREME CITY.

Her streets will be as the streets of heaven—visited by angels, and by the incarnate Son of God. It will be the city of the great King. The so-called "eternal city," and all other cities that now vie with each other for earthly glory, will be as nothing compared with her. Among its visitants will be heavenly and glorified beings; for as angels are ministering to us now, so it will be ours to minister in that day. "For not unto angels did He subject the inhabited earth to come." (R.V. marg. Heb. ii. 5.) I speak not now of what the city will be in its vast political and social influence over the earth, what its riches, its commerce, its power as mistress of the earth and of the seas, or what the splendour of its princes and its nobles. It is as towards God that details in the Word so plentifully abound. Grand is the account given of what its Temple will be, what the return to it of

the divine glory, and what its worship and its ordinances. In keeping with the description given of the temple is that of the land, with its glorious fertility, its sacred, clear-flowing waters issuing from under the threshold of the house; the extended boundaries of the land; its division, together with the plan of the city, and the name by which it shall be called—"Jehovah-Shammah, *the Lord is there.*" That name indicates its character. Moreover it shall be called

#### THE CITY OF TRUTH,

and the scene which it adorns "*the mountain of the Lord of hosts*"—"a holy mountain." God says, "*I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness. . . As I thought to punish you. . . So again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem.*" How beautifully personal to Himself the Lord makes it all! "*My house,*" "*My cities,*" "*I will dwell in the midst,*" "*My people,*" and "*I will be their God.*" Blessed Lord, how near to Thyself will Israel and all Thy saints be! What communion shall we not have with them and with Thee—Thy glory in the midst! Talk we of beauteous cities, public edifices, splendid suburbs,

decorated grounds adorned by the art of man? We may, but what can compare with Isaiah lx., which I take to mean Jerusalem? It says of its temple, "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet glorious." Ezekiel tells of the size and situation of the house, also its ground plan and elevation all minutely described; its varied ornaments graphically delineated; its ministry, its priesthood, and its appointed ritual. The account occupies whole chapters, and would require great skill to spiritualize. Some of the most eminent anti-millennarians decline giving any exposition, considering them as incapable of explanation; and so they are, if not taken to mean just what they indicate. But how gorgeous! When Solomon built a temple for the Lord, besides all other expenses there was without doubt more than a thousand tons of pure gold spread about and over it, until, as Josephus tell us, it appeared like a burning mountain under the eastern sun.\* Speaking of the latter days, God says (Haggai ii.), "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine" (which will be no longer spent for purposes of war, and for other vast evils of our day). "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former." In proof

\* *Out of Egypt.*

of this read Ezekiel xli., also Micah iv. 1-4. How else than beautiful, when God Himself will be the Artificer? "Our nature clings to beauty," said an eloquent statesman speaking of flowers. "Nothing is more touching than to see how human nature clings to it in these innocent and delightful forms." In Jerusalem restored, peace and safety will be in all its borders—borders beautiful indeed! Where will be seen the vine and the fig, the orange and the pomegranate, luscious fruits and beauteous bloom, with their sweetly-laden odours. It will be a city, above which will be seen skies illumined with heavenly light. Talk we of skies filled with the beauteous golden splendour of some setting sun. These will be filled with the glory of the new Jerusalem, come down from God out of heaven. Beneath its light the mountains will drop wine, and the valleys will be covered over with corn, where also are broad rivers and pure streams, and tree-clad banks rich with twelve manner of fruits. Peace and safety will be alike great. "No lion shall be there, nor ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there." Hence "*Jerusalem shall be A SAFE CITY, inhabited as towns without walls, for the multitude of men and cattle therein;*" "for I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of

*her.*" Walls tell of insecurity; and gates also. The gates of the heavenly Jerusalem shall be shut no more, and this earthly scene gloriously safe, defenceless as to man, but God a wall of fire round about. Hence "no galley with oars" shall go on its waters, no sword or spear of war shall gleam in its light, nor blood-stained warrior be found. Men shall learn the art of war no more. Therefore defences, fortifications, watch-towers, as of old, no more needed.

What need they then the gate and wall and tower,

"These dwellers in the Salem that shall be?  
Not as we need them now; for then no foe  
Assails. No fierce Assyrian more shall pitch  
His tent before thee, city of the blest;  
Or shake his spear against thy palaces.  
No Gentile battle-axe shall ever hew  
Thy rampart down, or thunder at its bars;  
No Roman torch shall fire thy shrine, or light  
Thy funeral pyre; no prophet, false or true,  
Shall mount thy walls to warn of coming doom;  
Or say, Flee out of her, her hour is come;  
Her day of trouble, and of treading down,  
Her day of farewell and captivity."

It will be

A CITY WITH NO SORROW.

Nothing could be plainer than Isaiah xxx. 19:  
"The people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem;

thou shalt weep no more." At what time in the past could it be said, "Thou shalt weep no more"? In Revelation we read, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." But not only Jerusalem. "They shall build the *old waste places*: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations." (Isa. lviii. 12.) It is all literal and all future; and indicative of a time when not only will Jerusalem be rebuilt, but the many cities of Palestine that once had their day will be again seen in more than their former magnificence and glory.

Thus Jerusalem and the land of Israel will in a pre-eminent way enjoy the fruits of the humiliation, suffering, and subsequent reign of the Lord Jesus as Son of man. It may seem a small territory; but as a small plate of the artist may display his most perfect art, and as a small instrument may set forth the consummate skill of its maker, so Jerusalem will display to the heavens and the earth how true and faithful in His character God has been, and how unchangeable have been His promises; and as principalities and powers in high places learn the exceeding riches of His grace in (*by or through*, R.V.) the Church, so the Church and those dwelling in the heavens will see in Jerusalem the Lord's manifested glory in the earth. As stars brightly shining in the heavens, and as isles of loveliness amid their waters of rest, so will Jeru-

saalem be. That the heavens will be observant of the scene none can question. There will be

## ANOTHER CITY.

The holy Jerusalem will come down from God out of heaven, not *to* the earth, as in the eternal state, but over it, as having connection with it. No reference to the one can be complete without a glance at the other. It will be "*The City of the Living God.*" Besides, God and the Lamb being there, the light and the glory of it, the patriarchs and the prophets have their names inscribed on its foundation (twelve apostles of the Lamb) and on its gates twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Enrolled among its freemen are such as David and Daniel, Caleb and Joshua, Moses and Elijah, Paul the apostle of the Gentiles, martyrs and confessors, an army of such who sealed their testimony with their blood during the ages of apostate and persecuting Christendom. Among the saintly women are Eve Sarah and Rebekah, Rachel and Asenath, Miriam and Deborah, Mary Magdalene, Mary the sister of Lazarus, and Mary the mother of the Lord; yea, all those who died in faith, and have fallen asleep in Jesus. Wonderful the words, "I will write upon him" (that overcometh) "the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God,



and mine own new name." (Rev. iii. 12, R.V.) We have sought to describe this city elsewhere,\* but mention of it cannot be omitted here. There cannot be this glory and blessedness of the kingdom in the heavens without its near connection with the earthly being blessed in its effect. Hence the words, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee . . . the Gentiles [nations] shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." It is in view of this day that so many voices of the prophets are heard, especially those of the Psalms. Precious in their application to us, they are notably the outburst of the saved nation. The 103rd is a grand setting forth of the past. The 104th, 133rd, 134th, 135th, with many others, tell of the glorious present; whilst the 126th is the natural expression of a joyous delight that all the long years of sorrow are past, and that instead, "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen—

The Lord hath done great things for them." "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Sweet indeed is their retrospective glance. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious

\* *The Brides of Scripture; or, Foreshadowings of the Coming Glory.*

seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." They had through a long history sown in tears, but now "sheaves"—sheaves of joy, of praise, of delight, for the earth's great harvest-home. They were captives; Jerusalem had been long trodden down. But that is past; all that is over; tears are wiped away. We may say concerning this city yet to come—

"Thy songs shall never cease; no night is thine,  
No death can find its way into thy streets,  
Or hang its drapery upon thy walls.  
Thy joy is full, thy light shall never fade;  
For the one Sun that cannot set has risen  
Upon thee with its holy health and love."

And now how are we affected by this? Are we longing to breathe the air of such a time? Are we praying, "Thy kingdom come"? What memories will be awakened! What reminiscences, as we tread mount Moriah, which is Calvary, where Abraham offered up his Isaac, and Thou wast crucified, blessed Son of God; or Olivet, where He who sowed in tears will reap in joy; or Bethany, the village of Martha and Mary and Lazarus, and where the Man of Sorrows was solaced in His weariness, as He rested in their loved and hospitable home; or as we tread the sheep-gate, through which the sacrifices in the days of old were led to be offered, and through which the great last Sacrifice was led as He went

up from Gethsemane to be slain. Then Lebanon and Tabor and Pisgah and the mountains of Moab, with the glorious panorama of the land which spread itself out before the eyes of Moses, will all have their interest. Moreover, that great and wide sea, on sighting which all the great nations of antiquity will come to mind ; nay, the whole past human world. A heavenly blue sea it will surely appear, bearing on its bosom no sign of war, and laving with its free and beauteous waves no clime at enmity with another ; but ships from the isles, and those of all nations, will be engaged in bringing presents to Jerusalem. All the great nations of the past had their rise and fall on its waters. Rome had sat supreme, and Greece and the earlier kingdoms of the world. But now peace dwells wherever it flows. What books are written of scenes which are travelled now ! but what will not the millennial tourist write as he tells of land and ocean ; yea, of a world's loveliness, a glorious earth made so by the Lord Himself, as an earth meet for His own dwelling ? He might well say—

“ I have no words to bring  
Worthy of Thee, my King ;  
And yet one tribute to Thy praise  
I long, I long to raise.  
My heart is full, mine eye entranced above ;  
But words all melt away in silent awe and love.”

IV.

**The Saved Nations.**

## THE SAVED NATIONS.

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“BEHOLD, the mountain of the Lord  
In latter days shall rise,  
On mountain tops above the hills,  
And draw the wondering eyes.

“To this the joyful nations bound,  
All tribes and tongues shall flow ;  
‘Up to the hill of God,’ they’ll say,  
‘And to His house will go.’

“The beam that shines from Zion’s hill  
Shall lighten every land ;  
The King who reigns in Salem’s tower  
Shall all the world command.”

## Fourth Part.

### THE SAVED NATIONS.

“Thus saith the Lord of hosts ; *After the glory* hath He sent me unto the nations.”—ZECH. ii. 8.

**I**T is *after* the Lord has come, with the glory in the midst, *that the nations will be saved*. The order as to this is plainly set forth in Acts xv. 14 : “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name.” This is what He has been doing for nigh two thousand years. “To this agree the words of the prophets ; as it is written, *After these things* I will return, and build up again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down ; and will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up.” This is what He will yet do. Then after the taking up Israel as a nation a people for Himself, He will bring on the designed issue, “that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles” (nations), “upon whom my name

is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." Thus, first, He secures a people for Himself out of this present evil age; He next comes and restores Jerusalem, following upon which will be *the millennium*. How all this accords with our prophet, chap. ii. shows, "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee." "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath He sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." And again, "Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee." No words could be plainer—*after the glory*, a glory interpreted by the words, "*Lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.*" Thus there will be no salvation for Israel until the Lord come, and no salvation for the nations; but when He has come, "Many nations, and the inhabitants of many cities, shall go and seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem." We must believe this just as it is said. Many true Christians read for Jerusalem the Church of God as it now is; some even think simply of "church and chapel;" but the true reading is *Jerusalem*. Moreover, it is not the collection of *congregations*, but of *nations*. Psalm lxviii. tells us of some of these nations—"Because

of Thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto Thee. . . . And "princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." Especially is mention made of Egypt, that ancient land between the two seas, with its vast natural rivers—the land which succoured the fathers of the tribes, and gave asylum to the Lord Himself.

Nor these only. "It shall come to pass that everyone *that is left* of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts." This accords with Isaiah lx.: "The sons also of them that afflicted thee [and who has not afflicted them?] . . . and all they that despised thee [and what nation has not despised the Jew?] shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel."

What could be more explicit? "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." (Isa. xix. 24, 25.) Sweet to see beforehand God's grace and love spread over all these lands, with all the present irritating elements and influences of war having



ceased, and nation at rest with nation, kingdom with kingdom, learning the art of war no more.

Think of Lot, Ammon, and Esau, how they, in God's grace, are not forgotten! and why—because once so related to the godly of the earth.

“I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord.” Concerning Edom, He says, “Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.” Elam also: “It shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the Lord.” (Jer. xlix. 6, 11, 39.) Nor these alone. Blessings are in store for all who remain of the vast Assyrian power and the great powers of the Roman earth—those extending from these our western islands to the land of Shinar, in the far East, whence the nations first took their rise; in fact, all the great nationalities, from our own shores to Assyria, are included. What a change! No longer the question of a balance of power. The real power will be with Israel; all other powers subordinate. We could not if we would change Scripture, but this may seem strange to ears never opened to the word of God: “Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.” What glory! Not merely natural, but supernatural glory. “The

sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended;" and with a new development of character Israel will be meet for the time. "Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in His time."

This all, of course, supposes an utter change as to the governments and powers of this world. Its prince will be dethroned, his kingdom gone; the kingdoms of the world will have become the kingdoms of God and of His Christ. As in His own person, in His humiliation, Christ had vanquished sin, death, and hell on the cross, so in His own person again, in the day of His glory, will He put down all rule and all authority. The nations in collision with Him He will have broken as a potter breaks his vessel. The rage of the heathen (the Gentile) powers, infidel of all that ever related to Him as Saviour, and utterly apostate from God, will He behold. He that sitteth in the heavens shall

laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. But after the judgment storm will come the earth's calm ; after long ages of Satan will be the bright, blessed reign of the Son of man. It is this time Psalm lxxii. so grandly portrays, and of which, in all its different influences and issues, James Montgomery so sweetly sings—

“ Hail to the Lord's Anointed,  
Great David's greater Son !  
Hail, in the time appointed,  
His reign on earth begun !  
He comes to break oppression,  
To set the captive free,  
To take away transgression,  
And rule in equity.

“ He shall come down like showers  
Upon the fruitful earth :  
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers,  
Spring in His path to birth.  
Before Him, on the mountains,  
Shall peace, the herald, go ;  
And righteousness, in fountains,  
From hill to valley flow.

“ Arabia's desert-ranger  
To Him shall bow the knee ;  
The Ethiopian stranger  
His glory come to see ;  
With offerings of devotion  
Ships from the isles shall meet,  
To pour the wealth of ocean  
In tribute at His feet.

“Kings shall fall down before Him,  
And gold and incense bring ;  
All nations shall adore Him,  
His praise all people sing :  
For He shall have dominion  
O'er river, sea, and shore,  
Far as the eagle's pinion,  
Or dove's light wing, can soar.

“For Him shall prayer unceasing  
And daily vows ascend ;  
His kingdom still increasing—  
A kingdom without end.  
The mountain dews shall nourish  
A seed in weakness sown,  
Whose fruit shall spread and flourish,  
And shake like Lebanon.

“O'er every foe victorious,  
He on His throne shall rest ;  
From age to age more glorious,  
All blessing and all blest.  
The tide of time shall never  
His covenant remove ;  
His name shall stand for ever,  
His great, blest Name of Love.”

Wonderful time ! far beyond whatever was known at Pentecost. Then all the dialects of the nations that formed the Roman earth had the gospel preached to them, and here and there individuals believed. Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia and in Judæa and 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; but now nations will believe. At Pentecost, from beyond the Euphrates to the banks of the Tiber, men from every nation under heaven heard the joyful sound. But in the day of the glory the reign of Christ will be universal, from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. How that reign will be associated with the divine glory we see in chapter xii. of our prophecy—for all things will be made manifest then. It opens significantly, celebrating God in three characters of His glory, in which He will then be seen. “The stretcher forth of the heavens, the layer of the foundations of the earth, and the former of the spirit of man.” These three characters the kingdom is destined to display; for then the God of grace and glory will be seen as having furnished the heavens, as having established the earth, and as having renewed man. And not one of these is less a work of God than the others.

And now here I would add a word on

#### ISRAEL AND THE WORLD.

First, on Israel's condition, as seen by one who was himself an Israelite. Tenderly does Paul speak of his “great grief,” his uninterrupted pain of heart;

he could have wished himself to be anathema from Christ, for his brethren and his kinsmen, according to the flesh. Theirs was the adoption and the glory and the covenants; yet they had crucified their Messiah, and were infidel concerning divine truth. Meanwhile God would make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory, whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, as he says in Hosea: "Ye are not my people . . . and it shall come to pass, that in the place where He said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God," which we, who in this dispensation have believed, now are; and forecasting the time of the end, the very time which is now before us, Isaiah says, "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: for He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." (Rom. ix. 27, 28.) As the prophet says before, "Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah." This is what He will do in the final battle of chapter xiii.—"*Cut the work short,*" in the destruction of His enemies, and in saving a remnant, a seed to serve Him, a genera-

tion to fear Him, as long as the sun and moon endure. Such, as described by Paul the apostle, is Israel's condition during this dispensation.

Respecting the world, the prevailing idea is that the Church is now converting the world. To such I would suggest that what we everywhere see is that the world is converting the Church. By mingling with the world the Church has attempted to conform the world to itself; but the world will not be so conformed. The world is the enemy of the true Church of God, and shows how, if it must be religious, it can be so without Christ. Therefore it is content with what pleases its own wisdom, and whatever ministers, in the several arrangements of religion, to the tastes of the natural man. Some go so far as to say, We are in the millennium now! They point to the growth of religion, to the arts, to science, and say that in their early lifetime there were none of those great discoveries which fill the world with their fame—those ocean wonders by means of which men are independent of wind and tide; none of those means of communication by which time and space are annihilated; neither the telegraph nor the telephone, nor the wondrous use of steam. Nor had dynamite been discovered. But how true is it that for the most part these discoveries only magnify man, showing how the secrets of nature may be discovered, while nature's

God remains unseen. Many there are who, while busiest with His works, ignore the Maker. "Nature" they know, "Deity" they know, "first causes" they know; but *God*, as revealed in His Word, they know not.

Worldly men themselves do not believe that the world is being converted. They are at their wits' end, many of them, to live safely in it; and Christians should know that what God is doing by the gospel in saving men does not touch the unchanging character of this present evil age, nor the doom that awaits it. "The age in itself," says one, "is a poor mechanical age, with Expediency for its pole-star, Knowledge for its divinity, and Reason for its heaven." Another has said, "It is an old worn-out world without reserve forces of reform." Every great form of evil grows apace. Because it is *old* does not necessitate improvement. "Old age," says Professor Mommsen, "cannot develop new ideas nor create activity. Nor did the Roman Empire do so, but in its own circle, not unjustly considered to be the world by those who belonged to it, it watched over the peace and welfare of the many united nations for a longer period and more completely than any other rule has ever succeeded in doing. In the agricultural districts of Africa, in the vineyards of the Moselle, in the blooming landscapes of the Syrian mountains, and on the borders of



its deserts, the work of the imperial empire may be sought and found. If asked whether the lands ruled by Severus were then or are now governed with the greatest reason and humanity, whether morals and the happiness of nations have progressed or retrograded, it is very doubtful whether judgment would be pronounced in favour of the present time." The fact is, the present time answers to the *whole time* of the dispensation as described by our Lord. I would like anyone to carefully read Luke xxi., which shows the character of the whole of this present age, and he will see if aught, there, is like a millennium.

But added to Revelation is our own observation. What of the nations of the east and those of the west, to which the apostles once came? They are in darkness instead of the light that then was; and then Christendom—what deepening unbelief as to divine truth, and the love of many waxing cold! while as to heathen lands idolatry holds its millions in a dark and cruel bondage. Nor do statistics brighten the picture. Fifteen millions of beings are added to the world's population every year. But are there every year fifteen millions of conversions? Looking nearer home one who is a true witness asks, "What is coming over us? what horrible clouds are darkening our skies? To-day the Revelation of God is treated with indifference, or

talked of as if it deserved no reverence or credit. Unbelief has sapped the foundations of the social fabric. Worst of all—I must not hold back the charge—many of the avowed ministers of Christ are no ministers of faith at all, but promoters of unbelief. The modern pulpit has taught men to be infidels. What truth is there which has not been doubted by divines, questioned by doctors of divinity, and at length been denounced by the priests of ‘modern thought’? Nothing remains upon which a certain school of preachers have not spit their scepticism. The experience of the unbelief of Germany is being repeated here. Among those who are ordained to be the preachers of the gospel of Christ, there are many who preach not faith, but doubt, and hence they are servants of the devil rather than of the Lord. So frequently are the fundamental doctrines of the gospel assailed that it becomes needful, before you cross the threshold to hear, to ask the question, Shall I hear the gospel to-day? or shall I come out, hardly knowing whether the Bible is inspired or not? Shall I not be made to doubt the atonement, the work of the Holy Ghost, the immortality of the soul, the punishment of the wicked, or the deity of Christ?”\* Are we surprised? No, not with the Word of God in our hands. But we are sad. All this makes us sad; yet

\* C. H. SPURGEON.

let us not forget what the gospel does. It has its own great work, blessed be God ! *Souls must be saved.* The feast of infinite love is provided, but the forms are not yet filled. Those first sent out, and who professed to be doing it, did not fill the house. Other servants are working now. It is "highways" and "hedges" time, in which men are compelled to come in, the compellers indeed often using means such as the Lord or His first disciples would never have used. The simple Mars'-hill-preaching, or that by the lake of Gennesaret, is not what we mostly see in this day. The environments of Paul's message or Peter's on the day of Pentecost were what ? There was nothing but the *preaching of the message, with the power of God following.* Just as in the wilderness, there was nothing but the simple uplifting of the brazen serpent on the bare pole, which only needed to be seen, and the bitten and dying ones were healed. Do any ask, What of

#### THE CHURCH OF GOD IN THIS DISPENSATION :

How did our Lord describe it ? It is as the "lily among thorns ;" a "little flock ;" "sheep among wolves." He who knew it said so truly.

The dispensation of the Church is pre-eminently the dispensation of the Spirit. We have seen what God is doing at this present time—not converting the world, but taking out of the world a

people for Himself. For this he sent down at Pentecost the Holy Ghost, who is the great soul-gatherer; and that which He gathers is a new creation. How the Spirit works is seen in the Acts of the Apostles, which might have been called the Acts of the Spirit of God. What kind of proclaimers of the gospel the Lord selected, and how they were to go on their errand direct from Himself over the world, is told in their commission; and the results in souls saved were those of the Spirit of God. There would be other results. As at the time of the kingdom, so now. Our Lord has described this under the similitude of a net, or a "drag-net," as the word is. From one end of the world to the other it was to be drawn. The good found in it will be gathered into vessels, the bad cast away. Alas! little has been done in the drawing of this net. The whole ocean of the race should have been dragged long ere this. Paul, with ever-living power, drew it; yet even he, the great evangelist, nestled too much, it would seem, about Jerusalem, loving to be with the saints who delighted to have him there. At one time the Lord sent him a prisoner to Rome, at Cæsar's expense, that he might be a fisher of men in that mistress city of the world. The early Christians had to be "scattered abroad" ere they went everywhere preaching the gospel. One would think the

“go ye into all the world” was spoken to the world, and not to the Church ; for it has been the world—philanthropy, for the most part—which has discovered the hitherto undiscovered parts of the world. It was not the Church that discovered the lands beyond the Atlantic ; nor is it, strictly speaking, the Church which is now discovering the vast peoples of the hitherto unknown regions of Central Africa. Christians rather nestle *in* the net, instead of being out in service drawing the net through the vast sea of the world’s waters. Why is this ? Alas ! why ? When it has been so often asked—

“ Shall we whose souls are lighted  
With wisdom from on high,  
Shall we to man benighted  
The lamp of life deny ? ”

And why, when the time is short ? Christian,  
only “ a little while ”—

“ A little while to spread the joyful story  
Of Him who made our guilt and curse His own ;  
A little while, ere we behold the glory,  
To gather jewels for His heavenly crown.”

V.

**The Changed Raiment.**

## THE CHANGED RAIMENT.

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“HAD I an angel’s holiness,  
I’d cast aside that wondrous dress,  
And wrap me up in Christ.”

## Part Fifth.

### THE CHANGED RAIMENT.

“I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head.”—ZECH. iii. 5.

BEAUTIFULLY does this vision of a saved, clothed, and crowned people accord with their restored city, and the glory of God in the midst. It reminds us of what is elsewhere said, “There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth.” One vision grandly leads to, and melts into another. So graphic is the one before us that it can be used as the delineation of the story of the justification of the sinner. That justification itself, is one and the same for each and all. What we see is the sinner Joshua in “filthy garments,” stripped, cleansed, clothed again, and crowned, all in grace—a grace that acts, as from itself, on the warrant of the blood of Christ; while we, like Joshua, are silent before it.

To a refined sense what so degrading as a defiled



garment? What so miserable to an awakened soul as a sense of sin? Hence Isaiah said, "Woe is me;" and Peter, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." It is because of the filthy garments that Satan appears on the scene to make his accusations. Such is the enemy's diabolical way. He leads to the defiling, and then complains of it; leads into sin, and then levels his fiery weapons against the one whose conscience has been awakened to see it. And true his testimony is so far. The garments *are* defiled, the sin *is* grievous. He is the father of lies; but when it suits his purpose he can tell the truth. He can, when it suits him, tell how we are sinners, deserving hell; but never tells how the hell has been taken out of the way. The Lord said unto Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee." God must do this. Hence *He* did not doubt His personality, or imagine Him to be a mere *principle* of evil. Ah, no! He knew his greatness of power, his awful depth of evil. He said, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass

from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments" (*i.e.* garments suited to one who is a king and a priest). (Chap. iii. 1-5.)

The whole of this statement shows how Satan has access to God respecting us, which still indeed he has, as we find in Luke xxii. 31, R.V. The Lord said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath obtained you by asking." It was thus he obtained Job, in both cases to sift them as wheat. But the Lord was with Job as with Peter, to whom He said, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

But there is a limit to his power, as we see in Job. God had put a hedge about Job. I do not believe the devil has any idea of the power that encircles the believer. Unchangeable is the promise, "I give unto them" (My sheep) "eternal life, and they shall never perish; *neither shall any pluck them out of My hand.*"

The words, "*Pluck them out of My hand,*" shows how desperate may be the effort of the enemy, and how vast the power that keeps us secure.

But what saith the Lord? "Is this not a brand?" Had He stopped there, how sad! *Satan* himself is "a brand." By nature we are all brands, fit

only for the burning. But the Lord said, "Is not this a brand *plucked out of the fire?*" Truth is never stronger than when put in the form of a question. What could the accuser reply? The enemy is dumb. Plucked righteously from the burning. It is the cross that answers the devil; there sin had its doom. Hence the Lord turns to those standing by, and with authority says, "Take away the filthy garments from him;" and unto Joshua he said, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee," (it is God only who can forgive sins) "and I will clothe thee with change of raiment."

This brings up the whole question of the work of Christ—the interposition of God on our behalf through Christ. "Once in the end of the world He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." If any ask, Whose sins? the answer is, The sins of the sinner; of such as Joshua, who, confessing himself to be a sinner, believed the testimony of His word—"I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee."

Those that stood by took off the filthy garments, and gave the goodly raiment. Oh, sweet exchange! Then self and sins are all seen taken away by the cross; and in their place we have Christ, in whom we are accepted.

What words!—"filthy garments!" "rags!" Who

can tell how sinful we are? It is Christ dying for us more than all else that shows what our sins are, and how they are put away. Apart from Christ sin must bring death, and in itself is dreadful; but death is harmless since the Lord took its sting. The sting of death is sin; death now has no more dominion over Him, and none over us. How I delight in the grand, bold words of Luther, who could always speak of sin and death and hell, and salvation from these, in the firm way in which the gospel does, and which it is not the habit of many in the present day to do.

“ Jesus Christ, God’s only Son,  
Came at last our foe to smite,  
All our sins away hath done,  
Done away Death’s power and right,  
But the form of Death is left,  
Of his sting he is bereft;  
Hallelujah !

“ ’Twas a wondrous war I trow,  
When Life and Death together fought;  
But Life hath triumphed o’er his foe,  
Death is mocked and set at nought.  
Yea, ’tis as the Scripture saith,  
Christ through death has conquered Death,  
Hallelujah ! ”

One of the clearest intimations we have of our participation in the death of Christ is 2 Cor. v., where we read, “ If One died for all ” (or for *the* all)

"then were the all dead : and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them." Christ and His Church form one new man. He the Head, they the members. Hence the Head and the members cannot be separated. When He died, they died, died unto sin once, never to be repeated. Hence Paul could say to the Colossians, "Ye have died"—not ye *are* to die, or *must* die, but ye *have* died.

But what happened when Christ died? He died to sin; He died to the law, and we have died in Him.

But in what sense have we died? Obviously not as to our natural lives. And nothing of the new nature can die. It is judicial. For that which is counted dead in us we still have, which we are to mortify, deadify, the members that would be instruments of sin. No, it was that on which the sentence of death rested—our old nature, ourselves as the offspring of Adam, that judicially came to its doom when Christ died. Self, sin, the law in our members, all before God were laid down in death in Him. Consequently there is no more death, no condemnation, no judgment. Further, we participate also in Christ's resurrection. This too is clear. But what was it in us that had resurrection? Not our sins. Not ourselves as

men in the flesh. "Not I," says Paul, "but Christ." By regeneration we have a nature to see and enjoy this; and in Him we are as He is—made high, holy, righteous, accepted in the Beloved. Sweet, to one who knows it, is the doctrine of our participation in the death and resurrection of Christ. What rest to the soul is this, when our sins and sinful selves were not only nailed with Him to the tree, but were buried together with Him. But if burial, no resurrection of our sins or sinful selves. These, as before God, were left in death. Hence "reckon ye also yourselves to be dead" (to have died) "indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." This is the gospel; the gospel of the death and resurrection not only of Christ, as I have said, but our own in Him. It is by the Spirit of God, quickening us through the truth, that we are born of God. Strange to hear a Christian say, "When shall I be good enough for heaven?" When indeed! Your own goodness is as filthy rags. The rags had no place inside the house; it was the best robe that was there; the ring and the shoes of the Father's providing.

And now besides the raiment, "the mitre," that told of honour, rank, yea, of office of king and priest, which office every child of God has. Oh, what has God not given us in Christ? Life, light, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; yea,

Christ Himself, all unsearchable; and God, who is the portion of His own Son, is ours also.

But now note Joshua submitted himself to the grace in which he stood; he was simply passive; he had heard the Lord say, "Take away the filthy garments, and put on the change of raiment"—costly, rich apparel. That was enough. He heard, and "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Listening to the obtruding and accusing enemy, he might well feel wretched; but listening to the Lord, how blessed! "Blessed is the man, unto whom *the Lord* imputeth not iniquity, whose sin is covered." Oh, why do we not rest in the Word more? It is *the Word* that assures; it is *the Word* that gives rest. A young Christian, dying, once said to me, "I do believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, but I have no rest." "Why?" "Because I have no assurance." I asked where she expected to get it. By a dream, or a feeling, or how? "By the Spirit?" she enquiringly asked. "Yes," I said; "but where does the Spirit speak? Not by any vision, or dream, or feeling, or imagination of our own. Were a million angels to say I am saved that would not satisfy me. The Spirit does not speak through angels, but through the *Word, the written word of God.*" I said, "You have taken a passage of that Word, and with your scissors, as it were, you have been cutting it in two."

"What is that?" she enquired. "You say you are a Christian?" "Yes." "That you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Yes." "What you have thrown away tells you just what you want—'Thou shalt be saved.'" She saw this, sweetly exclaiming—

"Safe in the arms of Jesus."

No other assurance was there for Joshua. It was God saying, "I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee," which assured that it was so. "What a joy," says another, "that the Word is a *written* Word, and that we have not to wait for a *spoken* Word! And what joy that on a confession of our belief we may look up into His blessed face, and possess the forgiveness He has promised!" No one truly believing can ever be lost; and no one can be saved except by believing. The word "*take away*" was spoken to them who stood by. Who they were is not said. Many are interested in us, of whom we know but little. It is said of angels, Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Had we "the heavenly eye" we might see them, or the heavenly hand we might touch them. For every legion of demons against us there are doubtless legions of angels for us.

If the devil could spare a legion for one poor



victim, what legions may not our heavenly Father give us, as our guards on the way, of those angels of the Lord which are round about, and canopy the saints?

But another thing here, not for salvation, but for obedience. "If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge" (ordinance), "then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places" (walks) "to walk among these that stand by." This is something more than being saved, reminding of John xiv.: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we" (God and Christ) "will come unto him, and make our abode with him" ("*mansion* with him," as the word is). Think of this—God promising to dwell in a saved sinner as in an elect mansion. Oh, my soul, what is this?—"I will love you, and MY FATHER will love you, and we will come and MANSION WITH YOU." This whole history is one of the many instances in which the gospel mingles with prophecy, its benign beams shining amidst God's purposes regarding Israel and the world. The two together tell of our own sweet rest and peace in Him—"Jehovah-Tsidkenu," the Lord our Righteousness; and also of the salvation of Israel, and through Israel the salvation to come on the nations of the world.

VI.

**The Branch.**

## THE BRANCH.

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“THEN, Judah, thou no more shall mourn  
Beneath the heathen's chain ;  
Thy days of splendour shall return,  
And all be new again.  
The fount of life shall then be quaffed  
In peace by all who come ;  
And every wind that blows shall waft  
Some long-lost exile home.”

## Part Sixth.

### THE BRANCH.

“Behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch.”

ZECH. iii. 8.

HERE is the Lord Himself presented to us. Commanding is the word, “Behold, I will *bring forth* my servant the BRANCH.” It shows the divine determination to put Him forth in unhindered display as “beautiful and glorious,” or, as some read, “Beauty and glory.” Did the prophet compare scripture with scripture? Surely yes. In doing this he would see new beauties, and still increasing light. For one prophet had said, “I will perform that good word” (elsewhere, “the *happy* promise”) “when I declared to the house of Israel, and unto the house of Jacob. . . . In these days and at that time will I cause to bud unto David THE BRANCH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and He shall execute judgment and righteousness upon earth. In those days Judah shall

be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell in rest. And this is she who shall be proclaimed JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."\* Delightful words for the prophets of God! Something more than simple imagery. The prophets looked for no mere spiritual coming of Christ, and no mere spiritual occupancy of their land. The Branch and the "engraved stone" were not to them as a dream of the mind, to die away. They represented a Person concerning whom they meditated great and glorious things. It has been said, "God's histories are also mysteries." Humiliation and glory were in this mystery of the Branch. Isaiah sings of Him, "He groweth up in His sight like a tender sucker, and like a root from a thirsty soil, and hath no form nor any beauty that we should desire Him."\* But there is glory too. "In that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely."

Daniel saw Nebuchadnezzar under the figure of a tree. Psalm i. compares the godly man to a tree planted by the rivers of water. Isaiah describes the destruction of the Assyrian army under the image of a mighty forest, consisting of flourishing trees, growing thickly together, and of great height; of Lebanon itself crowned with lofty cedars, but

\* LOWTH'S Translation.

cut down and laid level with the ground by the axe, wielded in the hand of some powerful and illustrious agent.

"It is in opposition to this image," writes Bishop Louth, "that he represents the great Person (Christ) who makes the subject of this chapter, as a slender twig shooting out from the trunk of an old tree, cut down, lopped to the very root, and decayed, which tender twig so weak in appearance should nevertheless become fruitful and prosperous."

Isaiah shows, "There shall come forth a rod out of *the stem of Jesse*, and a branch shall grow out of *His roots*." The word "stem" is literally "stump," than which nothing could be more unpromising. When the Lord was born, the house of David was at one of its lowest ebbs. The sceptre had long departed from Judah; the nation was politically dead. More than once was the race nearly extinct; never more so perhaps than in the days of Ahasuerus, when an edict had gone forth that not one Jew should live. But God raised up Esther and Mordecai, who were saviours of their people. What God had said to Abraham, what was sung by David, and foreshadowed in Solomon, of His intentions as to the Jew and the Jewish race, was not to be set aside or annulled by man, whose breath is in his nostrils. The line of God's providence is ever in sure accordance with

His purposes. How could the race perish when as yet the Messiah who was to come of it had not appeared? But when He did appear He was as here described, "a tender plant," an infant-bud. What more tender than a bursting bud on an apparently dead tree? and what more exposed to the rough hand of passers-by and the rougher elements?

We think of the sweet, gentle dawn of His life, the tender babe at Bethlehem; we think of Herod, the awful slaughter of the innocents, and of the flight into Egypt, and of the miracle and mystery of His infancy, as one quaintly sings—

" See, lying on His mother's breast,  
An Infant, weak and small;  
Ah! who would guess that this is He  
That offers life to all?"

It is of the full-grown Branch that the prophet speaks when he says:

"Lo, a man, a shoot is His name, and from His place doth He shoot up."

"A Branch from His roots is fruitful.

"Rested on Him hath the Spirit of Jehovah.

"The Spirit of wisdom and understanding.

"The Spirit of counsel and might.

"The Spirit of knowledge and the fear of Jehovah.

"To refresh Him in the fear of Jehovah.

"And by the light of His eye He judgeth not, nor by the hearing of His ears decideth.

"He hath judged in righteousness the poor, and decided in righteousness for the humble of earth."\*

Grand lineaments these of the Person and character of Christ! When the millennium comes the Branch will be glorious. I say in the millennium; for was He ever counted beautiful and glorious when on earth? Sad tale was man's rejection of Him! They cut Him down in death; they laid Him low in blood and dust. Man cut Him down; Satan cut Him down. But Satan did not know that resurrection would follow, which would be the means of bringing the Branch out in a glorious prosperity and fruitfulness. (John xii. 24.) All in accordance with, "In those days, and in that time, will I cause to shoot up to David a shoot of righteousness. In those days is Judah saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell confidently." (Jer. xxxiii.) Yes, dwell beneath this Branch amidst abounding blessings. Beautiful Messianic promise!

"I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first. And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth. . . . Thus saith the Lord; Again there shall be heard in this place which ye say

\*: YOUNG'S Translation.



shall be desolate without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast, the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness; the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; the voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of hosts: for the Lord is good; for His mercy endureth for ever. . . . In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth them, saith the Lord. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the *Branch* of righteousness to grow up into David. . . . This is the name wherewith He shall be called, Jehovah-Tsidkenu, *the Lord our righteousness.*"

What promises! How unchanging the Promiser. His covenant (*v.* 20) of day and night may be broken, the stars may be lost in the ethereal heavens, the sun and moon may refuse to shine over the earth, but this covenant cannot cease; it can never be broken. Moreover, how grand the outlook for our prophet! "The host of heaven,"

saith the Lord, "cannot be numbered" — those luminaries that for multitude baffle all calculation, which overpower our utmost arithmetic—"so will I multiply the seed of David my servant." Despise the Jew we may, but this is his future, and this is the glory the prophet sees as associated with this imagery of the Messiah as "*The Branch*." He Himself personally will be beautiful and glorious, and under His shadow Israel shall dwell with delight. His leaves will be for the healing of the nations, and we who have seen something of His power, and judging from His saving and healing virtue in the days of His humiliation, can imagine what it will be when, not individuals only, but nations, will flow to Him, and own Him as "*Jehovah-Rophi*." "Had He dwelt upon the earth till now," writes another of Him when He was here, "what would He have done for mankind?" If in three years He healed such crowds of diseased ones, what multitudes would He have cured in eighteen centuries! If He had fed five thousand and seven thousand at a meal, what thousands of thousands would he have fed since! Who would have been left hungry, or who naked? If He freely forgave the sins of penitent publicans, and praying thieves and weeping harlots, and cast out none who came to Him, what myriads would have swollen the train of His disciples since! Oh, what would it have

been now !” Yea, what will it be when He comes again ? All that might have been, will be, and in wondrous measure too. He will heal all this vast mystic Lazarus world—a world dead and corrupt, a world yet to shine glorious in the light of God ! Meanwhile we delight in this Word of His. How different is it to that which passes for theological learning in the present day. “The prophets,” says Krummacher, “were employed upon the positive meaning and glorious literal import of divine revelation. They searched the mine of that hidden wisdom of which David speaks in Psalm li., and ere they were aware the hieroglyphics of the tabernacle and temple were beautifully explained and unfolded to their eyes. What sorrow fills the heart to contemplate that which modern wisdom boasts. What has been said by an enlightened writer—viz., that ‘education has become a system of seduction’—may to a great extent be said of the religious education in our own schools and great centres of learning. There is a monstrous ignorance of the Word of God, an affecting want of Scriptural knowledge, a leading the mind away from the true principles of interpretation. No principle of interpretation can be right that would reduce to anything present as a full accomplishment of what we read thus of Him who is yet to be manifested in our world as ‘*beautiful and glorious.*’”

VII.

**The Engraved Stone.**

## THE ENGRAVED STONE.

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“O WONDROUS Love, enlighten me  
To comprehend this name ;  
Light of the Spirit, grant new tongues  
Its glory to proclaim !”

## Seventh Part.

### THE ENGRAVED STONE.

“For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua ; upon one stone shall be seven eyes : behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”—ZECH. iii. 9.

THIS stone brings before us *The Person* of Christ. Its engraving shows the pleasure the engraver had ; and indicates one special aspect of His perfectness. The engraving is on stone.

Stone is not of a perishable nature. Speaking of some materials which are perishing, Sir David Brewster remarked : “A moral as well as a secular lesson is taught us here. Like every organism of this world—diamonds, for example—bear the impress of decay. The stoutest metal and the toughest gems exist by forces which weaken and elements which destroy. And in that great catastrophe, when the earth and the works which are therein shall be burnt up, the pearl so highly prized will pass into its primeval cinder. But,” speaking of

other substances, "the silver and the gold," he says, "they may reappear brighter and purer in the new earth which is to arise." There is a "perchance" with the silver and the gold, but with Him whom this stone indicates none; when the new earth shall arise, He will be seen the head of the corner, the chief stone of the edifice.

The stone as an emblem is most ancient, as setting forth the Messiah. In the far-off days of Jacob, that patriarch in dying, on seeing Joseph a type of Him, said, "From thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel." (Genesis xlix. 24.)

In later times Daniel saw it, as not of any human art, but "cut out without hands," a stone of judgment to grind to powder the sinful Gentile nations answering to the fearful word, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

Isaiah saw Him as a foundation-stone, "a tried stone." As if God had said, I cannot build the superstructure of my salvation but on a safe basis. All must be fixed and immoveable, no gates of earth or hell to prevail against it. The prophet saw Him as a precious stone, on which St. Peter says, "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious," or is the preciousness; by which I

understand that none not having a nature according to His own could find Him precious. To those who have sight is the preciousness of seeing, or hearing is the preciousness of hearing. It is only when we have a nature according to God that we can say—

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds.”

Hence if ever so little sweet to our souls this name is, it is God who has made it so. This is one way in which we may know we are children of God. He who formed the eye for seeing, and the ear for sound, has formed in His people a heart for His Son. Loving the name of Jesus is one of the dearest formative elements fitting us for heaven.

Solemn thought! if no love for Christ we are not only unfitted to enter into His joy, but accursed of God. “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha.” We do not merit heaven *because* of our love to Christ; but we cannot be there without it.

It is of an *engraved* stone the prophet speaks, and the engraving in “seven eyes” indicating His perfect intelligence. The eyes showing the intelligence, the number the perfectness. The prophet foresaw Him as wanting in no knowledge. He would be aware of all circumstances. He would be ready for all events. None of His exploits for



Israel, or over the world, would be hindered by ignorance. None of His plans, as with those of the governments of the world, would be laid in mistake. What a joy to those looking for the consolation of Israel! How are we reminded of His words, "I know My sheep, and am known of mine." Some have thought that the emblem shows that God's eyes are ever lovingly looking upon the Lord, which indeed they are, and upon us who are His redeemed people. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry." But the image indicates His own intelligence. In His visions in Patmos, the apostle John saw Him a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes. The seven horns tell of His power. He not only *knows* all, but can *help* all. Power without knowledge would be blind. Knowledge without power would be helpless. "In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Also power. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He "is able to make all grace abound." "My God," says Paul, "shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Engraving is an ancient art. Thirty centuries ago Job prayed, "Oh that my words were engraven on the rock!" The Lord gave him more than his desire; the Rock of Ages Himself descended to

his view. It is interesting to think, that wherever are the sleeping-places of the just, there we find these words of the patriarch graven, as he prayed, in the rock—"I know" (see Revised Version) "that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand . . . upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." (Job xix. 25-27.)

We are told of Egypt and Nineveh and the "Hittite empire," that they have "stony records of forgotten ages." But what record, what engraving, will ever endure like this? Beautiful beyond all beauty, says another, must those scars be with which He allowed His whole body to be riven, that throughout the whole frame God's love may be engraven. Writes another: "What even, in the body of the Lord, can be lovelier or more delightful than those five wounds which He will retain in His incorruptible body, lest the blessed should be deprived of that splendour, surpassing far the light of sun and stars?"

"When Christ came," said Lady Powerscourt, "the bosom of Deity was open to us. He who had painted the beauty on the lilies, placed its light and glory on the star, has executed His grandest designs on His Son." "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." Yes, "the only-begotten of the Father," says John; "He hath declared Him." Not only His vastest attributes, but the more lovely traits of His character. How He loved to say it, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." What was displayed in Him, He loved, because it revealed the Father; and we beholding, what can we do but love, worship, and adore? Blessed One! Of Him the man of faith can say—

I love the love of lowliness,  
Displayed, O Lord, in Thee,  
When, in the manger of Thy birth,  
Thy helplessness I see ;  
Yet ne'er did light of heaven so shine,  
As o'er that wondrous birth of Thine.

I love the love of tenderness,  
That made our woes Thine own ;  
That blessing gave, instead of grief,  
Unspeakable—unknown ;  
That love which, weeping at the grave,  
Life from the dead so glorious gave.

I love that love in suffering,  
Thou guiltless crucified !  
The love that bore the bitter doom  
Of those who else had died.  
All other loves must seem as dross,  
Compared with Thine upon the cross.

I love the love of righteousness,  
Which brings me to the throne ;  
There tells me what my portion is,  
Through merit all Thine own.  
Not only saved, with sins forgiven,  
But life and peace, and joy and heaven.

But who now can think of the engraving without calling to mind The Engraver? The tables of the law were *His work* ; as with the moon and the stars, they were the performance of His own hand. (Exodus xxxii. 16.) Moreover, by His direction the names of the twelve sons of Jacob were engraven, as with the engraving of a signet, on the jewels which adorned the garments Aaron wore. It was He too who in His tenderness (when the walls of Zion had fallen to decay) said, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." Oh, touching the connection ! Zion on His hands. The one and the other inseparable ; so that our God can never look at His hands without seeing His people. None could destroy the one without the other. And how interesting to think that this divine art will have place in the eternal state, where there will be not only a public owning of His own, a confession of them before His Father and His holy angels, but a private owning in the "*hidden manna*," that the Lord will give, and the white stone, with a new name written on it, which

no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. This will be given to those who in their pilgrim days had maintained their communion, had overcome in their conflict with all that would mar that communion or dishonour Him, whose redeemed ones they were. Blessed Lord! we speak of the engraving on Thee; why art Thou not more engraven on us? We know how the image of the creature can be enshrined within our hearts.

Luther said of his departed child, "On my very soul are engraven the looks, the words, the gestures, during her life and in her death, of my obedient, loving child; so loving in her character, so full of tenderness." Oh, what we want is to have Christ engraven on us, every trait of His blessed life so imparted to us that we may bear His image; yea, be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of God. It is in our hearts we want to know this. Christ dwelling there, and reigning there. It is concerning this Cowper so forcibly affirms—

"Thy saints proclaim Thee King, and in their hearts  
Thy title is engraven with a pen  
Dipped in the fountain of eternal love."

But now added to the foregoing symbol is first a direction and next a promise, "*Behold* the stone that I have *laid before Joshua*." The prophet

was to behold it, to look upon it. And it was laid before Joshua, put down before him for special consideration; reminding us of John—"We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;" and Romans v.: "God commendeth His love toward us" (puts it before us), "in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

But besides the direction is the promise—"I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." But what is this "one day"? First, the eternal day of the divine purpose *before all worlds*. He, Christ, is the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world. It was He who said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." Second, the day when Christ died. In that day of His death, laden with our sins, bearing our iniquities, He put them away by the sacrifice of Himself. Then, third, the day of Israel's confession—they will look on Him whom they pierced, and will mourn. It is then that Isaiah liii. will have its place. They will say, "We hid as it were our faces from Him. . . . He was smitten of God, and afflicted." They will then see Jehovah hath delighted to bruise Him. "He hath made Him an offering for sin. He will see His seed; their iniquities will He bear."\* They will say, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He

\* YOUNG'S translation.

was bruised for our iniquities." Lastly, the day when we believed. Like thousands and millions of the redeemed, we came to see how God is a just God, and the Justifier of all who believe. We call it our "happy day."

"Happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away."

VIII.

**Earth's Golden Age.**



## **EARTH'S GOLDEN AGE.**

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**“Foretold by Prophets, and by Poets sung  
The time of rest, the promised Sabbath come.”**

## **Eighth Part.**

### **EARTH'S GOLDEN AGE.**

“In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig-tree.”—ZECH. iii. 10.

THE prophet Daniel, it has been said, leads us to the border of the millennium; but Zechariah brings us into it.

He tells of a time befitting the coming One.

What an advantage to know prophecy! It is the Word which tells of a brighter age soon to dawn upon our world, and which the world so much needs. Following upon the description of the person of Christ as seen in the Branch, in the engraved stone, is the character of His times. Instead of man's inhumanity to man as now, “he will call every man his neighbour.” This supposes no hatred, and no want; for man will have his own vine and fig-tree, none desiring to make him afraid.

How this golden age will come Psalm lxxii. definitely declares. We are told “He shall save

the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their souls from deceit and violence." "In His days shall the righteous flourish ; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." Physically it will be paradisiac. Morally and spiritually the true "times of refreshing" will have come. How produced Peter says, "He" (God) "shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you : whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Thus this improved age of the world will come, not from any human power or moral means, such as the gospel in this dispensation, but from "*the Presence of the Lord.*" The heavens have received Him "UNTIL the times of restitution of all things." When the earth receives Him, the regeneration of all things will ensue. Kingdoms and peoples will have their long-needed respite from horrid war and bloodshed. As long as Jerusalem was in the grasp of the Gentiles, it was a burdensome stone and a cup of trembling. In the favoured days of Solomon, whose sword was in its sheath, war ceased to the ends of the earth. So will it be again when Jerusalem is at rest. For the earth will rest only when Jerusalem is in rest. How few consider this who look blindly on wars

as they occur ; now in Turkey, and now Egypt, and again in that East where the earth's regeneration will so specially be seen.

I love to look on Egypt (that sheltered the patriarchs, and gave asylum to the infant child Jesus) in the light of these days to come. The Arab too, and the tribes of all lands downtrodden by man, will share in the blessedness of this sunny season. Many Christians are far too sublimated in their views, *i.e.* they are rather *dreaming of heavenly places*, often without knowing the power ; they think of being in heaven, but forget that two-thirds of the Bible is made up with what is coming upon this earth. Some are only earthly, and need to be born from heaven to live a life according to heaven ; but others who are born again look for glory only away from earth and earth's history. Prophets and bards speak and sing of glory to be revealed here ; of nations and kingdoms being the Lord's here ; of the Lord Himself being here ; and of ourselves as one with Him being with Him *here*, when *all* nations will call Him blessed.

But not only nations in the aggregate, men individually, man as man, will enjoy to his fullest delight this coming age. Then will it be true brotherhood of men, in the possession of which there will be free communication, and happy intercourse one with another. No longer, as I have said,

will there be the dread of man, or the fierce violence of man, as now seen among the civilized nations and the untutored savage. No ; when He reigns "men shall be blessed in Him," or "shall bless themselves in Him" (Psalm lxxii.), and being blessed in Him, will call every man his neighbour.

The student of history may learn how mere civilization or education (as in our day) fails to arrest a lawless villainy, or to give to sorrowing or suffering humanity the respite it needs. That respite will be by Him who is King of righteousness, and King of peace. Then none will be ignorant of Him. No need to say to our neighbours, "Know the Lord;" "for all shall know Me from the least unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."

And here, in speaking of the moral, we must not forget the natural and social, for that is what our text indicates. What lovelier time in vine-clad lands than just before the vintage! And what more delightful than to sit down under their far-spread branches, with the rich clusters all around telling of the goodness and bounty of the Giver. It is at such times man and nature in their peaceful forms sweetly harmonize. Even now none can see the trellis-trained grape, the climbing and trailing vine, its flourishing and ripening berry, leaf, and cane, amidst rocks or ruins of the East without

admiring their beauty, and forecasting the far greater beauty of this time to come. The sitting together under the vine and under the fig tree indicates fellowship and simple rest; also possession and plenty. For rich and grand will be the fruiteries of those days. The dwellers in the valleys will enjoy them, and those on the hills; the mountains will drop wine, and the little hills rejoice on every side.

Canaan at the first was "a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass." (Deut. viii. 7-9.)

In the coming time Canaan will be "a land that will grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary." (Ezekiel xlvi. 12.) This will be Eden restored, "the garden of the Lord"—

"Where fruits and blossoms blush

In social sweetness on the self-same bough."

Who that delights in the science of reclaiming lands, may see what is said of its most sterile parts. "There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." Sweet to associate the moral glories with the material beauties, the place with the dwellers therein, the loveliness of the works with the glory of The Great Worker, Nature, leading to nature's God. Can anyone say nature is not lovely now? Who will say spring is not lovely? "Nature takes out of her wardrobe of the sleeping, silent earth her beauteous robe of green, and hope seems to pervade the very air. It is then the singing of the birds is come; the wood is lively with their song in park and woodland, by river and hill, in meadow and by furrow. It makes one happy when the days are growing perceptibly longer, and no more are we obliged to be early inside as in winter, but longer with the day, beholding the sun in its glorious setting, or lingering to watch its after-glow." Solomon speaks of the voice of the turtle in the land, all suggestive of peacefulness and blessedness.

It is meet the turtle should be prominent—the turtle so known to Noah, and in the wilderness days, in the long ritual of sacrifices and offerings under Aaron, and by the mother of our blessed

Lord who brought two turtle doves for Him in the temple, probably unable to provide more, and by the blessed Lord Himself, who at His baptism in the Jordan had the Spirit descending on Him in the form of a dove. Taken in connection with all other descriptions of this age, who does not see that there will be no drawback as of old? The loveliest springs now have in them the remains of winter, and the sunniest regions their dangers from venomous sting or fang; but nothing shall "hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain."

And it will be no small delight of this time, the relief that will come to the animal creation. The "creature has long waited for the manifestations of the sons of God." It was subjected to all its evils through vanity, now its liberty will have come. Its long age of groaning will have ceased. Isaiah sings beautifully of this (Bishop Lowth's translation): No longer the melancholy "Boycotting" of the herd or of the flock. No longer the ferocity of animals.

"A wolf hath sojourned with a lamb,  
And a leopard with a kid doth lie down,  
And a calf and a young lion and a fatling are together,  
And a little youth is leader over them;  
A cow and a bear do feed,  
Together lie down their young ones;  
And a lion and an ox eateth straw,  
And played hath a suckling by the hole of an asp,



And on the den of a cockatrice  
Hath the weaned one put his hand.  
Evil they do not, nor destroy in all My holy mountain ;  
For full is the earth with the knowledge of Jehovah,  
As the waters are covering the sea ;  
For there hath been in that day  
A root of Jesse, that is standing for an ensign to the people ;  
Unto Him do the nations seek,  
And His rest hath been glorious."

Wonderful time ! "The exquisite imagery," says Bishop Lowth, "is not to be equalled. In all the best passages of the most elegant heathen poets in which they tell of a golden age, there is no such beauty and elegance, and no such variety of imagery as this." The wolf and the leopard, not only forbearing to destroy the lamb and the kid, but even taking their abode, and lying down together with them. The calf and the young lion and the fatling not only come together, but are led quietly in the same hand, and that by a child. The heifer and the she-bear not only feed together, but even lodge their young ones, for whom they used to be most jealously fearful, in the same place. All the serpents are so perfectly harmless that the sucking infant and the newly-weaned child puts his hand on the basilisk's den, and plays upon the hole of the asp. The lion not only abstains from preying on the weaker animals, but becomes tame, domestic, feeding on straw like the ox. These are all beautiful

circumstances, and in keeping with the imagery of the prophets ; for one seems to vie with the other in their description of these days.

But more beautiful will be the series of changes to come over the passions of empires and of man. Nature will have set her seal of nobility on man. Lawlessness and violence, passion and hate, and all other evils under the reign of our divine Messiah, will cease, and in their stead righteousness and peace, holiness and love, will everywhere abound. I like to think how the slightest thing may remind us of it all.

Once amidst the lovely pasture lands of Kildare, it happened, whilst a few of us were singing in the drawing-room of a friend, that a singular voice was heard mingling with our own. The door, which was partly open, led to the hall, and the hall to the open grounds outside, from which came a little robin, and stood on the top of the door ! It was marvellous to see how he turned his beak to the ceiling, shook his little sides with his supreme effort at song. He sang as if determined he would outdo us in the praises we were sending forth to our common Maker. For the moment it transfixed us ; for whoever imagined that a robin could send forth so lovely and grand a strain. Looking at him with delight, and charmed with his voice, I held forth my open hand as if to invite him near, when, lo !

down he came. His soft feet, I seem to feel them now, as he stood upon it. I drew him near to my mouth, and poured into his open beak my loudest strain, which, instead of disturbing, only made him more determined with his song. It was but a little thing, as I have said, yet it took one's mind right away to these sweet millennial days, when the confidence of the creature in man will be complete, and when the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory (R.V.) of the children of God. It seemed to tell of our Creator's goodness as seen in all, as we read—

“There's not a strain to memory dear,  
Nor flower in dell or grove;  
There's not a sweet note warbled here  
But minds us of His love.”

IX.

**The Light-bearer.**

## THE LIGHT-BEARER.

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“Soon make Thy seed, O Saviour,  
A lamp of burnished gold,  
To bear before the nations  
Thy true light, as of old.”

## Ninth Part,

### THE LIGHT-BEARER.

"What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof; and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. . . . And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches, which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

ZECHARIAH iv. 2, 3, 12-14.

**B**EAUTIFUL is the grouping of this imagery. First, the two evergreen trees rich with olive oil; then these trees over-canoping a splendid golden bowl, which receives the dropping oil from their laden boughs. From this bowl the oil descends to seven lamps, all of gold. These are suspended on a solid shaft of gold, on which they shed their light. But this they do, not as of old, only in the temple, but on the earth. In the golden oil supplying it, we see God ministering to His

people the full supplies of the grace of His Spirit.

The two olive branches may well represent Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the governor, both of whom foreshadowed the coming Messiah. The lamp doubtless represents Israel, who in the day coming will be God's light-bearer. This is what the Church is now on the earth—God's light in the midst of a dark place. God seems to delight in shining through His works. "The heavens declare His glory, and the firmament showeth His handiwork." The apostle, writing to the Romans, says, "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." There is not a star but tells of Him. Not a flower but points to Him. Every droplet and grasslet on earth say there is a God. God has hung out His book of creation, that men might read. Should an atheist say that there is no Maker, no God, the works of God at once blast and demolish his theory. The Church now forms a platform, on which principalities and powers see the exceeding riches of God's grace; but seated in her glory, Israel will be the light of the earth in the day of its millennium. She will give the light of the knowledge of God. The one source of it

all will be God. The wonderful force by which His heavenly illumination will fill the world, nations coming to the light, and kings to the brightness of its rising, will all be of and from Him. Resplendently the New Jerusalem city, come down from God out of heaven, will gleam with the uncreated glory of God, and with the glory of the Lamb. Every stone of that city will radiate glory to the world, to which it will have come during the millennium. This golden lampstand will not stand as did the golden vessel of old, simply shining before the Lord in the tabernacle and temple, but on the earth. The branches are sevenfold ; their united light will be a grand display of what is in Himself, and what He is in relation to His redeemed people. Thus now with every child of God. The name of the golden lamp-stand, under Aaron, was light-bearer. The shining out of the lamps in the tabernacle was to fall upon the face of it ; that is, on the face of the shaft of gold which sustained the lamps, which shaft upbearing the lamps, may we not say, was Christ ? The Christian testifies not of himself, but of Christ.

Such is the life-work of a Christian. He is to reflect Christ ; and the reflection, the light imparted, is to show Him from whom it comes. But for this there must be close connection with Christ. As the roots of the olives are deep down, nestling



at the secret source of all power and life, so all our supplies of grace and glory come from God, through Christ, who unites us to God. And that which comes from Christ to us, shows Christ, through us, to others. The oil and the light have their source in those unseen supplies at the roots, which are deep in the earth.

It is on this secret source that I would now dwell for a little. Moses describes the habitation of man newly created in a garden, planted with every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food, and how it was supplied with a river, that went out of Eden to water it. (Gen. ii. 10, xiii. 10.) The trees would have been of no value but for "this river of God."

As if to remind us of Eden, that oldest of cities, Damascus, we are told, has gardens thirty miles round, which are kept fresh by a river distributed to all the cisterns and fountains which water them. "The worthiest sight to be remembered," says another, writing of the East, "is the orange groves or gardens, with their trees of large spreading size, watered by a stream as it passes by each one." Psalm i. speaks of "rivers of waters," or "divisions of water;" and the prophet Jeremiah refers to the same when he says—

"She shall be like a tree planted by the river-side,  
And which sendeth forth her roots to the aqueduct.

She shall not fear when the heat cometh ;  
And her leaf shall be green ;  
And in the year of drought she shall not be anxious,  
Neither shall she cease from bearing fruit."

LOWTH'S translation.

It is in close connection with Christ that we get the blessing. When our souls are deep down, shall I say, in God, do we gladly say—

"My heart is resting, O my God ;  
I will give praise and sing ;  
My heart is at the secret source  
Of every precious thing.

"I thirst for springs of heavenly life,  
And here all day they rise ;  
I seek the treasure of Thy love,  
And close at hand it lies.

"And a new song is in my mouth,  
To long-loved music set,  
Glory to Thee for all the grace  
I have not tasted yet."

"All the grace"! Think of any one of the vast rivers of the globe. Think on the silent, everlasting flow of the deep, ponderous volume of its waters day by day, and night by night, coming on and on from their inexhaustible source, and we have a faint image of the eternal, inexhaustible flow of God's grace and love, and all the vast redemption-supplies, lodged for us in Christ. He is God's elect Treasury. In Him are hid, as in

a cabinet of treasures, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Yes, "in Him," who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are *complete in Him*." But all will be uninfluential unless united to Him. "Without me" (or separate from me) "ye can do nothing." But joined consciously in one Spirit to the Lord, we can do all things. Hence the power needed for service. That power was influential at Pentecost, when at one time three thousand, and another four thousand, souls, once resisting, were now yielding to the preaching of the Word. It was this power, this divine force in his own soul, Paul the apostle had when on the eve of his death he could say, as in the presence of his executioners, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

But beside power there will be beauty and glory; it was beauty and brightness of divine grace combined, that shone on the face of Moses when he had been with the Lord in "the secret place of the Most High." The same with Stephen, that proto-martyr. On dying he saw the glorified Son of man, and receiving of His glory his face shone as the face of an angel. Who does not pray with the sweet singer, "Let the beauty of the

Lord our God be upon us;" for that is what we want, not only the inward, but the outward and visible radiance, the power of the Holy Ghost seen in us, and by us. What beauty oftentimes where light is! See yon heights clothed with the beams of the resplendent setting sun! What calm, lovely glory rests upon their snow-clad summits! They are like islands of gold amid seas of beauteous blue. Thus with those who are illumined by Christ.

And it is all of grace. Supposing the lamp were to say, "How beautiful I am! how I shine!" What! Whence the light? whence the oil? Look up at the bowl, and further still at the lofty tree, and then deep down to its roots amid all their inexhaustible supply, and ask, Whence the brightness? whence the power? No, "not by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." What if the light become dim? Aaron had golden snuffers to trim the lamps. God has divine ways to purge and purify His own, so that, like John, you may be a burning and a shining light, not shining merely, but burning also. Bereavements, affliction, pain, losses, want even—He can use all these for our good. Think of a sick couch, of a subject mind having connection with that light. Think of Abram, thousands of years ago, who had been tried—"how the trial of his faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, might be found

unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

How the Lord will purify Jerusalem, purge away her sin ere her light will shine, we shall see. And now *in these days*, darkening around us, what is it we want?—We want power, force of knowledge, and utterance for doctrine—for instruction in righteousness; we want it in our own souls, for communion with God, and for service, in season and out of season, doing all to the Lord, not with "eye-service," or as "men-pleasers;" we want it for trial, for days of sorrow, that we may not "despise" His chastening, think lightly of it, or "faint," sink under it when we are rebuked of Him; we want it for conflict with the powers of darkness, and if we die we want it for dying. We want it that we may say, like Paul, "*I am ready to be offered.*" It is in the gloomy shade the vessel should give her light. *He is with me.*—What clouds are scattered by this single thought—mountains of anguish roll away from the heart!

Some one is saying, "It is all new to me; I have no light, no power." Yes; but by your accepting Christ, believing in Him, you become a lamp yourself; in other words, putting yourself under the rich droppings of the blood of Christ, all your sins are purged away, and you—"Complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved."

X.

## **The Flying Roll.**

## THE FLYING ROLL.

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"JERUSALEM hath sinned,  
Judgment is on her now,  
No sceptre in her hand,  
No crown upon her brow ;  
Alone she sits—alone,  
Her ancient glory gone."

## Tenth Part.

### THE FLYING ROLL.

"Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll."—ZECH. v. 1.

THE prophet Ezekiel had the vision of a roll, "Behold, an hand was sent unto me ; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein ; and he spread it before me ; and it was written within and without : and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe." The vision which Zechariah had was that of a *flying* roll ; its dimensions being singularly those of the Tabernacle, reminding us that if judgment begin at the house of God, "where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ?"

The vision is one of judgment. The interpreting angel said, "This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth," or as the word is, "*land.*" What sin had wrought the prophet Jeremiah sorrowfully tells. What an elegy is chapter iv. of his Lamentations. "How is the gold



become dim ! how is the most fine gold changed !  
. . . They [the opulent and great] that did feed  
delicately are desolate in the streets : they that  
were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills.  
For the punishment . . . is greater than the punish-  
ment of the sin of Sodom. . . . Her Nazarites  
were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk,  
they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their  
polishing was of sapphire ; their visage is blacker  
than a coal ;" and so altered are they, "they are  
not known in the streets : their skin cleaveth  
to their bones ; it is withered, it is become  
like a stick. They that be slain with the sword  
are better than they that be slain with hunger. . . .  
The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their  
own children : they were their meat in the destruc-  
tion of the daughter of my people." The people's  
inheritance is turned to strangers, their houses to  
aliens. They are orphans and fatherless, their  
mothers are as widows. They have drunken their  
water for money ; their wood is sold unto them.  
Their necks are under persecution : they labour, and  
have no rest. "The Lord hath accomplished His  
fury ; He hath poured out His fierce anger. . . .  
The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of  
the world, would not have believed that the  
adversary and the enemy should have entered into  
the gates of Jerusalem."

All this, alas! is but an instalment of misery. Our blessed Lord tells of Jerusalem laid in the dust. Vast as were His own sorrows, deep as was His own humiliation, the daughters of Jerusalem were not to weep for Him. They were to weep for themselves and for their children; their own misery was at hand. Between those times and now, what an outcast is the Jew among the nations! "The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter." Volumes might be written of the persecutions and indignities heaped upon the Jew during all these ages, in which he is an exile and a wanderer on the face of the earth. Well may it be asked—

"Oh, where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?  
And when shall Zion's songs again be sweet,  
And Judah's melody once more rejoice  
The hearts that leaped before its heavenly voice?"

The prophet Isaiah tells of a time, probably of this, when (chapter xxiv.) "the land [Israel] shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled." All its loveliness, its grand estates, the palaces of nobles and of kings, its cities, with their pomp and pride and so-called pleasure, will languish and fade away. "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof," no more are there the lovers of pleasure more than the lovers of God. "The new wine

mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh . . . every house is shut up, that no man may come in." This is what we now see concerning Jerusalem—

"On every side she hears  
The Gentile's scornful shout,  
Hatred and mockery  
Encompass her about.  
Alone she sits—alone,  
Her ancient glory gone.

"'Tis night upon her gates,  
And yet no watchmen call,  
Her streets are desolate,  
Ruin is over all.  
Alone she sits—alone,  
Her ancient glory gone."

This roll being a *flying* roll may indicate the terrible swiftness and suddenness of the judgment. Swift and terrible was God's judgment on the old world, when the fountains of the deep were broken up, and the heavens poured down their desolating rain. Swift and sudden too was the judgment on Sodom. Equally so will be the judgment yet to come, when men shall say, "Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." How solemn the word, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God"—"turned" helplessly,

hopelessly ; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Yet is there a remnant to be saved. As in "the shaking of an olive tree" there will be some olives, and as in the gleanings of the vine when the vintage is done there will be some grapes, so when God's judgments are on the earth the faithful of the land "*shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord. . . . Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires. . . . From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous.*" Bright, blessed exception to all the misery! Sweet oasis in the midst of the nation's woe! With all nature in sympathy—"the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when *the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously.*" No wonder the burst of adoration and joy follows: "O Lord, thou art my God ; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name ; for thou hast done wonderful things ; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." Thus after the storm a calm ; after the night of weeping the morning of joy. "Weeping may endure for a night, or come in to lodge at even" (R.V.) (only to lodge), "but joy cometh in the morning." What the joy will be the prophet Isaiah tells us.

Thousands of years are included in those few

words—described as of “magnificent glory” in Isaiah ix. (R.V.). “But there shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish. In the former time He brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali; but in the latter time hath He made it glorious by the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou *hast*” (not “*hast not*,” as with our old translation, but “*thou hast*”) “increased their joy. They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. Thus will it be when all judgment for Israel is overpast.

Blessed thought! There will be no “flying roll” for the church of God; no judgment, no wrath. The day of wrath for a child of God lies quite behind—“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” No law and no sin to condemn. The Judge, our Saviour, has taken the judgment.

XI.

**The Ephah.**

**K**

## THE EPHAH.

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**" WITHIN Thy circling power I stand,  
On every side I find Thy hand ;  
Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,  
I am surrounded still with God."**

## **Eleventh Part.**

### **THE EPHAH.**

“Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth.  
And I said, What is it? And he said, This is an ephah that  
goeth forth.”—ZECH. v. 5.

THE vision is thus described—“And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork; and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.”

This imagery—the woman, the stork, and the lead—at first sight may be difficult to understand;



but in the light of the saying, which is given along with the symbol, all is simple. The woman in the ephah is "wickedness." The ephah itself was a dry measure answering to our bushel. (Ezek. xlv. 13.) This shows how God measures wickedness. Hence we read, "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." God knew the exact amount. The "woman" was an emblem of the Jewish nation. And when *put into the ephah* shows how God had taken exact account of her sins. The "talent of lead," or weighty piece of lead, was put down upon the ephah or mouth of the woman; the sin of the nation was full weight; they had filled up the measure of their fathers. How tenderly we feel the words, "Thine iniquities are gone over mine head; they are too heavy for me."

"Wickedness," as here used, is a word interchangeable with "idolatry," which came at the first from Shinar; hence, when the wickedness is cast off from Israel, it will be carried back whence it came for its doom. How suggestive we need not say it all is, showing how God is occupied with His creatures; and of the importance of our own moral conduct before Him—for the principles all apply. In Daniel we find Him weighing the blasphemous king Belshazzar in "balances." And in dealing with the ordinances of justice, the prophet Ezekiel charged the princes of Israel to

“execute judgment,” and to take away exactions from the people, saying, “*Ye shall have just balances, and a just ephah, and a just bath.*” Thus as man measures commercially by the ephah, so God has His rule by which to know and judge His creatures morally.

“Those watchful eyes that never sleep  
Survey the world around.”

And yet how marvellous with what ease men add iniquity to iniquity, and sin to sin; and in their seeking to hide sin think more of man than of God. They say, “Doth God see?” Not considering that

“If o’er my sins I think to draw  
The curtain of the night,  
Those flaming eyes that guard the law  
Would turn the shades to light.”

Rather ought we to live in the remembering of,  
“Thou God seest me.”

“The beams of noon, the midnight hour,  
Are both alike to Thee;  
Oh, may I ne’er provoke that power  
From which I cannot flee!”

It is a solemn thought that all through the ages God has kept His eye upon Israel, and is doing so still. Their whole history lies before Him, as also does that of men generally; there is a certain amount of iniquity to fill up. “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof

in the day of judgment." This refers to those who die in their sins ; but of the righteous it is said, "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." God oftentimes allows us to go on and on in sin, as He did David and Peter, sowing the sin, and then reaping the sorrow. He has no way of purifying, chastening, or correcting His children except by such sorrow in this life. Their judgment for sin is overpast, and there will be no judgment for them in another world. He is not unobservant. The Christian, indeed, may go on sowing, but "God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." We are told that at Horeb the people made a calf, and Moses "took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it." (Ex. xxxii. 20.) Sin, in its result, is like drinking a nauseous draught from which our souls would fain turn away.

Israel's wickedness was special because so gratuitous and aggravated. Deut. vii. 7 shows that God had taken them up of His own free gracious will ; but they fell into awful idolatry. God had told them not to mingle with the nations lest they should learn their ways. Gravitation is downwards. You never find the worldling and the Christian really mingling, without the worldling

bringing down the Christian. Solomon first married idolatrous wives, and then worshipped their false gods. The wickedness spoken of here is idolatry. Love is jealous, and can be easily pained. In such spirit God bemoaned over them saying, "Ephraim is joined to idols. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?" Alas! ours may be some idol of the heart, some sin that easily besets us. God will measure it and us, and we shall reap as we have sown; we shall sorrow according to the sin. Striking image is this ephah. And striking attitude is it of God as Supreme Judge and Arbiter, sitting enthroned in the midst of all circumstances, and weighing the actions of nations and men in His divine balances. The lead brought into the picture *lay* in the ephah *resting, settled* there, as did Israel rest in her idolatry. Thus was it with David in the case of Uriah, ere the prophet came to him. He had no conscience of his sin; he was resting in it. The woman was sitting in the midst of the ephah, reminding us we may be tranquil under sin, as if we were at home in it. The thought ought to fill us with a holy fear lest we enter into temptation. Observe how the lead was put down upon the mouth. You can almost hear it said, "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." But what was done with it all?

"Behold, there came out two women . . . and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven." God is wanting to show how, in mercy to Israel, He will take it away, and put it down in its place, where was the beginning of idolatry—Shinar, the seed-bed of corporate hostility to God. These build it an house in Shinar. Can this be Babylon? No city now existing answers to the Babylon of Revelation. By no ingenuity of explanation can it be Rome; she has her own sins to answer for. Why not a city yet to be built at Shinar? Some believe it will be so; and as the ephah represents commerce, it may yet be a vast metropolis of commerce for the East. But whether it be a city yet to come, or merely mystical, a doom is to fall upon it. God is going to put His mark on this special wickedness. And should it mean a new centre of this world's godless traffic, as indicated by the house, it will be "set upon her own base," a thing to be seen by all, and finally to be doomed. And now think. What has God done with our own wickedness? Where have wings borne our sins?

Blessed for the child of God, "their sins and iniquities will *I* remember no more." Instead of Shinar, we have Calvary, where justice has spent itself, and we are "accepted in the Beloved." "Safe in the arms of Jesus."

XII.

**The Crowning Day.**

## THE CROWNING DAY.

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“BRING forth the royal diadem,  
And crown Him Lord of all.”

## Twelfth Part.

### THE CROWNING DAY.

"Take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua."—ZECH. vi. 11.

THESE crowns were real. They were no mere visions, but realities to be seen, that the eye may affect the mind and the heart. It was God's way of illustrating the priestly royalty of His own Son, the supremacy of Him who is yet to govern the world. Mr. Krause remarks "it was thus, to the prophet's mind, the land of Israel—that little corner of the earth was yet the citadel of the world's hope, the hearth on which the sparks that were yet to kindle the earth were kept alive." And truly it is so ; for *there* will take place the great re-action against the world's sin. As in the secret of the mountains the springs are fed which create the great rivers, so in the secret purpose of God they saw this re-action would come. Were we to trace the course of a stream, we should not count the large morasses or the stagnant pools ; we should



only recognize as the river the slenderest thread, in which an onward current may be discovered.

Thus Abraham, the man in whose seed the whole earth should be blessed and his family, were the little stream, in which the life and onward motion were to be traced ; while Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon were but the vast stagnant morasses on either side. What reflections, praise, and wonder, when the stream will have reached its fulness ! when He who has moulded all else on the earth, the enmity of men and devils, all times of war and peace, will cause it to issue in the full glory of the kingdom !

Accordingly these prophecies have all an onward-looking attitude. They are anticipative of good things to come, and of a Person who will bring them. Sacrifice, sacred offices as priesthood and kingship, and the whole history of Israel, have all a looking on to the future. They that went before, and they that followed after, cried, "Hosanna ! blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord !" He, the Christ, the coming One, towers up above the history of the world and the process of revelation like Mount Everest among the Himalayas. To that great peak all the country on the one side rises upwards, and from it all the valleys on the other descend ; and the springs are born there which carry life and verdure over the land. Christ the

Son of God is the centre of Scripture, and the Scripture is a unity, because there is driven right through it a vein of gold, either in the way of prophecy and onward-looking anticipation, or in the way of history and grateful retrospect, the reference to the One name which is above every name—Jesus Son of God.

The crowning of Joshua here is of great interest. The prophet is to go to the house of Josiah, whither certain exiles have come from Babylon. They have brought presents for the house of the Lord. The acceptance of their gifts foreshadowing the incoming of those from afar. Good men they are, who do not forget the God of their fathers. Note how their names are expressive of their relations to God—"Tobijah," *the Lord is good*; Jedaiah, "*God knoweth or careth for*;" Josiah, "*The Lord supporteth*;" Zephaniah, "*The Lord hideth*;" and perhaps Heldai, "*The Lord's work*." One could easily read in these names Israel's whole history, the Lord being indeed "good;" "knowing" and in the midst of all; "caring" for all, and "supporting" all. This in the past. But now, for the present, He is hidden from view; or in the judgment to come, hiding His people until the indignation be overpast.

These men returned from captivity were with Joshua and Zechariah in Jerusalem. They were

entrusted with silver and gold, with which now was made this "crown." (R.V.)

It was wonderful for our prophet. It was like letting him into the council chamber of heaven. Kings and cabinets have their policies. God's policy is a glorious priesthood and an everlasting kingdom for His Son, who is "a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Rich unveilings were these crowns of rank, and dignity, and glory; for crowns are of costly metals, and are associated with the greatest persons and occasions. When a king is invested with his kingdom, or hath many kingdoms, then the crowns, or the united crown, is placed on his head. The ancient kings adorned their hair with dust of gold, so that their very locks were golden, while the crowns themselves were golden, and set with every form and beauty of precious stones. The eastern bridegroom was known on the day of his espousals by the adorning of his crown. And we know how as a crown of beauty the golden mitre or golden flower sat on the head of Aaron when arrayed in his garments for glory and for beauty. In the song which tells of the true Bridegroom the head itself is of "fine gold." The head is the seat of wisdom, and Christ has been "made unto us wisdom." Aaron's crown and Solomon's song were familiar to the mind of our prophet. He foresaw his Messiah

majestic in person, the possessor of many and great kingdoms.

God's design in these crowns was to present the glory of Christ in the light of the richest splendour, as in Revelation we read, "On His head were many crowns." We call to mind *the priestly crown*. Aaron wore his holy mitre in *the holy place*. He had, on the great day of atonement, been accepted for Israel in his garb of pure white, with the blood of the sacrifice placed before the Lord. It was not until all sins had been put away that this crown, with "holiness to the Lord" inscribed upon it, was placed on his brow. He wore it in the holy place unseen by the people. We are now in *our* great day of atonement. Christ having died has entered into the holiest, where He now is, appearing "in the presence, or before the face of God for us." All our sins and iniquities having been put away by the sacrifice of Himself.

Then there is the crown of a present reward for His soul's travail. "What is *man*, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower, or for a little while lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. . . .

But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made for a little while lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." (Heb. ii. 7-9, R.V.) What a grand valley of gospel we travel over whilst journeying thus with Him!—First, from heaven to the manger; then from the manger to the dust of death; thence again to the height of His now being in the presence of God for us; and thence to His coming again. This valley lies between the throne whence He came and His coming again, with the cross between, and is for us a green pasture all through. This is His present blessedness—"crowned with glory and honour;" He is where sin has no longer connection with *Him* or with *us*. Hence when He comes it will be without sin unto salvation.

Further, there is the crown of the espousals. "King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon. He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple. Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals." (Song Sol. iii. 9-12.) What a profusion of imagery is here! setting forth the dignities and honours of the greater than Solomon. Here is cedar wood from Lebanon, telling of His

glorious incorruption. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." The pillars of silver tell of His strength; the silver itself and the gold tell of His righteousness, yea, His perfectness, as divine. The chariot is a royal chariot, telling of His kingliness; the crown is one of love—the crown of His espousals, as He said, "I am married to you." What sweetness for the heart! what dignity for the person! Oh, my soul, what a future is here! What endearments of bliss! all to be made good in the days of the earth's blessedness, when "a King shall reign in righteousness, and all nations will call Him blessed." The silver reminds us of the atonement money; and the sockets, made out of the same, on which the tabernacle firmly stood, shewing how all the glory rests upon the sufferings, without which there could be no atonement and no glory to follow.

But again, our favourite bard sings—

"Come, then, and added to Thy many crowns  
Receive yet one, *the Crown of all the Earth!*  
Thou who alone art worthy, it was Thine  
By ancient covenant ere time began.  
And Thou hast made it Thine by purchase since,  
And overpaid its value with Thy blood."

Strange, after nearly two thousand years of Christendom, that so few think He will ever

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personally reign on the earth. Yet the Bible is full of this great truth. From end to end we read how He will come, as we have seen, and subdue the nations of the world now opposed to Him—yea, personally destroy all that vast Gentile power which for ages despised the true God, having under its relentless foot trodden down to the dust Jerusalem and the land of Israel. His own He will subdue with love; but His foes with the rod of His mouth. Both Rev. xix. 11, 12 and our prophet (chapter xiv.) show this solemn crisis in the world's history—how especially He will put an end to that long-continued and Christ-rejecting Christendom, which from the first has been the enemy of His truth.

But beside the crown of the earth are the crowns of all worlds. He is "the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth." What wealth of divine truth is there in such a name as this! Who can measure its full dimensions? Who can express in words what exceeds our apprehension? What creature can tell the numbers of the worlds—the whole universe of suns and moons and stars, innumerable systems which tell of Him?

Added to all this are the undying splendours of His person. The personality of Christ will pervade the whole universe, fallen and unfallen; pervade it as waters of the ocean penetrate its unmeasured

depths, and as the suns and stars permeate with their light all the fields of illimitable space. Oh, who should be crowned with the many crowns if not He! What a long for ever in which He will be told, "THOU ART WORTHY!" Oh, lost ones of a fallen province—for such we were—what has He not done for us! Blessed Lord, we fail not to mention the marks of the thorns on Thy brow! Beyond all other wreaths or crowns is that which tells of our redemption. Thy best crowns as Man and Mediator, and ours, owe their existence to the sorrows of the tree. "Mournful, lovely Calvary!"

"Well He remembers Calvary,  
Nor lets His saints forget."

These crowns, it is added, "*are for a memorial.*" What *are* memorials? They are not passing tokens merely; but are intended to remain, never to pass away like a thing of the hour. We shall have eternity to study what they will be.

We are told by ancient Jewish writers that the crowns in the temple hung in the light of its windows. Oh, to what a height of observation, and in what light of uncreated glory in that heaven of heavens, will be that which will tell of our Redeemer! And how marked with their own individuality of interest will be each of His crowns! Think of "*Gethsemane*," as it were, inscribed on



one ; "*Calvary*," "*Golgotha*," "*Olivet*," on others ; "*Creation*," "*Government*," "*Providence*"—yea, the interests of all beings and all worlds, on others. It takes away the breath to think what it all will be—A WEIGHT OF GLORY, A FAR MORE EXCEEDING AND ETERNAL WEIGHT OF GLORY which no creature could support. Our Christ is no Unitarian Christ. Eternal weights such as His, only One who is eternal could bear. Oh, say what of ourselves, when these crowns are laid at His feet, or placed upon His brow ! May our God impress us with the thought that if we have no part in His cross here, we can have no part in these glories hereafter. How will they have rightly judged, who, having possessed what society so-called most keenly values—its gaudy tinsel, its stores of wealth—have sung of the world as did Margaret of Navarre—

" Its glories and its honours, adieu !  
Adieu, pomps ! vanities, adieu !  
No longer commune I with you :  
Other pleasures seek I more,  
My Redeemer's love adore ;  
Honour, riches, all my store,  
Is in Him for evermore ;  
For the fleeting and the vain  
Shall I give the eternal gain ?  
Adieu ! adieu ! "

**XIII.**

**The Counsel of Peace.**

## THE COUNSEL OF PEACE.

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"HUSH ! while on silvery wing of holiest song  
Floats forth the old, dear story of our peace—  
His coming, the desire of ages long,  
To wear our chains, and win our glad release.  
Our wondering joy to hear such tidings blest  
Is crowned with, 'Come to Him, and He will give you rest.'"

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

### Thirteenth Part.

## THE COUNSEL OF PEACE.

“The counsel of peace shall be between them both.”

ZECH. vi. 13.

A GRAND cluster of things is presented to us here. It hangs richly on this bough of prophecy. The Messiah shall grow up as a branch out of His place, so that under His divine shadow Israel may rest. Moreover, “He shall build the temple;” and again, “He shall bear the glory,” He “shall sit and rule upon His throne; and shall be a priest upon His throne;” and again, “The counsel of peace shall be between them both.” Respecting this counsel the principles included are of wide application. Our minds are taken back to transactions which were before all worlds, when there was a counsel of peace between God who would have a redeemed people, and Christ who would redeem them—between God as Judge, and Christ as sufferer of the judgment; between the Father as predestinating us to be sons, and Christ, who made Himself as Saviour and Deliverer responsible, and who as

Messiah would be Ruler and King on His throne. Zerubbabel and Joshua are both images of Christ, who unites in Himself the altar as well as the throne, Joshua representing the Priest, whose office is to deal with sin ; the other the office of King. The one has close relationship with the other. If there had been no offering, no sacrifice for sin, there would have been no kingdom, no right to rule or reign. In the tabernacle of old, thus His whole person and work were imaged by the veil. Its colours wrought into the veil were the blue, the heavenly ; the purple, the kingly ; the scarlet, the atonement. All these were wrought into the pure white—His own intrinsic perfectness. Not one could be dispensed with. If no atonement, no kingly reign or heavenly association with man—a sinner. Singular, the scarlet and the blue combine to make up the purple. Just as His being here from heaven to suffer and die, there will follow the reward as Ruler and King. But the veil was rent, Christ died. If God would save the guilty, it could only be on righteous ground. That ground was in Christ, who covenanted to fulfil all the claims of God's holiness, so that no let or hindrance should exist to the requirements of God's will. The counsel was eternal. It was between them both. Hence we hear the Son saying, "Lo! I come to do Thy will." All the great attributes of God are seen

manifested in the work of Christ. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Satan was the first in our world to teach what God hates; viz., that we should doubt or deny His Word. And he was the first to teach a denial of punishment. He said unto the woman, "Ye shall not surely *die*;" "*Hath* God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Could such an one as God deny you thus? That first doubt has filled the world with its sad fruit. That first death, moral death, was the precursor of all who are dead in trespasses and sins, and who, if they die in such state, will suffer what the same enemy would get men to deny; viz., the "second death." It was on the ground of what this "counsel" was that God could say, speaking to the serpent of the seed of the woman (Christ), "Thou shalt bruise His heel." The bruising due to man's sin Christ had made Himself responsible to take. The first parents exercised faith; *i.e.* they simply received what God had said. It is on the same principle that we, as His children, are to go on with God. "The just shall live by faith." Man has been taken up by God to show forth the riches of His grace. For this His character must remain perfect; His righteousness against sin being satisfied, His saving love for the sinner is gratified. God has His own eternal

peace—a peace above all circumstances which has never been disturbed ; His first peace with man, His Eden peace was broken. His redemption-peace nothing ever will break. It is AN EVERLASTING PEACE, to be enjoyed through the age of Israel blessed on the earth, and those ages of ages of the new heavens, and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. But at what a cost to the Son ! The price was His own blood. Accordingly He who died is our peace. It is through Him we have peace with God. And that we might know it, He “came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.” Hence our peace is not a feeling nor any experience of ours, though knowing Him is the fount of sweetest feeling. He who is with God in our heavenly home is our peace, also our life, as we sing—

“ My life is not below—

’T is all on high.

The living One now lives for me above,

The loving One now pleads for me in love ;

I cannot die.

“ Therefore am I calm—

Peace and love within ;

That dear light that on me gently falls

Casts out fear and sin.

As my home above is, so

Am I now below.”—BONAR.

XIV.

**The Glory-Bearer.**



## THE GLORY-BEARER.

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“SUMMER suns are glowing  
Over land and sea,  
Happy light is flowing  
Bountiful and free ;  
Everything rejoices  
In the mellow rays,  
All earth's thousand voices  
Swell His psalm of praise.

“Christ's free glory streameth  
Over all the world,  
And His banner gleameth,  
Everywhere unfurled.  
Broad and deep and glorious,  
As the heavens above,  
Shines in might victorious  
His eternal love.”

## Fourteenth Part.

### THE GLORY-BEARER.

“He shall bear the glory.”—ZECH. vi. 13.

THESE words have “a magnificent glow and movement.” Here it is not so much the person of Christ, not what He is, as what He will do. He will “BEAR THE GLORY.” Some read, He will wear the glory, as if all, like a magnificent garment, would gloriously adorn Him. But bear it all He will. And intrinsically and mediatorially He will be able.

There are two passages which shed their light on this figure of bearing the glory. The one is in Isaiah xxii. 23, 24, where God promises, “I will fasten Him as a nail in a sure place; and He shall be for a glorious throne to His Father’s house. And *they shall hang upon Him all the glory of His Father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.*”

The image of the nail in a sure place carries us

back to the tabernacle and temple of old—to the strong golden pins or nails on which the vessels of the sanctuary were hung. Each one had a separate pin; but here all, everything in creation and redemption, are to be upon one nail. With such provision in the Tabernacle, the tiniest vessel would be as safe as the largest. Being allied to Christ, hung on Him, the weakest believer is as safe as is the universe itself, which also depends on Him. And He is not a moveable nail; Christ will bear all, and for ever the same. All in eternity will owe their safety to Him, from the little infant that left its mother's arm to those who, having filled their days, were ripe in the knowledge of the love and ways of the Creator and Redeemer. In Ezra ix. 8 we read, "To give us a nail, that is a constant and sure abode, in His holy place." How beautiful! Not to have any more of these vicissitudes, these troubles; no more on earth or in heaven these adverse changes. And all this, our bliss, not for a limited period merely, but for ever, for the glory will have no end.

Obviously this is future. Else *when* did He sit upon His throne, which is David's throne? or when as King and Priest did He bear the glory? What He did bear, when here as a child on earth, were the sobs and sighs of infancy; or as man He bore our sorrows, and carried our griefs; and as One

down in the dust of death He bore our sins. But as Messiah He was cut off, and as to the kingdom received nothing. Yet to Him—as the rejected God-man, have been committed all the grand results of His death; all authority, all judgment, and all dominion.

He will bear the glory in His person—all His own perfections which form His character, those which are intrinsically essential to Him as Son with the Father, and those derived as man, all constituting Him mediatorially glorious. We have had glimpses of Him thus. Moses saw Him on Sinai in the sublimity of His awe-inspiring majesty; the disciples saw Him as the glorified Son of Man on the holy mount; John saw Him in Patmos, shining with a brightness above the sun; so also Paul when he saw Him as He appeared at his conversion. The Old Testament scriptures are full of grandest shadows which fall from Him, like as the colours in the tabernacle harmonized together in one beauteous whole, and those garments for glory and for beauty which Aaron wore.

He will bear the glory of His works. This is now said; but it will be seen then. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." We go back beyond creation, and He is. He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. Can we

conceive it from the smallest animalculæ to the loftiest angel, from the tiniest atom to the most ponderous world and systems of worlds? Creation is the expression of what was in His mind from all eternity; the types of all that we now see, of all that ever will be seen, were there from everlasting. He Himself is no mere emanation of the Godhead, as some vainly say. "The Word was with God, and the Word *was* God." Therefore the Word was not *made*. But all that is made was "made by Him."

The book of Genesis gives us glimpses of the Word in time; John the apostle gives us the Word as He was in eternity. We want not for witnesses of what He has done. "The heavens declare His glory, and the firmament showeth His handiwork." From the first orb whose light ever broke on the bosom of immensity down to the last, formed by the ever vast resources of His power, will own Him as their glorious Maker and Artificer. Accordingly, what exploits of His creative power, the types of things and beings may yet be in His mind to be created. All through the eternal future, whatever we may see and know, or ever shall see and know, He will bear the glory of it all, whilst yet we must still exclaim, "These are parts of His ways."

Moreover, He will bear the glory of all those greater and most wondrous exploits foretold by prophecy, and which had their beginning in the

manger and on the cross. Marvellous that *He* should hang naked and helpless upon a cross, a spectacle to men and angels; and that in dying He should overcome death, and lay the foundation of all that vast superstructure of redemption and salvation, which will be the study and astonishment of His whole intelligent creatures for ever.

If we must speak of glories, there are glories on glories which He will bear. In John xvii. there is His own, that He had with the Father before the world was, the essential glory, which we are to see.

Then there is His derived glory, "the glory which thou hast given me." He gave Himself to glorify His Father; the Father gives Him glory as His reward. We have part in this; not in its acquirement, but in its possession, its enjoyment. It has been said that in Christ "God has taken us up, not only out of our sinnership, but out of our creatureship." Not that we are not creatures. We shall be that for ever. But of what creature, standing simply in himself, could it be said, that with the same love wherewith He has loved the Son He hath loved them, and the glory which He has given to His Son has been given them. And again that we should sit with Him in His throne, as He is seated in His Father's throne.

Then, besides, there will be the redeemed themselves. As diadems set with precious stones, so

Israel will be as an ensign in the land, and as a crown of glory for her king. And then the risen and glorified saints, what a multitude! That wondrous kingdom of kings—the kingdom of His Son. They have had all their sins put away; they have been made like unto Himself.

These, with thousands and tens of thousands of angels, will yield him a weight of glory which no creature could receive or bear. Through Calvary's cross they will learn infinitely more than by any other means the depths of God's nature—His love, His holiness, His righteousness and grace.

And there will be no finality as to this.

“From glory unto glory that ever lies before,  
Still wondering and adoring, rejoicing more and more :  
Still following where He leadeth, from shining field to field :  
Himself our goal of glory, Revealer and Revealed.”

There will be ever fresh occasions for praise.

“For eternity  
Measured by ages, limitless to man  
Has intervals and periods of bliss,  
And high recovering festivals that stand  
On the sidereal calends in eternal light.”

Who or what will not contribute to His glory?  
My soul, will He bear the glory of *thy* redemption?  
In Rev. xiv. we read, “And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and the voice which I

heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders: and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been purchased out of the earth." (R.V.) Yes; none but the saved will ever sing; only those who have been born again and have a new nature—fruit of divine grace and fitted for divine glory! Blessed be His name, grace was before the glory—"The grace of God that bringeth salvation." This is a day of grace; it is like a beauteous canopy whereon is inscribed, "*Having made peace through the blood of His cross.*" We come under its shelter and live. But the canopy is to be taken down; it is limited to this life. Learn, now, what that meaneth—"Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth."

Did we want to put more weight on this glory there will ever remain "ETERNITY." When all else has been completed it remains—His own eternity which was before all worlds. Who can tell what it is? Go backwards and forwards until the imagination finds what it thinks is the utmost limit, when lo, it is as yet only the centre.

The wonderful mystery that centres in eternity is borne by Him. He bears it all—the renown of



its duration and the sublimity of its greatness. What a boon to have been made capable of such contemplation! And what a height called to be one with Him whom we thus contemplate! and what a history is all this—God's ways, rooting in God's love! It is not so much a history of the world, but of His kingdom in the world.

**XV.**

**The Rejected One.**

## THE REJECTED ONE.

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"A KING in Thee His course would hold ;  
Ah, who shall tell its worth ?  
A King before whose glorious light  
And gorgeous splendour shrink from sight  
The meaner things of earth.  
Oh, see  
How He  
In royal state  
Now through the gate  
Descends, and how  
The heavenly choir before Him bow.

"As ready there He stands, all round  
The heights of heaven with songs resound,  
And palms bestrew His way.  
But, ah, how strange, as near the earth  
Approaching, all this sacred mirth  
Grows dim, and fades away ;  
And palms  
And psalms  
And crowns of gold  
And thrones, behold,  
All, all are gone—  
A little child is left alone."

## Fifteenth Part.

### THE REJECTED ONE.

“Behold, thy King cometh.”—ZECH. ix. 9.

EVERY word of this announcement is of deep interest, “*Thy* King cometh.” “I am not sent,” He said, “but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” “Thy King cometh unto *thee*.” He came assuming the nature of the seed of Abraham, to be as one of themselves; not One whom they could not endure, as at Horeb, respecting whom they begged that they might not hear His voice, neither see this great fire any more, and in answer to which, Moses said, “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee . . . from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.” (Deut. xviii. 15, 16.)

“Yes,” says an old Jewish writer, “He shall come to thee to atone thee. He shall come to thee to upraise thee to His temple, and to espouse thee with an everlasting espousal.” Another writes, “As Man, He was born of her; as God, He was

the Word made flesh, that He might come to her, to be manifest unto her, and hence commune with her." Moreover, He is *just*—righteous in Himself, righteous in His offices for Israel, and for us *Jehovah-Tsidkenu*—the Lord our Righteousness—through whom we are made the righteousness of God in Him.

"*Lowly* also. He was lowly in His birth. Two poor persons in vain sought room in the inn. Driven thence, they resort to a stable near, and there the Infant was born. How lowly that little One! With what amazement must Mary have looked upon such surroundings, when she knew that He, whose face was one of unspeakable delight to her, was destined to infinite honour and glory. Surely no joy was ever so deep, so holy, so beautiful as hers; and no wonder could be greater when she saw Him thus without the needed, or ordinary comforts." Yes, lowliness was His. When men fell off from Him, as if they were not of Him, He was passive and subject to Him to whom He made His wants and requests known. As Son, He stood alone; it was "the habit of an unbeginning eternity." Awful as was the guilt of His having been rejected, He glorified God in it. The shame He could endure, knowing the glory that was now rejected would reappear and assert itself in its own place. "*Lowly*," it has been said, is a word

which can never be fully explained or illustrated as regards Him. In His outward lot, foxes had holes, and birds of the air had nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay His head. The term, by some, has been translated "afflicted." The word, it is said, implies that His lowliness of spirit came from the loneliness and sorrow of His life. This may be so. For where was sorrow like His? And where such subduedness to His Father's will? Where such meekness and gentleness? Such condescending tenderness of love? Ignorant, unthinking disciples would reject the little ones; but not so the meek and lowly Saviour. He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

Significant of what He did is the prediction, "Riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." "This," says another, "was among the proposals and presentations of the Messiah. There were many such. The Bethlehemite was born according to the prophets. Wise men of the dispersion came to Bethlehem that they might worship Him. The light too shone from Galilee, from the land of Zebulun and Naphtali. The harmonies of many voices from Scripture may be heard now."

Psalms viii., xxiv., and cxviii., as well as our prophet, are in our hearing on this great occasion. The moment is full of wonders. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," is heard; for

the owner of the ass acknowledged the Lordship of Jesus, and sets His title as paramount to his own.

I have said every word is of interest here; and so the grouping of the description of His riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

"The ass itself," writes another, "as well as its owner, was in the power of the moment; for the foal accompanied the mother, or the mother her foal, we can scarcely tell which, and it matters not. Both were brought, and brought together to Jesus, for there was to be then no trespass on the sympathies of nature. The kid could not at such a moment be seethed in its mother's milk. That moment was the dawn of the millennial day, and creation must take their part in its joy and power. The people by their palm-branches and their hosannahs were telling of a happy day—a feast of tabernacles for the tribes of the Lord." In the day of His temptation the wild beasts were with the Lord to witness that Eden had not been forfeited by Him. (Mark i. 13.) So here the beasts of burden rejoice in their service as though the kingdom were now entered by Him and creation was delivered from its groaning. Surely again, I may say, it was a moment full of wonders bright and festive. This had not been so in the days of Samuel. The kine lowed then as they went, for

their calves were left behind, while they, their mothers, bore the ark to Bethshemish. (1 Sam. vi.) Nature might receive a wound then and continue in her groaning; but now, in the presence of the Lord of the millennial world, nature must rejoice.

How simple, yet how grand and brilliant, all this is! It is, however, but for a moment. And this is so, that whether they should hear or whether they forbear, Israel should know that the shout of a King had been among them. But Israel did not hear; for speedily that word is fulfilled—"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Oh, what a revulsion! Instead of shouts and rejoicings, only scoffs, insults, and challenges awaited Him. This was the moment of His rejection. In a cold-blooded, cavilling spirit "THE CHIEF PRIESTS *said unto Him*, 'HEAREST THOU WHAT THESE SAY?'" Implying He had no right to their Hosannas. They rejected Him. What follows is, "*He left them*, and went out of the city into Bethany; and He lodged there. Now in the morning as He returned into the city, He hungered." (Matthew xxi.) For Israel was like the fig tree which He saw—there was no fruit for Him. The thirty pieces of silver in the prophecy (chap. xi. 13) is a foretelling of that rejection as seen in the evangelist, also "the blood of thy covenant." (Chap. ix. 11.) Alas! all had owned



Him but those for whom He came. The angels at His birth. The star stood over where the young child was. Nature, creation, waited on its Lord. Learned men from the East owned Him (for philosophy was represented in them); they came and worshipped Him, bringing as to a king their "gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." And, according to His own words to the imprisoned John, the blind owned Him as they received their sight, the deaf also, the lepers, the lame, and the dead. The poor too, in having the gospel preached to them, was but a fulfilment of His claim to the confidence of those who possessed the sure word which shone as a light in a dark place. "But the darkness (Israel) comprehended it not." They received not, but crucified their King. He Himself foretold the same. He asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I am? And they answered, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets. And He saith unto them, But *whom say ye that I am?* And Peter answereth and saith unto Him, *Thou art the Christ.*" And He charged them to tell no man. Why, we can easily conjecture. For "He began to teach them that the Son of man" (this same Messiah) "*must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and of the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.*" And after He had risen,

the prayer of Peter and John shows how they understood it. "For of a truth in this city against thy holy servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel fore-ordained to come to pass." (Acts iv. 27, 28, R.V.)

But note, the prophet had said (see margin), "He is just and *saving Himself*." This it would seem His enemies knew. Hence they derided Him as He hung helpless on the tree, saying—"He saved others; *Himself He cannot save*." (Mark xv. 29-32.) Remarkable, in quoting this scripture, none of the evangelists give this word, "*saving Himself*." It was the one thing He did not do. Hence an arrest as to this word was laid on their pen. How minutely accurate the blessed Spirit of God! We are reminded of a line, specially omitted by the blessed Lord, who, when He went into the synagogue at Nazareth, opened the Book and read (R.V.):

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

"Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor :

"He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,

"And recovering of sight to the blind,

"To set at liberty them that are bruised,

“To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book,” not reading, “And the day of vengeance of our God,” because obviously that day of vengeance had not come ; nor was He here to proclaim it, but only that in which we now are ; viz., “the acceptable year of the Lord.” Hence it is for both these, “The day of vengeance of our God,” and the saving Himself, or the bringing in of a full salvation, He must come again.

**XVI.**

**Beauty and Bands.**

## BEAUTY AND BANDS.

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**“ SWEET to trace His toiling footsteps,  
Here amidst the desert sands ;  
Bear in memory all His sorrow,  
Thorn-clad head, and piercèd hand !  
Learn His love beside the manger,  
Learn it on the stormy wave,  
By the well, and in the garden—  
Learn it by the cross and grave.”—MRS. BEVAN.**

## Sixteenth Part.

### “BEAUTY AND BANDS.”

“And I took unto me two staves ; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands ; and I fed the flock.”—ZECH. xi. 7.

HERE we are to see a touching consequence of Christ's rejection ; for the One who is personated is the true Shepherd. He would have comforted His flock, yea, adorned and strengthened them ; for “Beauty” means loveliness, and “Bands” strength. Both these, if Israel had received Him, would have been theirs. He came with His heart set on searching out the poor of the flock, dividing the precious from the vile ; but on His rejection “Beauty” was broken ; for there could be no beauty without Him. It was on the total disruption of Israel that “Bands” also was broken. Said the prophet, “I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder.” No more, therefore, now is He simply guiding, guarding, or protecting them, as He would have done. Like Joseph of old, He is now in His exaltation on high, of which they are

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ignorant, separated from His brethren. Touching are His own last words of remonstrance unto them, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Hence His coveted mission of gathering them in to Himself, as Shepherd and Comforter, for the present is at an end; no longer would His rod and His staff comfort them. "Bands" also is broken; for they are not only deprived of their land, they have no king, no priest, no home, no temple, no ark, no pillar of cloud, and no shekinah of glory. What strength can they have? Scattered, removed to the ends of the earth, what bond is there to bind them as of old? They are a crownless nation without Him. Concisely does Paul the apostle speak of this, the sad circumstance in their history: "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets . . . they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*. And though they found no cause of death in Him, yet desired they Pilate that He should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre. But God raised Him from the dead." (Acts xiii. 27-30.) He is now, as Joseph was after his humiliation, in profound rest; His whole joy is

heavenly; whilst here He received nothing as to the kingdom.

"For Him the wilderness did not sing,  
Nor the desolate place rejoice ;  
Nor, as the rose, did the desert bloom,  
Nor the wastes lift up their voice.

"The glory of Lebanon was not there,  
Nor the shittah, nor myrtle sweet ;  
Nor was the place of His sojourning fair,  
Nor glorious the place of His feet.

"Through the great and terrible waste He trod,  
Where water-springs were none ;  
In the weary desert alone with God,  
And His heritage God alone.

"No way in the desert prepared for Him,  
Nor the mountains and hills made low ;  
Nor the crooked straight, nor the rough ways plain,  
Where His pilgrim feet must go."\*

And now what of ourselves during this intermediate time between Christ's rejection and His coming again? We who believe, both Jew and Gentile, are as He is—raised and seated "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." And as Christ is in heaven crowned with glory and honour, we in spirit are with Him there. In perfect repose, with the joy still set before Him, He keeps all in His mind—Israel, the Church of God, and the glory of the kingdom which has yet to come. Thus in

\* MRS. BEVAN.



spirit we are far removed from all the sins and defilements, in the midst of which practically we sojourn. Our spirit ever is with Him. Tender, entire, and unchanging is His love to us—“Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.” This is how it is with Him and with us during the interval of His rejection from this world. His coming next will be to receive us to Himself; till then we are strangers and sojourners, not satisfied with any scene while He is absent. It is abnormal for the Head to be in heaven and the members on the earth. We live not so much where we are as where we love; we live therefore with Him, inside the circle of the Father’s presence. Sweet it is to sabbath there, saying, “This is my rest,” as He promised in Matt. xi., “I will give you rest;” or, “*I will rest you.*” We labour here; we work and watch; we seek to save men, taking them out of the world; but inside, in spirit with Christ, is our true place as we sing—

“There above I rest untroubled,  
All my service to adore;  
Cross and shame, and death and sorrow,  
Left behind for evermore.

**XVII.**

**Christ's Second Coming.**

## CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

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**"MESSIAH comes, rejected once and slain ;  
Daughter of Zion, loud hosannahs sing.  
Who came to suffer once, now comes to reign.  
Beneath the palm tree Israel's Judge shall sit—  
Behold the people gathering at His feet."**

## Seventeenth Part.

### CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation."—ZECH. ix. 9.

CHRIST will come at last. The prophets had no thought of His not coming, nor of there ever being such a period as *the millennium* until He should come. Was there one of the prophets therefore who was not a pre-millennialist? No; they saw Him coming—a BEING of mysterious grandeur—personally to reign. That they must have seen mingling with their hopes such signs of humiliation and even death, as in Psalm xxii. and Isaiah liii., there can be no question; but His being here as One to put down all rule against Him, and to reign over the kingdom Himself, and possess the earth, was the one great preponderating thought.

Many great events are linked in with Christ's coming. He will be *just, righteous*, bringing salvation. The nations gathered against Jerusalem

He will destroy. He will root out of His kingdom all that offends. The beast, the antichrist, Satan, and all other enemies, those avowedly such, and those false professed friends who will, like the foolish virgins, have their lamps but no oil in their vessels, He will adjudge to their doom. In grace He will reveal Himself to those in Israel whom He will find waiting for Him. He had said and will keep His word, "Ye shall not see me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Luke xiii. 35.) This they will do; they will hail Him as blessed. Moreover, "He shall speak peace unto the nations." His reign will be glorious. The crown of supreme dominion will never again sit upon a Gentile brow. "His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the River even to the ends of the earth."

These are some of the vast attendants of His coming. It has been said of the prudent of this world, that the future belongs to them; but it is not so. The true future will be His. Christ will exercise dominion on this earth for a thousand years. How tender then the reminiscences of its people!—Those who in days past had said, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." (Lam. iii. 26.) And who will have said, "Lo, this is our God ;

we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad, and rejoice in His salvation." (Isaiah xxv. 9.)

1. There will be judgment for those of Israel and Judah who will be infidel to the end. They have said, "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement." But they will be condemned with the world. Then it is that the question will solemnly apply, "Are there few that be saved?" or rather, "Will such as be saved be few?" Many, when it is too late, will seek to enter in with the saved to the kingdom, but shall not be able. The Lord Himself tells the fearful result. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."

As introductory to this Daniel speaks of a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." Jeremiah laments, "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble." Every image whereby those sorrows could be shown to be dreadful has been used. "As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace," so are they to be melted. The Jews had said, "His blood be on us and on our children." And it will be. Hence He said, "Daughters

of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us ; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke xxiii. 28-31.) Of the ten tribes (Israel proper) God says, "I will sift the house of Israel *among all nations*" (before they reach the land), "like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword." (Amos ix. 9, 10.) "As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand . . . and with fury poured out, will I rule over you. . . . and I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. . . . And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." (Ezek. xx. 33-38.) The rebels, He says, He will purge out from among them.

2. Thus will it be with Judah and Israel; but what of the world? Not only did the Jew reject Him, the Gentile joined with him in His death. Hence the event will be universal. "Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all the tribes of the

earth shall mourn over Him." (R.V.) Mourn in repentance as the saved remnant will do, or wail in despair as those in unbelief. Men refuse to look at Him now ; they madly avert their eye from His truth, but they must see Him then. There will be no walking backward from the august sight, no closing the eyes against it. Every eye must see Him, and seeing Him see at a glance the reality of their heaven or their hell, the reward or the doom which will be assigned them. Judgment will be sudden. As it was in the days of Noe, and in the days of Lot, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. Men did not believe the flood was coming, or that Sodom would be burned. They do not believe now that Christ will come. Hence the awful surprise. "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child ; and they shall not escape."

Malachi iii. iv. shows how the wicked will burn as stubble, and the prophet asks, "Who may abide the day of His coming?" Let anyone doubting the power of God to punish, ask, "Could Sodom abide the fire? Could the antediluvians the flood? Could Herod the angel that smote Him, or the worm that consumed him? Belshazzar saw only "*fingers*" on the wall, yet his knees smote and his loins were seized with terror—reminding us of the



inquiry, "if thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee . . . then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

More terrible is the word in 2 Thess. i., where "flaming fire" is spoken of "taking vengeance." Will it be literal fire? It was so with Sodom; and with the sons of Aaron, when doubtless from the altar it leaped upon them in the outer court, and left them monuments of devouring flame. We cannot lower these words—"flaming fire," "taking vengeance"—whatever they may mean, they are God's words. They tell how the coming of the Lord will be overwhelming in its envelopments and attendants. He will come, not in humiliation and sorrow as before, but in power and great glory; in His own glory, and in the glory of His Father, and in the glory of the holy angels. What a spectacle for the world to see! What a moment for man to meet! "Behold," said Enoch, the seventh from Adam, "the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints," who with Him will "execute judgment upon the world, also judge angels; from them will proceed the solemn '*Amen*' to the announcement of the world's doom."

Paul tells the Thessalonian Christians *they* were not to be troubled by this event; for that *they*, at that time, will *rest* as under the feathers of the Almighty, like the brood under the wing of the

mother-bird, amidst the rolling of the thunder and the flaming of the lightning; the saints risen and glorified will rest safely, as the Lord Himself is safe in that day.

Such is the *main line* of prophecy respecting the coming of the Lord to the world. There is another line, peculiar to the New Testament, which tells of His descending to the air; probably some such descent as He made when, above the earth, but not on it, He met Saul on his way to Damascus. This is spoken of in 1 Thess. iv. See also 1 Thess. i., Phil. iii., the promise of which roots in John xiv. No judgment will be allied to this. Speaking of believers, the Lord said—and no word could be more explicit—“*They shall not come into judgment,*” having been delivered from the “wrath to come.” (2 Thess. i. 7.) The words are special, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” This being so “*our tale,*” said Lady Powerscourt, “may soon be finished, and the history of our lives will be soon put by in the library of God as an old volume of His faithfulness. Soon we shall see Him face to face, and know as we are known.

Soon too, prophecy will be all fulfilled. Then every plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted will have been rooted up ; but the little grain of love scattered by His own hand in our hearts shall flourish in the courts of the Lord's house for ever and ever. Hallelujah ! Why tarry thy chariot wheels ?" Unlike the coming to judge the world, which will be public, this may be without the observation of the world. Not so with

#### THE DAY APPROACHING.

And observe how all along this day *has been* approaching. All along as foretold by our Lord have there been events which form one by one the predicted *approaches*. Our Lord speaks of wars, famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places, the love of many waxing cold, &c. These fill up the intermediate time, and point on to the coming end. They were to be the sign of His coming as Son of man. Events momentous enough are happening in our time ; but these will be repeated with deeper and more solemn emphasis at the close. How exact is prophecy ! For how long during the 1800 years has the world been without "wars and rumours of wars" ? Who but a divine Being could have foretold that there would be no continued peace until He should come ? Other things also tell His ap-

proach. All along the line of 1800 years—in our British Isles, in India, Italy, Spain, and China—gigantic famines and earthquakes have occurred. By the latter God has just now been knocking at the crust of the earth, telling its sinful millions of the reality and solemnity of His own august Being, and of the reality and solemnity of man's dependence on Him. Think of 100,000 human beings destroyed by only one such visitation. But these are only intermittent now; they will be the awful order of things in the coming day of Rev. xvi. Our own hope I believe to be dependent on no sign, no tribulation, no budding of fig-tree, as in Mark xiii. 28, 29. To-day, even, ere the eye could lift its mystic lash, He may come. He never said at what time; that we may expect Him at any time. We fix no date as to the Lord's return; but this we may say, that if the one event—His coming to the earth—draweth near, the other must be nearer. The Lord said, "*A little while.*" When it happens it will all be "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." There will be no time to fear; no time to prepare. It is now we should fear, if need be, or prepare if we require it. In a moment and He will be here. No roof-work if in our houses, no sleep if in our couch, will hinder our being caught up to be with Him—just as bars and bolts were nothing to Him when, the door being shut for fear

of the Jews, He came and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be unto you." Do not mind money inordinately, or houses, or land. Whose will they all be when He shall have come? What comfort is this hope to the sick, the sorrowing, and the bereaved. I never enter a saint or stand at the open grave that I do not think how in a moment of time the departed may be restored, and our sorrow turned into joy. Grand the gospel word—" *Shall not come into judgment.*" At the Lord's first coming He took the judgment due to our sin that no judgment might come on us. Receiving Him we shall not come into judgment, but have eternal life. Not only so, "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

**XVIII.**

**Divine Beauty.**

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## DIVINE BEAUTY.

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"THINE eyes shall see ! Not in some dream Elysian,  
Not in thy fancy, glowing though it be ;  
Not e'en in faith ; but in unveiled vision  
Thine eyes shall see !

"Thine eyes shall see *the King*, the Mighty One,  
The many-crowned, the light-enrobed ; and He  
Shall bid thee share the kingdom He hath won.  
Thine eyes shall see !

"And *in His beauty* ! Stay thee, mortal song :  
The 'altogether lovely' One must be  
Unspeakable in glory ; yet ere long  
Thine eyes shall see !"

## Eighteenth Part.

### DIVINE BEAUTY.

“For how great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty !”

ZECH. ix. 17.

“Gazing down the far for ever,  
Brighter glows the one sweet Form ;  
Stedfast, radiant, paling never,  
Saviour Jesus, still the same !  
Evermore Thou shalt endure,  
Glorious, beauteous, strong, and sure.”

WE are told that the word *expect* is rendered by a happy phrase, signifying to “watch *the way* or *the person* waited for.” This is what our prophet does ; he watches the way of the coming of his Messiah, ever and anon catching fresh glimpses.

This charming outburst of admiration tells us of his nearer view. With all the colours mingling in his prophecy, no marvel the Being before his eyes is accounted beautiful. David thus speaks of Christ, “Thou art fairer than the children of men ;” and Isaiah says, “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty.”

“Here on earth,” says another, “created beauty can, at least when suddenly seen, hold the frame motionless, pierce the soul, glue the heart to it,



entrance the affections. Light from heaven kindles into beauty our dullest material substances ; the soul in grace diffuses beauty over the dullest human countenance. The soul, ere it has passed from the body, has been known to catch, through the half-opened portals, such brilliancy of light, that the eye, even for some time after death, has retained a brightness beyond anything of earth. The earth's form of beauty is a sort of voice of the dumb earth. Doth not, on considering the beauty of this universe, its very form answer thee with one voice, ' Not I made myself, but God ' ?" Poets have said—

Old friends . . . shall lovelier be  
As more of heaven in each we see.

Who that looks at a solitary star for long, his soul being, as it were, far away in its soft light, but is ravished by it, as it silently gleams amidst the illimitable vault of the mighty heavens? But all created beauty is as nothing to His own.

" Nor earth, nor sun, nor seas, nor stars,  
Nor heaven, His full resemblance bears."

There is no beauty beyond or above His. It has been imagined how it would be were there no such Being as the Lord Jesus Christ. We might say, as we see the many orders of created existences, " He who made them could excel even these." And so, as ages rolled on, other and more glorious ones appear ; still as we admire we say, " Hath God in

His infinite mind any more excellent ones than these? Is there any beauty greater still?" However this may be, having gone to the utmost extent of His infinite power and skill in forming His own beloved Son, the wondrous shrine in which He Himself would dwell, the mind is satisfied. There is not, there never can be, anything higher or more glorious. The ear, we are told, contains no fewer than three thousand strings; and every one of this wonderful harp acts, unconsciously to ourselves, in the reception of sound. Such is the ear, which has been made for ever to hear the voice of our Beloved, and to list to the melody of heaven's everlasting orchestra. And then the eye? The eye that will see Him is a small aperture, but what an inlet and outlet for the soul! The mere animal sees its prey or looks for its lair; that is all. Man's vision was made for the sublimest scenes that God Himself can give. His "eyes shall see the King in His beauty"—personal and official, human and divine, the glorious beauty of HIS FORM; also His *inward* beauty, the beauty of His mind, His will, His affections. Oh, the greatness of our destiny! Not only to see Him, but to be conformed to His image. My soul, canst thou say, "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord"?

"Serene as Heshbon's tranquil lake,  
Thy meditative eyes forsake  
The world's distracting joys."

Note how this will not be seeing Him through the long lattice-work of ages, as you now see Abel's offering, or Abraham offering his Isaac. Nor through the long corridor of prophecy, as looking back on these images of a "tender plant," or "an engraved stone," or of "crowns"—these royal and priestly crowns; nor merely through faith; or through doctrine; nor yet, as the prophets saw Him, as the Star of Jacob, or the Sun of Righteousness. We shall see His FACE, and then to use the expression of another, "At a glance will be seen the voluminous wonders of heaven—loveliness inexhaustible. We shall then understand how the mightiest spirits of angels and men, in the full-grown statures of their imperishable glory, will unfold themselves in the sunlight of that countenance, and feed for ever on its sweet, worshipful solemnity." Our first act will repeat itself for ever—one of adoring love.

That act may begin on earth. I have seen the poor, thin, worn face of a dying saint suddenly, on departing, filled with a radiance none could describe. The eyes indescribably suffused with ineffable expression, appeared as if they had caught the first glimpse, and the departing one was making a reverential and loving obeisance to Him. We have no scripture on this. Yet what of Stephen? He was in the midst of murderous

stones, when, looking up to heaven, he saw the Lord Jesus standing as though ready to receive him. The proto-martyr's face shone as an angel's with the glory. If it were thus with him on the way to heaven, what would it be to be there?

Our Dublin bard has sweetly sung—

“When a believer yields his breath,  
I follow him with eyes of faith,  
Where sense can see no more.  
Methinks I see him spread his wings,  
And soar above material things,  
To yon celestial shore.

“No tongue can tell, no fancy paint,  
What transport fills the enraptured saint,  
Of paradise possessed.  
His wants abundantly supplied,  
His wishes fully satisfied,  
Himself supremely blest.

“But what occasions so much joy?  
Or what can now his powers employ,  
That yields him such delight?  
’T is Jesus on His heavenly throne,  
Who saved and claimed him for His own;  
What object half so bright?

“How far is what he saw below,  
Or all he had the power to know,  
By what he sees excelled?  
The clouds that interposed before,  
Obstruct his clearer view no more,  
And Jesus stands revealed.”

THOMAS KELLY.

Two questions in conclusion. 1. Why do we not love Him more? For sweet is love. "I have sometimes heard," said Edward Payson, "of spells and charms to excite love, and have wished for them when a boy, that I might cause others to love me. But how much do I now wish for some charm which would lead men to love the Saviour more! Could I but paint a true likeness of Him, methinks I should rejoice to hold it up to the view and admiration of all creation, and be hid behind it for ever. It would be heaven enough to hear Him praised and adored. But I cannot paint Him; I cannot describe Him; I cannot make others love Him; nay, I cannot love Him a thousandth part so much as I ought myself. Oh, for an angel's tongue! Oh, for the tongue of ten thousand angels to sound His praises!"

2. Why not a holier living? Tholuck marvels how man can so readily yield to a multitude of propositions, and yet fail to draw from them the influences which are so very manifest.

Paul said Christ was formed in him the hope of glory. Oh, let none who read this rest till they know Christ thus—One who died for their sins, and is now in heaven, appearing in the presence of God for them.

XIX.

**The Idol Shepherd.**

## THE IDOL SHEPHERD.

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“WE may

Be nearer the grand conflict than appears.  
Let it make haste, it shall be welcome ; not  
For its own self, but for the peace it brings.  
The victory in which the spoiler shall  
Be spoiled, his weapons broken, and himself  
Bound in eternal chains by Him who came  
To fight our battle here, and to undo  
Our evil, and to conquer earth for man.”

HORATIUS BONAR.

## Nineteenth Part.

### THE IDOL SHEPHERD.

"Woe to the idol shepherd."—ZECH. xi. 17.

WHO is this shepherd if not the antichrist? That he is *an* antichrist, a false shepherd, and not the true Shepherd, there can be no question. Every feature of the false is the opposite to the only One and *true* Shepherd.

"In speaking of the antichrist," Mr. Fawcett says, "we must distinguish between the anti-Christianity that is latent in the long ages of apostatizing Christendom and the patent antagonisms to God of the *last* antichrist." Our Lord speaks of many such. He says, "Many shall come in *my* name, saying, I am Christ." But He emphatically distinguishes these *many* coming in *Christ's* name from the *last*, who shall come in *his own* name. "If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." (John v. 43.) Like his Master, John distinguishes the *many* of the professing Church



from the *one* of the *last* age. "As ye have heard that antichrist *shall* come, even *now* are there *many* antichrists." (Chap. ii. 18.) So again, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God : and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come ; and even now *already* is it in the world." (Chap. iv. 3.) "For *many* deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and *an* antichrist." (2 John 7.) Many such have come in past ages ; as Cerinthus and the Gnostics in John's time, and Mahomet subsequently denying Jesus' Messiahship and divinity. But these obviously are not *the* antichrist to come, whom the Lord shall "destroy with the brightness of His coming." (2 Thess. ii. 8.)

The many antichrists are easily distinguishable from the one foretold by our prophet, and set forth to us under the character of *the* "*idol shepherd*—a shepherd *in the land*, which shall not visit those that are cut off or hidden, neither shall seek the young ones, nor heal that which is broken, nor feed that which standeth still : but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces."

The term *idol* shepherd is one answering to his utter worthlessness and falsity, including the original

meaning of *nothingness*. Revelation xii. xiii. give a clear development of the antichrist, and of Satan, whose instrument he will be.

In those chapters Israel, Satan, and the coronated ten-horned beast are all identified. The ten-horned beast is doubtless the revived Roman Empire in a new character. But a difficulty has been suggested. "The empire," it is said, "is not in our day to be defined"—which is proof of what we are saying, for Revelation xvii. 7, 8 tells us, "The beast that thou sawest was, and *is not*"—but what follows?—"and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition; and they that dwell upon the earth shall wonder." Hence it existed once; it does not now, but it will exist again, have a diabolical character, and be a full expression of the power of Satan. The two-horned beast is his minister; he will lead men to worship the first beast, also to worship the dragon. Nothing can be clearer than the events which are prophetically—I had almost said historically—set forth to our view. Let us pursue their order.

1. In chapter xii. we see Israel, the woman clothed with the sun, having a crown of twelve stars, and the moon under her feet. She is delivered of a child, which is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. We need scarcely ask, Who is this? or of whom was He born? But "the great red

dragon (of hideous mien and power), having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads"—the god of this world, and the prince of the powers of the air, stands ready to devour the child as soon as it is born. But the one born is *caught up unto God and to His throne.*

Thus the One born was to shepherd all nations with a rod of iron; but ere this He is caught up to God and to His throne. Who but Christ could be on the throne of *God*? No creature could be ever there. It is on *Christ's* throne, the throne of the Son of man, on which we are to sit, and not on the throne of *God*. This surely gives the key to the whole of this prophecy. Having as yet access to God and heaven, Satan is to be cast out. Note, none of these descriptions of Satan agree with the ordinary idea; viz., that he was cast out of heaven before the fall of man, or before the creation of the world.

But now Christ having been caught up, Israel, of whom He was born, is left; and God prepares a place for her in the wilderness where He may nourish her 1260 days, the time being the same as the half of Daniel's last week—a time when there will be war with him in heaven. Overcome by Christ, whose great enemy he is, he, with all his angels, will be cast out into the earth. Awful time, truly, for this earth—the devil and his angels all

here, making—shall I say ?—earth a very hell for a time.

Note the blessedness of the Church in having no more to war against wicked spirits in heavenly places ; for they are no more there. Moreover, the Church will be with the Lord. “ Rejoice, *ye heavens* [be full of delight] ye that dwell in them.” But “ woe for the earth and for the sea : because the devil is gone down unto you having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time.” “ Short ” it would not have been if this event had occurred more than 6000 years ago ; *i.e.* before man had fallen or the world was made.

But being cast out Israel is the object of his hate. He sets himself to do another thing. He creates instruments, who will not only carry out his design on Israel, but cause the nations of the world to deny God. Both the beast and the dragon will receive honours due only to God. They are both worshipped as God. Chapter xiii. opens thus : “ And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns [horns, emblems of power] ; and upon his horns ten crowns [diadems], and upon his heads names of blasphemy.” Let anyone compare this symbolical beast, crowned and full of blasphemy, with the description by Daniel of the fourth beast in his own prophecy, and he will

easily identify it with the fourth great world power.\*

It is this beast the dragon sees—sees him as the very instrument he needs; but to use him (probably its supreme head) he gives him what he once offered to *the* Christ, but which He would not receive at his hands, all being His by His own right—the dragon gives him “*his* power, and *his* seat, and great authority.” What is this but to make him as Satan is himself? Hence we may say the possessor and ruler of the world is the devil. The world submits and wonders. “Who,” it asks, “is like the beast?” The apostacy symbolized by Babylon could never have answered to this. Besides, the doom of Babylon is different. She may be, and doubtless is, the woman that sits on *the back* of the beast, and so for a time is supreme, but eventually is trodden down *by man*. On the contrary, the beast *is destroyed by Christ, cast alive into the lake of fire, which is the second death*. Their different end shows that they themselves are different. The two-horned beast is the minister to the other and to Satan. His office is sacerdotal. He is “like a lamb,” but compels men to blaspheme; moreover he works

\* All the elements of the great world powers concentrated here—the leopard, the bear, the lion—all complete, as if terrible revival in the last days.

miracles. Like Elijah, he calls down fire from heaven, and makes an image of the beast ; "and it was given unto him to give breath to it, even to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should speak." No wonder the elect may be deceived by such prodigies, not the productions surely of merely unassisted man. Is not this the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel the prophet, and referred to by our blessed Lord (Matt. xxiv.), "standing in the holy place"? Note, St. Peter's at Rome never was such. Pagan Rome was the place of the *pagan* god ; in papal days of *superstition*. No ; "the holy place" will be in the temple at Jerusalem, rebuilt, as we have sought to show. Dreadful beyond all imagining will be this time on earth. There will be no neutrality in religion as now, and no hypocrisy. The dead leaves of an indolent profession merely will be torn away by the terrible storm raised by the desolator.

The terrorism, fruit of the lawlessness of the present time, is as nothing to what will be then. A man having a million of money may die in want, for no one will sell to him ; or he may be rich in merchandise, but no man will buy from him. Man must be out and out for God or for Satan. The edict is that he who is for God, and who resists idolatry, must die. Any who desire to flee have in Matt. xxiv. the warning given ; also in the

number of the beast, which is six hundred and sixty-six ; that is, three sixes, 666. Any student of the Word, at the time, reading this would see himself mercifully forewarned. Meanwhile a victorious remnant appears in chapter xiv., glorious and blessed. "In their mouth was found no lie : they are without blemish." (v. 5, R.V.) On earth the everlasting gospel, which is, "Fear God, for *the hour* of His judgment is come," has been fully preached.

The dead are blessed. Why? Those who died for Christ will get resurrection and be in the heavenly glory, whereas if they had been among those spared they would simply have entered into the kingdom on the earth.

In chapter xix. "the heavens open," time is no longer delayed. Christ has come at last. He comes to smite the nations. (v. 10.) Babylon has fallen ; subsequently He smites the antichrist and the false prophet. Instead of these He Himself reigns. And then what an outburst of joy !

"Hark ! Hallelujah ! O sublimest strain !  
When He, our Saviour and our King, shall reign,  
And all the earth shall own His righteous sway.  
Lift heart and voice, and swell the mighty cords,  
With hallelujahs peal to Him, the Lord of lords !"

It is now He will have shepherded with an iron rod ; and it is now the beast and false prophet are

taken and cast alive into a lake of fire. The dragon for a thousand years is cast into a bottomless pit. (Chap. xx. 1-3.) Observe how the beast and the false prophet are the first beings from this earth who go down *alive* into the lake of fire. A similar judgment will befall the wicked who go from the great white throne. Little does the world think of these things to be enacted at the coming of the Son of man. "The world," says another, "will be caught in its living action at the appearance of Christ—caught in its progress and advancement, saying, 'Peace, peace.'" These will be arrested by the coming of Christ, while they are in their occupations, their pursuits, their vices, their sins; and when once the thunders of His approach roll around this world the door will be shut—shut for those who have heard of Jesus, and had their Bibles, and neglected them, saying, "To-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow! A little more of the world, a little more of self-indulgence, a little more of present things!" But ere this final hour of opportunity—"Now!"—that great *now*; now the present time running to its close—"now is the day of salvation." But those *not* saved, who have gone after other things than God, will know them no more.

Such is a summary of events to occur when, after ages of patience, Christ irresistibly comes.



With prophecy in our hand, we are borne along into this solemn future. It is all solemn, all real ; there is no room for romance, or mere sentiment, or the working of our own imagination ; and reading we feel—

“ Thoughts that will not rest in rhyme, as they steal  
Down the shadow-land of time.”

**XX.**

**The Cup of Trembling.**

## THE CUP OF TREMBLING.

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**"WITHOUT** or aim, or end, we boldly say—  
There never shall appear a judgment-day  
Where God and man in hostile arms contend,  
We know full well how such a strife must end."

**THOLUCK.**

## Twentieth Part.

### THE CUP OF TREMBLING.

"I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling . . . a burdensome stone for all people : all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces."—ZECH. xii. 2, 3.

THIS will occur when Christ comes ; it is not gospel work surely. How this dealing of Christ with the nations, cutting them to pieces, could be spiritualized it is hard to see. Taken literally, it is plain enough. Glancing backward, what nation has ever spoiled Jerusalem that has not been spoiled ? "They have called her out-cast, saying, That is Zion, whom no man seeketh after." But Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, Media-Persia, Greece, Rome, all the Mediterranean races whose countries bordered that sea, and who, one after another, acted their part in treading down Jerusalem, have had their day. They sought to prolong it, but in vain. Every form of government sought a change for the better, but all to no effect. This is the true Eastern question ; they had trodden down the land of Israel. When Israel rests

the world will rest. Blind may the nations be of God's purposes, but God is not unobservant of His word. He has said, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." (Gen. xii. 3.) It will be after the last great siege against Jerusalem that Jerusalem again will become supreme. And it will be when the last great battle against Jerusalem is fought, the governors of Judah, we are told, will be like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf. They shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place. How the people will be gathered to meet their doom is seen in Revelation, where we read of "three unclean spirits" of demons working signs, which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God the Almighty. And they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon. (R.V.) How changed then the position of nations! Whether under the name of Babylon or the Assyrian, their doom is complete, and sudden as complete. (See Isa. xiv. 3, 4, 25.) Men do not see this. What they see is, that hopelessness, a kind of final helplessness, has settled down upon Jerusalem, the land of Israel, and on all that East of which Jerusalem forms so prominent a part.

Not knowing his Bible, "*Unimaginable ages may transpire*," writes one, "before any change can come, and then how it may come is all a *terra incognita*. There can hardly be one whose heart is not stirred by some strange emotion, more akin to pain than pleasure, as he stands on the throbbing deck crossing the Red Sea and watches the low white buildings of Suez, and the tall masts of his country's ships fade slowly in the golden haze. This is the Gate of the Unknown. Here, on either hand, stands Isis, with her eternal veil still undrawn. Here are the problems of the ages, which genius and patience have never solved, and gordian-knots still waiting the keen sword of some whose faith shall be equal to their courage. Here the noise of Europe is unheard, and the rush and whirl of her restless civilization, and the bustle of her political and social life, are forgotten. There is no change in this Eastern world of silence and mystery, whose institutions were already venerable when naked savages were still launching their frail coracles on the Seine and the Thames. Europe has indeed flowed into Africa and Asia, but her current is apart, like the turbid Rhone, in the blue waters of Geneva."

The problem to be solved is not to be the work of either genius or patience of man, nor will it be a work of "unimaginable ages." The whole matter

is simple ; the One whom, in our meditations, we have seen all through will do it. God will solve it. First, in the destruction of those arrayed against Jerusalem ; and next, in the supremacy of Jerusalem itself. Then when Jerusalem rests, and not till then, will the residue of the world rest.

This, as to Jerusalem and the world. What of ourselves? Have the burdensome stone and cup of trembling no lesson for us? Is there not a voice saying, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth"? Truly nothing shows more the unchanging truth of God. As with nations the same with individuals, wrong-doing will meet with its reward. If we sow to the wind, we must reap the whirlwind. Let the children of God think how, as to this law, they are not exempt. The wrong we do now will become *our* cup of trembling, *our* burdensome stone. Even sin forgiven lies as a weight of sorrow on the remembrance. "My sin," said David, "is ever before me."

Blessed Lord, how unchanging art Thou through all vicissitudes! Thou dost never cease Thy love for Thine own. The land is Thine; Israel is Thine; the kingdom is Thine. We worship Thee as the *one Mind* proposing all and accomplishing all.

XXI.

**The World's Last Battle.**



## THE WORLD'S LAST BATTLE.

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“ BUT an image of a deeper woe,  
Where are breasts no joy can balm :  
Anguish, peace can never calm.”

## Twenty-first Part.

# THE WORLD'S LAST BATTLE.

“I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle.”

ZECH. xiv. 2.

THIS is the last battle the world will ever see. I say the last *battle*; for a thousand years later “a storm more dark and terrible than ever swept it before will clear the atmosphere for ever, as we see in Rev. xx. Then God, without a war, with the awful flash of His ire, will mete out wrath upon Gog and Magog as they encompass the camp of the saints.” This will be after the millennium when, whatever latent sin or sinners there may be external to Israel and the saved nations will be swept away with a summary vengeance.” Instigated by Satan, for a moment let loose from his provisional prison, they will attempt once more the subjugation of Jerusalem, but all in vain; for instead of Jerusalem there remains the awful Gehenna, that lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

It is sweet to think of wars ceasing to the ends of the earth. When has this ever been? Who can tell what millions have been their victims?

Who can tell the miseries of the slain? And those not slain—left on the field in pain and woe, among the dead and dying, thinking of the dear ones at home, what they will feel when they read the list of the dead and missing! And then beyond death! Can we imagine with what feelings the slain in war look upon it the moment after death? Some think that the things of time must appear very diminutive when looked back upon from eternity. But no; not those that so closely bear upon eternity. It is melancholy to think for what petty causes wars have been waged, and how long the antipathy of race for race has lasted. (See BROWNING on "War.") The animosity of nations seems never to die. Men die, and their animosities die with them; but nations have long lives, and history never dies. Our Lord shows (Matt. xxiv.) how wars will go on to the end. They have gone on for four thousand years, and are going on now. Long is the catalogue of the so-called "grim glories" of this world. But there will come this last war. As to who the actors are, we are not left to conjecture. "For," remarks another (going back to the first settlement of nations), "the descendants of Noah will in the end be ranged

either under the beast or under Gog, the two principal powers." If we consult Genesis, we shall find, "By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; in the generations of the sons of Japheth Gomer is named."\* The ancient divisions of Russia make "Gog, Magog, and Meshech." Gen. x.; Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix. may be read as history. Singular how the names answer to history. Japheth, which signifies *enlargement*, was their father and ours. As with the father, so with the sons; for the name of Gog signifies *extension*. The chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, which signifies *flowing forth*, is in Hebrew *Rosh*. When has this empire not been extending, growing, flowing forth? We are left no conjecture as to its future any more than as to the past. God says, concerning *Rosh*, or the chief prince of Meshech, "I am against thee . . . and I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour [answering to the all sorts of people that form the vast extended power], even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands; and many people

\* See HALE'S *Dictionary*, vol. i. p. 352.

with thee. . . . Thou shalt be visited : *in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword* [the land of Israel, with Israel restored] . . . gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste. It shall be *in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land.* . . . And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that *my fury shall come up in my face.*" (Chap. xxxviii.) "*Behold, I am against thee . . . and I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee*" (chap. xxxix. 1, 2) ; *i.e.* a mere remnant, as with all the other nations whom the Lord will destroy.

And what of the Western Powers ? Our prophet speaks of "all nations" being gathered against Jerusalem. "The avaricious hosts of these Western lands," says the same writer, "ever bent on war, will combine together with the nations of the East, indicated by 'the mule, the camel, and the ass, and all the beasts that shall be in tents.'" Chap. xiv. 15.)

In what we now see in the East—the Western and Eastern armies in battle, with the camel as well as the horse—how forcibly are we reminded of what this collected multitude from the Eastern and Western nations will be. These nations will send

the pride of their strength to Jerusalem, the carcase for which the eagles will gather, or, to change the figure, the target against which the dreadful arrows of the world will be directed. These are the armed hosts *the Lord* will gather against Jerusalem. *They* think only of their own lust, *He* of His own design. Significantly, therefore, He lays the whole plot. It will be for Israel's final cleansing and full and final salvation, and for the long-predicted and plenary judgment of the nations who have for ages despoiled, uprooted, or oppressed Israel. It is all plain as if it were history. In Micah iv. 12 we read the Lord shall "gather them as sheaves into the floor," or, as our prophet shows, against Jerusalem, only to be destroyed. Dreadful are the details of this war; for first as to the city it shall be taken and the houses rifled. Overcome by the terrible onslaught, half the city shall go into captivity. The residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." At the first no result could be more disastrous; but then comes a glorious reversal of the fight. "*The Lord* shall go forth and fight against those nations." He who had gathered them for this end now deals with them single-handed, a solitary Man of war, the One concerning whom the prophet had asked, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?" and who responds: "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was

none with me : for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury ; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." Note, the blood sprinkled is not His own, as many wrongly imagine, but the blood of His enemies. Isaiah liii. tells of His own blood offered for reconciliation. This is blood of destruction. Parallel passages descriptive of this are Rev. xix. 11-13. See also Ps. xlv. 3-5.

With no material weapon of war will be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem. "Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth." Conceive an army thus ! Never was war like this. No counting the dead after the fight ; horses, mules, and all beasts, with the nations, all reduced to this sudden inglorious issue. Think of the pride of the world—the vast Eastern and Western Powers, the great ones of the earth—"the wealth of all the nations round about gathered together ; gold and silver, and apparel in great abundance"—all in a moment a prey to this sudden, unexpected doom.

He must be ill-acquainted indeed with history

who would make this to mean the war of Titus. Then it was the utter triumph of Rome and the *destruction* of Jerusalem, but here the destruction of the *nations* and the *salvation* of Jerusalem. Truly under Titus the streets were made to run down with the blood of the Jewish slain; but here the enemy is destroyed, annihilated. The war under Titus was followed by the Jews' *dispersion*; but this is followed by *the Lord's reign*, and Israel and Judah made to dwell together again. No, the event, like most in this prophecy, is yet future; and this word regarding it, if men would but read, is a light penetrating the awful times into which Israel and the nations of the world are yet to enter. Again I say, little do men think of this. They dream only of progress and peace; the settlement of boundaries and the arrangements suited to commerce, and the well-being of man as he is. But *their* thinking or not makes no difference. "The words are closed and sealed up till the time of the end. The wicked shall do wickedly, but *the wise shall understand*."

One feature more we must not fail to see. The Lord is standing on the mount of Olives, as if to survey the scene, when lo! at His presence the mountain parts in twain, the long-extending valley which is formed thereby opening to Israel as they flee from the enemy, providing for them a safe



asylum, answering to what the opening of the Red Sea was when Pharaoh and his legions were pursuing them of old. Sheltered and secure themselves, the enemy is seen to lie multitudinous around in ghastly heaps. A marvellous episode in the world's history is this !

"A wondrous Conqueror there I see,  
He bears a banner, sign of victory ;  
His hand no weapon wields, yet 'neath His hand,  
Of conquered dead ones lies a countless band."

How still the scene now where Christ is ! He has dashed the nations as a potter his vessel. The heathen are given to Him for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession." "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner." (Mark xii.) Alas for the builders ! What can we say but alas for those who have rejected Him, or who have rejected the gospel !

XXII.

**The Mount of Olives.**

## "OLIVET."

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"His feet shall tread on Olivet,  
Not as they trod in pain,  
But with the joy of glory set  
Upon His wide domain.

"Not sadly, when the weary mile  
Grew shadowed to His gaze,  
But with the light of God, whose smile  
Shall fill millennial days.

"Yea, those same feet that Mary bathed  
With tears contrition shed ;  
That, by her crown of tresses swathed,  
She kissed and comforted.

"Ah, Lord, how sweet to love the feet  
That brought glad tidings here ;  
But yet more sweet that love complete,  
Which waits their drawing near,

"When the long slumber of Thy dead,  
And life's sad shadowed day,  
At sound of Thy celestial tread  
In silence steal away."

J. W. G.-S.

## Twenty-second Part.

### THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

"His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives."

ZECHARIAH xiv. 4.

THE Lord's ascension from Olivet is as much a matter of history as any event ever recorded. Independent of all that would detain *us* here, He ascended *bodily* to the Father. "There would have been a felt loss had we not known His ascension—a gap in our hearts as though a portion were torn away. If the disciples had been asked, supposing none had seen Him after His passion, "Where is your Saviour gone?" what could they have said? His history on earth would have had no ending. As it is, it loses itself, not in the grave, but in the heavens, whence He came. The cloud spread out under Him, carried Him to that world where we look and long for light and purity." It is much indeed to know this.

"Where is He gone? Where thought to Him may go!  
But *He* can more than send a thought below;  
He can, descending thence, Himself impart,  
And thus He shares with me His heaven and heart."

In thinking of heaven one instinctively looks up. It is no long journey, as we have seen. To the martyr Stephen it was within reach of eye, as it were, of our world. A recent author, writing on this, says, "The Lord's departure was as distinctly seen when He passed into intersolar space as that of any ocean-bound vessel that ever left our shores. As He directed His way towards His Father's house of many mansions which He went to prepare, His eye would be directed to one particular point in the heavens, and to some world as real in its nature as the body it was about to receive. Often during His weary pilgrimage on earth His eye would turn upward with a loving and longing gaze. This heavenly relationship was much dwelt on by our Lord. He foresaw how it would be when He would take the return journey. "What," He would say, "and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?" Concerning His descent Paul writes, "*And again, when He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.*"

But now where He last stood on the earth He will stand again. Every word is of interest—"His feet shall stand in that day on the mount of Olives." Tenderly associated are *the feet* of the Lord Jesus. Those feet which, wearied and travel-stained, bore Him to a heart laden with sin at the well of Jacob,

to whom He revealed His saving and consoling grace. They are associated with that sea whose waters at His tread became as adamant under Him. More than once in divine majesty and power He trod the deep—the winds and the waves obeying Him. They were associated with the poor woman in Simon's house. She came to Him as one knowing she was a sinner. "When we begin as sinners with a Saviour our journey is wonderful and glorious beyond all thought. Sin leads us to Christ, and Christ leads us to the Father, and what a path that is! It stretches all along from the darkest and most distant places of creation where sin and death reign, up to the highest heavens where love and glory dwell and shine for ever. Angels have their own untainted sphere to move in, but they have never had such a path as this." Blessed path for this woman; she wept her tears upon His feet; she wiped them with the hair of her head. They were, moreover, associated with the love of one who anointed Him for His burial, and concerning whom He said, "Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her"—words never spoken to such as Enoch, or Noah, or Abraham, or Paul, showing His estimate of a loving personal devotedness to Himself. He saw in her a love which reflected His own, and which,

indeed, was more precious to Him than crossing oceans, or splendid gifts, or so-called sacrifices in service, so that many a poor bed-ridden saint may in her heart-devotedness minister more to His joy and His delight than those whose deeds are emblazoned in the chronicles of fame.

But beyond all, those feet were nailed to the tree; they were pierced through with the iron, as also were His hands, from which flowed His saving blood. They are to stand on Olivet. His oft resort was Olivet! It was the house of God and gate of heaven as the Man of Sorrows bowed there in prayer. In its underlying garden of Gethsemane—

“Being in an agony,  
He prayed yet more fervently,”

“Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.” It was there He had full sight of Jehovah lifting up His rod. His sweat as it were great drops of blood and His beseeching cry told of its weight; but the calm, confiding word, “*Abba, Father,*” showed that it was love that led Him to die. What He felt who can know.

“Who can thy deep wonders see,  
Wonderful Gethsemane?”

It was from Olivet He surveyed Jerusalem—  
“vision of peace,” which it yet will be, but which

meanwhile is left desolate, as He said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Oh, moment of moments was it!—"When He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now are they hid from thine eyes." (Luke xix. 41, 42.) Think what a calm, solemn glory will rest upon Him when, as Conqueror of death and the grave, He is seen coming down through the clouds—*the same Jesus*—to take possession of His sleeping and His living saints! Thence again, as we believe, to this mount, when it will indeed be "a mountain of myrrh and a hill of frankincense." (Cant. iv. 6.) Oh, my soul! art thou to be an eye-witness?

"To see Him, love Him, feel Him near,  
Nor dread, as now, His transient stay;  
To see beyond the reach of fear,  
Lest joy should wane and pass away."

This will be a wondrous time. We stand as if between two worlds—the one, this present evil age, then coming to its end; the other to be inaugurated by Israel's blessed reconciliation, the eternal erasure of all outstanding sinfulness, and the tender embraces of a love that had through all ages borne all ingratitude and neglect. Will it not be now that He will say, "Though I was angry with you,



yet is my anger turned away, and I am pacified towards you"? "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." (Isa. liv. 7, 8.) Our lot is to be for ever with the Lord—with Him when He comes to the earth, with Him on this mount. 'Tis but a little while.

"Only a little moment  
Treading where Christ has trod;  
Then the weary, toil-worn workers  
Stand face to face with God."

**XXIII.**

**Ebentide.**

## EVENTIDE.

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"WHILE glory all around is rayed,  
And beams of bliss their souls pervade,  
Well may their dazzled vision deem  
It is a new and glorious dream ;  
And as on their enraptured sight  
Bursts a new world of living light,  
Through every nerve what rapture thrills,  
And all their inmost being fills."—ROBECK.

## Twenty-third Part.

### EVENTIDE.

“At evening time it shall be light.”—ZECH. xiv. 7.

SWEET is the twilight hour, the calm hush of the eventide after the heat and burden of the day! One of our poets has sung—

“There is a vast immensity of things  
Within the shadowy glimmer evening brings,  
As if the universe lay calm and still,  
Brooding the purposes which years fulfil.”

In nature there are two twilights—that of morning, which opens into day; the other of evening, which darkens downward into night, reminding us how the evening hour of the righteous opens for him into the cloudless day of the paradise above, whilst that of the wicked deepens down into “outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

We sing—

“The calm retreat, the silent shade.”

But never is retreat more calm or shade more silent than in the twilight hour. It was in some such

quiet hush of morn or even that the blessed Lord was wont to pour out His soul in prayer to His Father in heaven. Never was twilight hour like the one mentioned here. Not at first easily understood are the words: "It shall come to pass in that day that the light shall not be clear nor dark. But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." "The Hebrew," remarks one learned scholar, "is acknowledged to be obscure." "The passage," remarks another, "is somewhat difficult; but its true meaning has been given as to its general sense by Matthew in his French translation, where we read, 'There shall not be a precious light withdrawn. It shall not be a day of mingled light and darkness, but a day appointed by the Lord, a day characterized by His intervention and His mighty presence, and that could not be characterized by the ordinary vicissitudes of day and night; but at the moment when total darkness of night might be expected it shall be light.'" How else could it when the Lord Himself will have come? Only admit His presence, and all is plain. Wonderful it will be, in the midst of such awe-inspiring woes as shall befall the spared remnant, to find their Deliverer come, and at the moment, instead of the dreaded night, the night lost in unsullied day.

Such is this "eventide" taken *literally*. But speaking of it symbolically, another has eloquently said, "In nature after evening time cometh night. The sun hath had its hours of journeying, and the fiery steeds are weary; they must rest. Lo! they descend the azure steeps, and plunge their burning fetlocks in the western sea, while night in her ebony chariot follows at their heels. God, however, oversteps the rule of nature. He is pleased to send to His people times when the eye of reason expects to see no more day, and fears that the glorious landscape of God's mercies will be shrouded in the darkness of His forgetfulness; but instead thereof God overleapeth nature, and declares that at evening time, instead of darkness, it shall be light."

Thus the doubting child of God finds the Lord better than his fears, giving him through His truth by the Spirit some sweet surprise of certainty of salvation, and corresponding joy and triumph in the darkest hour. That there will be light at the close none can doubt. Besides the promise, "I will be with thee," death itself disappears. "*Present with the Lord.*"

None can deny that there is with some a depression of soul that all means and all ordinances fail to remove. It may be physical or spiritual. Psalm cxix. 136 shows how the soul's longings after God may be great while comfort may be low. The

Psalmist says, "I opened my mouth and *panted*." Those panting after God must know something of God. The invalid, throwing his window open, panting for the pure, invigorating air, knows well what it is; so a soul, longing for the enjoyment of God, knows who and what God is. Psalm lxxxviii. is without any brightness. "The only comfort I have," said a desponding servant of God, "is that psalm, in which there is not one word of comfort." It told him how there might be life without one ray of sensible enjoyment. The psalm, taken as the language of a believer, is wonderful as showing into what depths he might sink. But if it be, as doubtless it is, the language of the blessed Lord, as are Psalms xxii. and lxix., what fearful depths they were into which He had sunk, and how He looked to Him to whom the psalm is one unbroken cry for relief! Blessed it is to know that we need not be without comfort! One look at Christ would suffice. *He* had to look at sin without hope of its being removed except by drinking the dreaded cup. We see it as put away from before God, and in its stead Christ has placed his own blood.

We would we were more like the offerer under Aaron. He may not, indeed, have known all about the sacrifice; but he brought it in simple obedience. So the sinner knows not the infinite value of Christ; but he is obedient in bringing

Him, and is accepted. Grand is the gospel which wells up from those Old Testament offerings, representing the Lord Jesus Christ! bright the caskets containing such unsearchable riches! Many fail in not exercising confidence in the written word of God. They have got away from God into fear and doubt. It has ever been so. We remember Abram, who, though he was told God would make him the father of many nations, feared that he would die at the hand of Pharaoh. And David also, who, though God had promised he should sit upon the throne, said, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." What a revulsion of feeling will the first sight of heaven bring to such as have given way to their fears! It has been said of one who laboured under ten years' darkness of sight, that his joy on its returning could not be described. It is a fit type of the wonderful change which will transpire when the old things of doubt and sorrow shall have passed away, and night shall be no more.

Why should we ever doubt? Of the early Christians it was said, "*their faith grew exceedingly.*" Luther's little daughter was a charming illustration of simple faith. Luther said, "Children do not doubt; they believe. Happy are those who die young. With them all is trust; they fall asleep." This he said concerning his dear little Magdeline,



a child of fourteen years, who died in the Lord. Luther had said to her, "My daughter, enter into thy resting-place." She turned her loving eyes towards him, and with touching simplicity responded, "Yes, father;" adding, while a sweet smile irradiated her countenance, "I go to my Father in heaven." Melancthon, impressed with the love of Luther to his child, said, "Parental love is an image of divine love. God does not love us less than a father loves his children." Lovely picture of Luther! Looking at her, with his heart breaking with tenderness, well might his soul have sighed—

"See, her lips are sweetly parted  
As she welcomes the divine  
Realms, where none are broken-hearted  
With the anguish that is mine."

But it is love that makes perfect—the perfect love of God—that in Christ has met all our need, annihilates fear, enabling us "to smile in anguish and rejoice in death."

XXIV.

**The Wounded Hands.**

## THE WOUNDED HANDS.

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"THOSE dear tokens of His passion  
Still His dazzling body bears,  
Cause of sudden exultation  
To His ransomed worshippers.  
With what rapture  
Gaze we on those glorious scars !"—MADAN.

## Twenty-fourth Part.

### THE WOUNDED HANDS.

“And one shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in thine hands?”—ZECH. xiii. 6.

THESE wounds tell of the death of Christ. The death has long since passed; but the wounds will last for ever. They will surpass all else, because they will tell of the greatest event the universe ever knew. Probably the mount of Olives will be the scene of this inquiry. A manifestation, it may be, more calm and intimate than that to the world, will be given by our Lord to Israel. His renewed intercourse will give rise to the full development of all that had previously happened to Him as a suffering Messiah, which development may be brought on by the sight of His hands. Who can read the story of Joseph and his brethren without seeing a greater than Joseph here? Joseph was in his earthly power; they, his brethren, in misery and want; he, the once slain one; they, the transgressors. How he reached their dead conscience after twenty

years showed his wisdom; how he felt at intervals, especially when he heard their confession, showed his compassion; how he wept on their necks showed his love. What enmity was slain at sight of those tears! Who has ever fully told the height and depth of this wonderful story? But the picture is a prophecy, as when he says, "*Come near to me.*" This the Lord will do; it is His special word to the guilty, "*Come unto me.*" The ruler of Egypt said, "I am Joseph," as the Lord will say, "I am Jesus," which, under similar circumstances, He said to Saul. Joseph added, "I am Joseph *your brother*, whom ye sold into Egypt." What a remembrance! "Now therefore be not grieved [this is the wonderful part], nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life . . . to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. . . . Say to my father"—poor sorrowing Jacob!—"Thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds [the millennium pre-shadowed], and all that thou hast: and there will I nourish thee." Oh, my soul, what a glass in which to see the humiliated One. For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross and despised the shame. It may be in some such scene as this the question will arise, "What are these

wounds in Thine hands?" What a marvel it will all be. Their Saviour and Deliverer, descended from heaven for their deliverance, yet with the scars of suffering in His hands. With such a Teacher, and such evidences of sacrificial work, what an unveiling of the whole plan and purpose of God in redemption! But what grief, which will not cease till, resting in His love, they can say, "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, He was bruised for *our* iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him." These wounds tell of

#### CHRIST'S OUTWARD SUFFERINGS.

He was wounded by *the thorns*. The agony they gave as He helplessly hung on the tree none can tell. He was wounded by *the nails*. This has been called "the crucifixion wound." He was the only one in our world that ever lived after crucifixion. He was wounded by *the spear* barbed with our sin; it met the blood which washed it away.

Rent and torn was that holy shrine in which dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. How can we ever sufficiently think of those bleeding wounds, that wasted form and broken heart!

"Oh, groundless deeps! Oh, love beyond degree!  
The offended died to set the offenders free."

I would suggest a word here on the exact form of the crucifixion. "The word cross," remarks another, "does not once occur in the Old Testament Scriptures. In the original language of the New Testament there is no such word. In twenty-eight texts the word *stauros* occurs, which signifies *a stake*. In Dr. W. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* ample proof is given that stake is the meaning of the word," answering to, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." The form of death thus would be the hands folded one over the other, high up over the head, nailed through with one nail to the tree. The same with the feet; folded one over the other. Nailed thus by two nails at both extremities, the body itself was poised, or made to sit, on a kind of rest in the middle of the stake, so that life might be prolonged in its torture, as long as possible. Hence Pilate wondered He was dead *already*, not knowing how the Lord *yielded up the ghost*. He "*gave Himself a ransom for all*." He waited not the intended time of man, as He said, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." It is well to have an exact idea of the death of Him whom we so love, and to whom we owe our all, especially when we meet to remember His death. Scripture and History, and not superstition, must be our guide here. Scripture says, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth *on a tree*," and

history tells us that the bare stake was the special instrument of capital punishment under the Roman law.

The Lord Himself showed how His wounds were associated. They were evidence of His death; they enabled His disciples to identify Him as the One who had died, but was alive again; they told of that atoning blood which was shed for many, and which was made to flow through them for our salvation. How sweetly did He associate them with the peace He had procured when He said, "Peace be unto you"—the peace of conscience, peace for the soul; for it was in connection with such utterances that He showed to His disciples His hands and His side. No marvel it is said, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." They were associated with the peace of testimony. He saith to them again, "Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." They were confirmatory of His own testimony. Thomas had said, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails" (those nails doubtless which he had seen driven in at the cross, and which he could never forget), "and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." He had heard what man had said, and what the disciples told him the Lord had said; but what He wanted was evidence direct from the



Lord Himself, and who shall say this was not the way to the very strongest faith? He saith to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless but believing." This was enough; we do not read that Thomas did put his finger into the print of the nails, or his hand into His side. No; full of faith and full of worship he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" Sweet the love that invited it! It shows that by faith we *may* put our hand down, as it were, into that side of His, the blessed Lord Jesus, and enjoy closest communion with Him. It is not for assurance, but for communion that we sing—

"Fain would I, Jesus, know thy love,  
Which yet no measure knows;  
Would search the depths of all thy wounds,  
The secret of thy woes."

Happy disciple to be favoured as was Thomas! Happy testimony did he give to the Godhead of his blessed Lord! Thomas was no socinian, no humanitarian. Sweet to our own soul is the word "my." He felt as if he appropriated the Lord all to himself. The Lord, however, said:

"Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." What is this but a looking on to our own blessedness in this age, in which we

have no outward or visible sight, but as the apostle writes—"whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" ?

To the question, "What are these ?" "He shall answer, I was wounded in the house of my friends." It was the Jews who demanded that He should be crucified. Not even Pilate ; certainly not His own friends, who looked on sorrowfully ; not Mary, His mother ; not John ; not even Peter, though he did wound Him. No, it was the house of Abraham, His friend, that wounded Him ; the house of David, the man after God's own heart. Those then before Him "shall look on Him whom they have pierced." This was the *manward* side, if one may so speak, of the sufferings—the outward and visible. Deeper than these were

#### CHRIST'S INWARD SUFFERINGS.

We are told, "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him." It was this more especially that led Him to say, "Now is my *soul* troubled," and, "I have a baptism to be baptized with ; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished ?" What it was we may judge from the awful cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?"

No outward wounds could tell the inward. "Jehovah lifted up His rod." He said, "Awake,

O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow." A name truly denoting equality and Divinity, as He Himself declared, "*I and my Father are One.*" God calls Him "my Shepherd." He is *His* Shepherd and *our* Shepherd. Shepherd is a name which has been as a banqueting house to God's children in all ages. A shepherd is responsible for his sheep. Christ became responsible for His own sheep and for all their punishment. He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree." He could say, "The waters of a full cup are wrung out to me." In His official character, as responsible for His people, was this cup put into His hands. It was *wrung* out to Him as from the law ; all its curses and its terrible doom fell upon Him. It was wrung out by divine justice ; all its vengeance against sin, which He bore on our behalf. The Lord made to meet on Him the punishment of us all. He bore the awful load. Did you ever think of what it is to feel the weight of only one sin ? Think of Peter, how, over that one sin of denying the Lord, he went out and wept *bitterly*. Think of David—what one sin cost him, what misery of soul, what a world of suffering, what remorse ! He said, "*It is ever before me.*" And Judas—his sin was a burden unendurable, a load of abject woe, making his life intolerable ; *he* went out and hanged himself. If such the fruit of but one

sin, think of *my* sins, *your* sins, the sins of *all the redeemed* laid down upon His spotless soul, with no screen between that soul and them. It was for this that Jehovah's awful sword awoke against Him.

And He who endured it was Jehovah's "fellow." What an assurance of divine right to do the work ! What a word for His absolute divinity ! What a power to save ! How unlimited and eternal ! He was before all sin, or death, or hell ; and since they came on the scene He has trodden them all down by dying.

" By weakness and defeat  
He won the meed and crown,  
Trode all our foes beneath His feet  
By being trodden down.

" He hell in hell laid low ;  
Made sin, He sin o'erthrew ;  
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,  
And death, by dying, slew.

" Bless, bless the Conqueror slain !  
Slain in His victory !  
Who lived, who died, who lives again,  
For thee, my soul, for thee ! "

But what next in our prophet ? " The sheep shall be scattered : and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." They were scattered. " They all forsook Him, and fled ;" but He put His hand

upon them (the little ones) to provide for them, to shelter them, to help them. For three centuries after His ascension there was little else for them but martyrdom. They had

#### FELLOWSHIP WITH HIS SUFFERINGS.

He had said, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." They had fellowship with Him in His trials, as we read—"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations." Note that word "*with me*." They first forsook all, and followed Him. They then were "with Him," and had fellowship in His sufferings. We cannot explain it; but where love's object suffers our love cannot but suffer with it.

We have heard of one remaining at the foot of the gibbet on which hung the dead body of her beloved till she was found there herself a corpse. She preferred dying, watching his remains, to living apart from the fellowship which the melancholy sight gave her. Oh for a feeling more akin to this! Were we to contemplate the cross more we should have less sin, less levity of spirit, more sobriety, more obedience, and more service. This was Paul's prayer, "That I may know Him . . . and the fellowship of His sufferings being made conformable unto His death." "I ought," said the godly McCheyne, "to see the stripe that

was made on the back of Jesus by each of my sins.”  
Do you ask—

“WHAT OF THE CRUCIFIX?”

Alas! many know the crucifix, who are ignorant of Christ. This is what casts such a shade of sadness over Christendom. Where will you not meet with the crucifix? The sign is on dome and spire; it is worn as an ornament; it is put on books; it is engraven on the person; it is lifted before the eyes of the dying, and placed on the coffins and tombs of the dead. Many through this means *may* get a glimpse of Jesus dying for them. God acts as a sovereign; but we know how for the most part it is the symbol of superstition, the mere decoration of art or ornament; and singular, as a rule, it is only the mere professed symbol of *death* we see. In all continental lands what meets the gaze on the highway and on the altar is a *dead Christ*. Resurrection does not seem to come to mind. Christ is always still in death. “If Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins.” Blessed be God, He is raised, and to faith we are not in our sins. Would that this were known by the millions who, alas! know it not.

And now, blessed Saviour, one thing we would never forget; it is with *Thy* sorrows we learn to bear our own. It is by *Thy* wounds, *Thy* death,

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we are healed. Tears we have, but *Thy* tears can wash them away. Soul-sufferings we have, but it is by Thee we are healed.

We shall never have done with this history! In heaven Christ is seen "as a Lamb that had been slain;" the glory rays will shine for ever on that once thorn-clad brow. They will be seen through His hands and feet when millions of ages upon ages have rolled away.

Sweet with no death or aught between,  
By sight, undimmed, to see Thee near,  
To see Thee as Thou now art seen,  
No earth-born cloud, no sinful fear.

How glorious ! Lord, 't will ever be  
With harp of gold and tongues of joy,  
Thy very inmost love to see,  
And all for Thee my love employ.

XXV.

**The Great Mourning.**



## THE GREAT MOURNING.

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"THE path of sorrow, and that path alone,  
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown."

COWPER.

## Twenty-fifth Part.

# THE GREAT MOURNING.

“They shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son.”

ZECH. xii. 10.

“EVERY family apart . . . and their wives apart”—sin and sorrow isolate. The poor Samaria sinner went to draw water at the time when the other women went not. She was at the well alone. David, grieving over his sick child, and yearning for its recovery, lay all night upon the earth. The elders of his house would raise him up; but he would not, neither did he, eat bread with them.

Especially does a deep sense of sin isolate. Peter, having denied the Lord, *went out* and wept bitterly. We read of the sorrowful one, “He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him. He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.” Tenderly, in his *Stricken Deer*, does our Christian bard sing of this—

“I was a stricken deer, that left the herd  
Long since, with many an arrow deep infix’d ;

My panting side was charged when I withdrew  
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.  
There was I found by One, who had Himself  
Been hurt by the archers. In His side He bore,  
And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars.  
With gentle force soliciting the darts,  
He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.  
Since then . . . .  
With few associates, and not wishing more,  
Here would I ruminate as much I may  
With other views of men, and manners now  
Than once ; and others of a life to come."

Nothing in the natural world could more touchingly show how it is with one under great soul-trouble for sin. First, there is the wound made by sin ; truly an awful wound, like an arrow deep infixed rankling in the soul. Next, the weariness caused by the wound, which leads to the retirement, where confession is made and faith is exercised in the precious blood of Christ. Then the arrow is extracted by Him, the blessed One, who Himself had been hurt by the archers.

It is well, when He leads us to be alone with Himself, to find Him there according to that word, "I will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." (Hosea ii. 14 ; margin, *speak to her heart.*)

Probably, as we have said, on the mount of Olives, or when showing the saved remnant His wounds, the Lord will tell them of their sin,

and show His covenant of grace in their forgiveness.

It is in our confession of sin that He delights to forgive—unveiling the love which led Him to die. Our sins were as nails bringing forth the blood which put them away.

But how does this sorrow come? “I will *pour [empty out]* upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication.” God will do it. “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart.” This will be the real riddance of sin in the flesh, the destruction of the enmity of the fallen heart of man.

The great mourning will answer to the heart-broken expressions of the Psalms and the Prophets, expressions of sorrow for sin, gathered up and told out in one outburst of lamentation and grief. The tears of Jeremiah are wept anew; the mournful minor key of David’s harp is heard again. Hosea, Daniel, and others, who in tender, touching strains of pleading sorrow poured out their hearts to the Lord, are heard here; also the Lord’s responsive forgiveness; and truly the goodness of God will lead to repentance.

Nothing breaks the heart like pardoning love. To see one who is *unforgiving* only hardens it;

but to see one loving, notwithstanding the sin, gives the dawning of a genuine sorrow. What a change of mind Christ's love gives! It is Joseph and his brethren over again. The arrows of remorse in one moment are removed, as He kisses us with the kisses of His mouth. (Cant. i. 2.) Sorrow cannot exist in His presence. Hence sorrow will be done away and sickness, which so often casts its shadow over our greatest earthly happiness. "God will wipe away," or, as we have said, "wipe out," "all tears from their eyes!" He will wipe out *the source*, the very spring whence they come. What a moment!

Meanwhile, during our Lord's absence, we have the Word.

"Oh, child of sorrow, be it thine to know,  
That Scripture only is the cure of woe!  
That field of promise, how it flings abroad  
Its perfume o'er the mourner's thorny road!  
The soul, reposing on assured relief,  
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief;  
Forgets her labour as she toils along,  
Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song."

XXVI.

**The Fountain Opened.**

## THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

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"AND Thou wilt sins and griefs destroy,  
That so the broken bones may joy ;\*  
And tune together in a well-set song—  
Full of His praises  
Who dead men raises ;  
Fractures well cured make us more strong."

HERBERT.

\* Ps. li. 8.

## Twenty-sixth Part.

### THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."—ZECH. xiii. 1.

GOD is light, and God is love. The twofold name of the Divine Being might be seen inscribed on this fountain. What *love*! For when sorrow for sin overwhelms, we are met by its cleansing power. And what *light*! showing God's exacting holiness! Twice are we told in Exodus that if Aaron and his sons did not wash at the laver they must die. That scene for cleansing was situated between the altar at the approach of the sanctuary and the sanctuary itself, just as the washing of the feet, in John xiii., comes in between the time of the Supper, which told of the atoning death of Christ, and the "Father's house," in chap. xiv. The laver made provision for the brief way which lay between the sacrifice at the door of the tabernacle and the holiest within, just as the washing of the feet is a service by Christ for us from the moment we first



believed in the value of His precious blood and the time of our being with Him where He is.

This fountain is "for sin and for uncleanness." The evils indicated had no provision under the law. David, on account of his twofold sin, must have died had he not (overstepping his dispensation) put himself before God on the ground of grace. That grace in which we stand is free to save from all sin in virtue of the one righteousness, or "the one act of righteousness"—the death of Christ. How that made complete atonement for our sins, the Lord must have told His disciples. Hence He could say, "*Now ye are clean* through the word which I have spoken unto you." What an assurance for us who are by nature sinners, and who have within us such a fountain of defilement! The water for the feet is different from the bath; the bath is an image of the perfect, complete putting away of sin by the death of Christ. Once for all He bore our sins in His own body on the tree; He bore them to bear them no more. The washing is a service of His life, which He is conducting for us now. Thus by the one we *are* clean every whit, as to our state before God; by the other we are kept clean, as to walk and life, from the consequences of the miry path we have daily and hourly to tread. The disciples would well understand the twofold action of the bath for the person and the water for

the feet. The latter was not only valuable for its own use ; it was the uniform welcome given by his host to the weary, foot-soiled traveller. Abraham gave this welcome to his heavenly visitants at Mamre. What a picture is this, the Lord and His "friend" Abraham ! "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree." What a reminiscence this for one who in the glory will ever be known as "the friend of God !" Lot had a similar welcome for the two angels that came to him. The Lord complained of Simon that he gave Him no such reception ; but praised her who, standing behind Him weeping, began to wash His feet with the tears of her unspoken love—the meaning of which He well knew—and to wipe them with the hairs of her head, adding to this service the loving kisses of her lips.\* She too will surely call this to mind through the bright ages yet to come. One who was known for his love to his Saviour, and whose memory is blessed,† writes : "Abraham, Lot, Laban, Joseph, the old man of Gibeah, were all eminent among those who observed this duty (Gen. xviii. xix. xxiv. xliii. ; Judges xix.) ; and the Son of God, as receiving into the heavenly house, would give His elect the full sense of their welcome and their wit-

\* The words are, "And kissed much." (Luke vii. 38, R.V.)

† J. G. BELLETT.

ness, that they might take their place in happy confidence in any department of that holy sanctuary. And such is the grace of the Son of God, the Master of the heavenly home, that He charges Himself with the duty of keeping the household in priestly sanctification and honour. 'If *I* wash thee not [unless I keep you], thou hast no part with me.'

"Unfathomable wonder and mystery divine! All we need is the spirit of a simple, unquestioning faith, which rests in the reality of such surpassing grace. Thus it was the paschal lamb once and for ever redeemed Israel out of Egypt; but in the wilderness it was the *intercession* of *Moses* that turned away wrath from the trespasses of the camp." The same with our trespasses. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." We shall never come into judgment for sin; but our path is a miry path, and not one day could we tread it without being assoiled. Christ only could keep us. Not of one stain in a thousand are we cognisant, when even the thought of foolishness is sin. Perfect we can never be whilst coming short of His glory. Things of omission, a look, or a word, may leave before the divine eye marks of sin. Many not knowing the "clean every whit," or the blessed service of Christ in keeping us, on seeing their sin, into which the enemy has drawn them,

take their old place again, as if still children of wrath, even as others. They say they *were* saved, but are lost *now*. They estimate their sins as Cain did, saying they are greater than can be forgiven. Let such seriously think they are losing what the Lord delights us to have—the joy of opening the heart's door anew to Him. He likes no closed door (Rev. iii.); but one with its open welcome, that He may come in and sup with us, and we with Him. They lose too what the Father delights to give—His restoring word; or what, in Luke xv., He longed to bestow on His confessing and returning child—the warm embraces of His love. Others estimate their sins lightly, and forgetting that God is *light*, live on in the evil which robs them of their once enjoyed communion. Alas! worldly and sinful influences here and there in the world unite to keep the heart from Christ. But sins, of which we are cognisant, brought to light by the Word by some enquiring Nathan, or whilst bearing chastening, such as David endured, are the result in us of the priestly office of Christ, and the searching of the indwelling Spirit. If overpowered by any sense of the evil, as Israel doubtless will be, and the brethren of Joseph were—and we, as they, know not what to ask for as we ought—"the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." The

result is we confess our sins, and God, who promised, forgives; and we are cleansed from all unrighteousness.

What are we to do with those who have fallen? Just what the Lord does. We are not to leave them to themselves, not to tread on them, not to point them out to others as defiled—a sorry service surely—but to take them in our own hands as it were, and wash them as the Lord has set us an example. He says, “Wash one another’s feet.” (John xiii.) Holy, heavenly work to be kind to the fallen. It is God-like, Christ-like; for our pattern is the Lord. But only love can do it. Mere religiousness would say, “Stand by . . . I am holier than thou.” Love alone can fashion the copies, for love is the artificer of the originals in heaven; as the Lord again says, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”\* It is not, as of old, the skill of such as work in brass that will do now, *but the skill of such as walk in love*. The fashioning of any kind thought in the heart toward a brother, the arming of the mind with power to bear and forbear in love, the goings forth of the soul in sympathies, and the moulding or softening down of any hard or selfish affection; these are the copies of the

\* How to act towards those who have imbibed false doctrine or are apostates from the truth, see Titus iii. 10, 11, margin, R.V.

heavenly patterns. It is only as "*dear children*" we can be "imitators of God." (Eph. v. 1.) And what comfort is this! When the Lord would appoint on earth the witness of His own ways in heaven, He tells us to love one another, to wash one another's feet. What a sight of Him, though within the veil, does this give us! He shows His thoughts how kind they be. What mirror of the daily occupation of our Priest in His sanctuary on high is here disclosed to us! an occupation, however, only for a while. For note, there will be no room for growth in holiness or need of water in our heavenly state. Hence in John's vision the laver was not a laver of *water*, but of *crystal*. Holiness in its own home—perfect, final, fixed—as nothing that defileth shall enter there, so the service of cleansing or keeping clean will be no more needed. Ineffable rest will this be—a heaven in heaven. Not only to die no more, but no more sin; not even to have that thought of sin which, if only passing through the soul, leaves its dark shadow behind. Meanwhile a heaven in heaven, by faith, we may now have; for where He is, who keeps us, there also are we.

"Far beyond the storm and tempest,  
That untroubled calm above,  
There the Son of God abideth,  
Resting in the Father's love.

T

“ Loved with love beyond all measure,  
Love that knows no check nor shade ;  
Loved before the worlds were founded,  
Loved before the heavens were made.

“ Loved with all the love that dwelleth  
In the very heart of God ;  
Loved with all the love befitting  
Him in whom all grace abode.

“ Loved with all the love He claimeth,  
Who endured the cross and shame ;  
There, by God and man forsaken,  
Telling forth the Father’s name.

“ Now in God’s unmingled gladness,  
God’s unmeasured, endless peace,  
He abideth, and rejoiceth  
With a joy that cannot cease.

“ And amidst that joy and glory,  
In that peace no tongue can tell,  
Far above the storm and tempest,  
There on high with Him we dwell.

“ Unto this His love has brought us,  
Nothing less than this He gives ;  
This the secret joy and power  
Of the heart wherein He lives.

“ Let us praise that love for ever,  
Fall in worship at His feet ;  
Lost in silent joy and wonder,  
Sinners made in Him complete.”

**XXVII.**

**Libing Waters.**



## LIVING WATERS.

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**"THOU sacred spring !  
As clear as crystal glistening ;  
Those streams of blessing pure and free,  
All splendour of the cherubim,  
And holiness of seraphim,  
Is darkness when compared to thee !" — THOLUCK.**

## Twenty-seventh Part.

### LIVING WATERS.

“And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.”—ZECH. xiv. 8.

**W**HAT grand glimpses we get in these waters of millennial times! Besides being literal rivers, they are earthly images of spiritual and eternal things. They will be refreshing and beautiful as objects of natural delight when the earth will be the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. Beautiful too and instructive as types of the heavenly, where “the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” It seems as though they take their rise when the Lord appears in His temple—from thence they are to issue—or perhaps when the mount of Olives is divided by the earthquake they will suddenly appear. What are they but the same spoken of by the prophet Joel, where we read, “In that day all

the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord." (chap. iii. 18.) By these we are reminded of the river of God's grace and love, as we see it flowing in different channels according to different dispensations. Truthfully has it been delineated thus: "In Eden it took its rise to water the garden, thence to wander in divers ways over the earth; for the dispensation was one of earthly good. In the wilderness the smitten rock was its source, and every path of the camp of God its channel. In Canaan afterwards the waters of Shiloah flowed softly—Jehovah watered the land from His own resources, and made it to drink of the rain of heaven; and for the people every feast and every sacrifice was as the well of this water, and the current of the yearly service of the sanctuary was its constant channel; for Israel was then the people of the Lord, and their land His dwelling-place. But the time had come for leaving Canaan a dry land, and for opening the river of God elsewhere. It was now to take its rise in the glorified Son of man in heaven, and the channels through which it was to flow were to be His members on earth. The dispensation was one of spiritual blessings in heavenly places; the earth was not for the present to be watered, only the Church of God. But by-and-bye, in the kingdom, when the present age, like

others, will have fulfilled its course, and other dispensations arise, this same river will own other channels and springs. It will rise in the throne of God and the Lamb, and flow through the golden streets of the city for the gladdening of the multitude before the throne." (Rev. vii. 17, xxii. 1, 2.) And it will be seen as issuing from under the sanctuary in the earthly Zion watering Jerusalem, and the land which is "Immanuel's land."

Ezekiel (see chapter xlvii.) is most graphic in his description—"Behold waters issued out from under the threshold of the house." The angel is our guide; he brings us to a living spring, increasing in its clear depths of calm pellucid waters; also to banks of wide-spreading trees, laden with fruits of every kind. There are four things to be specially noticed respecting these waters.

1. Their depth. They commence ankle-deep only; thence flow on to the height of the knees; next the loins; and finally, no more standing, for the depths cannot be fathomed. Suggestively this is our own history, only many, alas! stop in their experience at the *ankle*-depth. They are weak in faith, perhaps hardly knowing that they have been saved. We are not to stop here; we are to seek the deeper and ever-deepening knowledge and power of the love that saves us, seen in the counsels and purposes of God, and revealed to us

in Christ, who came to manifest the Father. We may know Him as did Mary of Bethany, or as Paul, who could say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" There is to be *progress*. The Lord, teaching His disciples, spoke of, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." How sad if the corn remained simply the blade! (See Hosea viii. 7, R.V.) We should all be as full corn in the ear, laden with the golden grain of a holy sanctified life. We may learn a lesson from some of the natural products; as they ripen towards heaven their roots become less and less in their hold on the earth—a true image of the Christian who as he nears heaven becomes more and more loose to everything here.

2. Their influence. They issue "out toward the east country, and go down into the desert (the plain), and go into the sea," whose "waters shall be healed." (Ezek. xlvii. 8.) That sea, known for ages as the *Dead* Sea, "on whose shore nothing of value ever grows, and in whose dense unnatural waters nothing lives, and which has been the monument of the sins and desolations of the cities of the plain," shall be at once and for ever healed. At the present it lies some thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, only a ridge of sand-drift dividing it from that

great and wide sea, wherein are things innumerable. That gone, the ocean connects itself first with the Dead Sea, the Dead Sea with the river, and the river with Jerusalem itself, lifted up in her place—suggestive, again, how that city may become the maritime centre, as it will be the metropolis, of the whole earth. Fishermen, who for ages could never find aught in the Dead Sea, will now spread their nets on its banks, finding in its waters the riches of the Great Sea. (Ez. xlvii. 10.) We take this simply as it says. It would be impossible to spiritualize what is said of these nets, or the treasures they secure. Wonderful will it be, in the Bible studies of these times, to read this prophet. "It shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and everything shall live whither the river cometh." (*v.* 9.) Suggestively again, this is beautiful, as showing spiritually that wherever Christ, the true river of the water of life, comes, the dead are made to live—dead souls, dead fellowships, dead services, dead graces, dead gifts, dead feelings, dead affections, dead hopes, and dead aspirations, must all yield to Him.

3. Their extent. From first becoming a large and deep river, the waters part in twain—half

toward the former or Eastern Sea, and half toward the hinder (Mediterranean) sea. From the grandly-restored city Jerusalem to their ocean goals they will pursue their beneficent course. "In summer and in winter it shall be." No drought will lessen their flow, and no winter's frost will bind them. Nothing will be a hindrance. In winter's adversity as well as in the summer of an outward prosperity, Christ will be the same.

4. Their fruitfulness. It shall bring forth new fruit every month, because the waters thereof issue out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for healing." Not yearly, but every month, shall the fruit be. So rapid each fresh supply, that one could almost see them grow; and so plentiful, that none could want, telling of the inexhaustible supplies we have in Him who is Jehovah-Jesus—our Saviour, and Jehovah-Rophi, the Lord that healeth us. Happy days, when men will sit under the shade of these trees, and satisfy their want, so that on earth, as in heaven, "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more." Meanwhile our fountain of the water of life is not here. We look up into HEAVEN, and there see the GOD-MAN, the source of all we need now and for ever.

**XXVIII.**

**The Extended Land.**



## THE EXTENDED LAND.

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**" VALLEYS and hills of sacred Palestine,  
Dear land of heavenly thought and glorious dead,  
The centre and the glory of all realms,  
The earthly home of God's incarnate Son."**

## Twenty-eighth Part.

### THE EXTENDED LAND.

"All the land shall be turned as the Arabah . . . and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place."

ZECH. xiv. 10. (R.V.)

IN the day to which these prophecies (may I not say, histories?) carry us, there will be a new and more extended settlement of the land. Probably, by means of the earthquake, that portion on which Jerusalem stands will be lifted up, and Jerusalem "shall dwell in her place." Hence the exceeding high mountain spoken of by Micah the prophet, and hence also its Jacob's ladder connection, or contact even, which may exist between it and the new Jerusalem city descending from God out of heaven. We have positive assurance as to the destined dimensions of the land.

First, Isaiah xxxii., xxxiii. 17, speaks of "*a far-stretching land.*" A type often loses itself in the antitype. The type in this chapter is Hezekiah in humiliation, an exile in his own land, the invading Assyrian being at the gate. As if in sympathy with his sorrows the land mourneth, it languisheth;

Lebanon is put to shame, it withereth. Sharon is become like a desert, and Bashan and Carmel are stripped of their beauty. Proverbial as were Lebanon and Sharon, with Bashan and Carmel, for natural glory, each was desolate then, and each is desolate now, reminding us of creation after sin had entered the garden, in which condition it still remains. The enemy in the one case, and sin in the other, causes the whole creation to groan. But God said to the invader, "I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest." This typifies what the Lord will yet do when the Assyrian shall be in the land. Accordingly "the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand." This done, the king is seen in his beauty, and the land from which he had been severed is a far-stretching land, or, as Bishop Lowth renders it, "*The land far extended.*"

This foreshadowing reminds us of the first promise, which has never yet been fulfilled. In giving Abraham the land, the Lord said, "Unto thy seed have I given the land, *from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.*" (Gen. xv. 18.) Elsewhere we read, "*From the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be.*" (Deut. xi. 24.)

Such are the ample boundaries of the land which God gave to Abraham. In all the truths we have considered Abraham occupies a special place. He is at the head of all that long history of the Jewish race which can never be separated from the land. He stands before us as a figure unique in the history of the world. He of all mankind is singled out by the sovereign grace of God as one whom He called His friend. Born in Ur of the Chaldees, where all was idolatry and apostasy from God, the "God of glory" appeared unto him in a special divine revelation. Again and again, in form suited to his apprehension, yet in mysterious ways, does the Divine Being visit him, converse with him, and even partake of earthly repast at his hand. Concerning the race of which God constituted him head, "as Abraham gazed at the countless stars glittering in the brightness of a Syrian sky—those stars worshipped in his native land as radiant gods, but now to be regarded only as glories of the Creator's power—the words fall upon his ear, 'Like these innumerable shall be thy descendants. A child of thine own shall be thine heir.'" It was hard to credit it at his age; but he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.

It was wonderful, as a solitary man of faith, his special dealings with and enjoyment of God.

Leaving his own country and kindred, he had come where he had no right of land; and yet amid the symbols of the presence of the Almighty the sacred words of a covenant are heard, in which the whole land on which he trod is formally given him. "It was," said Geikie, "a good land suited to the divine purpose. Lying in the centre of the then known world . . . its influences would radiate from it to a wider circumference than was possible for any other country, its wide variety of climate, moreover, embracing every gradation between that of temperate regions in the district of Lebanon, and that of the sub-tropical in the valley of the Jordan. It was hemmed on the one side by the terrible desert, and on the other by the boundless ocean."

But what we specially note is the demarcation of its territory. It needed no "international commission" to fix it; the boundaries are all defined. God said to Moses (Exodus xxiii. 31), "I will set thy bounds *from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines*" (that, is the Mediterranean Sea), "*and from the desert unto the river*"—the Euphrates. In the time of Solomon all the districts included became tributaries, but that was not simple possession. In the coming day of the true Solomon, He will be the *Possessor*, having Lordship over all. But lest Israel should

lose sight of these original dimensions of the land, God repeats Himself again and again, indicating its exact coasts. Thus, in Deut. xi. 24, "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be." The promise is absolute—without condition. The possession therefore will yet be made sure. Hence if men forget, the Lord will not, though the Gentile tread it down. His eyes "are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." It will be a large land to dwell in, and goodly and beautiful as large—a land in which, freed from care and toil, the people will rest.

It has often been said, It is quite impossible for the Divine Being to bestow upon so small a land so great a future. But were it "so small," magnitude is of little account when God wills. Truly the manger was small, and Calvary—the mere spot of earth where the cross was erected. Yet what transactions! what issues!

And now this extending of the land reminds us how all that God has promised will be the same. All that we now possess will be seen as ages revolve to be for ever extended and extending. Far beyond our thoughts will be God's infinite love and grace, and the love and grace

of Him who died for us. For ever extending will be our capacity for enjoying God and Christ. This will go on indefinitely and infinitely. It forms one distinguishing difference between the creature and the Creator, that no new conception or enlarged capacity could ever be added to Him, else His knowledge would be finite, and He less than God ; on the contrary, our progress will be limitless and eternal. How grand is the future we expect, and glorious the life we shall enjoy !

XXIX.

**The Feast of Tabernacles.**



## THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

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**"THEY stand, those halls of Zion,  
All jubilant with song,  
And bright with many an angel,  
And all the martyr throng.**

**"There is the throne of David,  
And there, from care released,  
The shout of them that triumph,  
The song of them that feast."—BERNARD.**

## Twenty-ninth Part.

### THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

“Every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.”

ZECH. xiv. 16.

THIS brings us to one of the grand commemorative days to be enjoyed in the land. Some think it going back to Judaism to keep the feast of tabernacles ; but no, it is going on with God, and with His revealed Word. Do we reenact the cross, or renew the sufferings of Christ, when we remember His death ? Surely not. Thus as the supper is an ever-repeated memorial of the Saviour and His work on the cross, so this feast will recall to Israel those wilderness days when their fathers were sojourning in booths or tents, having for forty years no homes in which to dwell. It will remind them of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who lived as pilgrims and strangers on the earth ; also the cloudy pillar, the bread from heaven, the

water from the rock, the shoes that never wore out, and the garments that never waxed old, with many other signs and wonders of the way. Other feasts—such as Pentecost and the Passover—have had their antitype, but not so this. Its joy is future. It is designated a *festival*, “a closing festival.” (See Lev. xxiii. 34.) They were told: It shall be a solemn rest, in which there shall be no servile work. Ye shall take the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. These seven days of festivity, in the age to come, will be carried out on a scale quite unknown before. How fair a scene to look upon! Princes, nobles, people, together with visitors from all lands, of every clime and hue. Not a few, we can imagine, whose delight was in the Lord, had been engaged in gathering the long branches of trees of varied leafy glory—“the living tracery of the season”—with which to form and adorn the booths themselves where His name, in the joyous assemblies was to be above every other name. Not only will Israel keep the feast, but a vast assembled brotherhood of nations will willingly unite in the thanksgiving and praise. And what rest! There will be no troubles to hinder; no hunger or thirst; no sun or moon to smite; nor entrance of anything defiling. The enemy has

been judged—that old serpent and Satan—trodden under foot, no longer able to hurt or destroy; he will eat the dust of death in his own den. The antichrist, whose time was so murderous to the true people of God, has been, as we have seen, finally doomed. No more weariness or fainting of soul because of these; no haughtiness of the Jew or supremacy of the Gentile to mar their fellowship. His servants will serve without fault; and day by day there will be the happy worship of “holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.” Imagination may seek to picture the scene, but only the coming days themselves can tell what it is. And God will be absolute in His requirements. We hear much of Egypt; but there will be an Egypt far different from that which perplexes men in these days. Old nearly as the world after the flood, it will shine in the light of the kingdom at this time. “If the family of Egypt go not up . . . there shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite the nations that go not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” The requirement is, that “everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” It will be the great commemoration feast. It was essayed to be kept in the days of the Lord’s

humiliation ; but the gold was dim, and could not be owned by Him, whose joy had not yet come. He refused to sanction the feast, telling Israel they had no title to the rest and glory which it pledged to them ; that they were not really in Canaan ; that their land, instead of being watered by the river of God, was but a barren and thirsty portion of the accursed earth ; that they had forsaken the fountain of living waters, and all their own cisterns were but broken ; and accordingly, as the feast was closing, Jesus put the living water into other vessels, and dried up the wells that were in Jerusalem. He turns the fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, and opens the river of God in other places. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

We can form no true conception of what this feast will be when it comes at last. As we have said, the days of their fathers and all past dispensations will be in the minds of the worshippers—God's goodness, His faithfulness, patience, and changeless love, will be the theme for their meditative hearts. Israel will look back on all their enemies laid low, and around upon Zion, the symbol of divine grace,

with the Lord in the midst, and above, filled with its divine glory, the heavenly Jerusalem! Glorious time! magnificent ritual this feast of tabernacles! There will be joy, great joy, expressing itself in songs such as earth has never sung. And in those days doubtless the heavens will hear the earth; and they of the heavens may say, "What is this?" And the answer will be, "This is the feast of tabernacles," and the heavens shall minister to them amid their joy, or with the harps of God regale them anew with heavenly songs of praise. The moral influence over the world will be great. Nations will go up to Jerusalem to see the glory there revealed, according to the Word, "Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising;" for the rising will be known to the ends of the globe, then will Heber's long-known hymn be fulfilled—

"Waft, waft, ye winds, His story,  
And you, ye waters, roll,  
Till, like a sea of glory,  
It spreads from pole to pole."

The service will be led by Israel; but, remarks another, "it will be responded to by countless multitudes of every kindred and tongue. The area of the temple enclosure, vast as it is, will be none too great to accommodate so mighty a con-

gregation"—a multitude beyond all calculation. We meet in our happiest commemorate-times in twos and threes, or at most in a few scant thousands; but when Israel is in the land they will meet as a nation, and other nations of the world will, by delegation or otherwise, go up from year to year to keep the feast. The people *themselves* will be an offering to the Lord. Psalm cx. 3 (R.V.) reads, "Thy people offer themselves willingly, or *are freewill offerings* in the day of thy power: in the beauties of holiness, or in holy attire, from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth." "As much as to say," remarks another, "the freshness of this new birth dates and is derived from the dawn of the day of the Lord, the day of Christ Jesus—earth's seventh millennial-day of sabbath rest after six days of toil and sorrow. Then, and not till then, will the people of Israel as a nation be all presented as freewill-offerings before the Lord, and in 'holy beauties;' that is, in this glorious ceremonial service, and as true worshippers of the Triune Jehovah." But observe how God will be supreme in this the day of His divine worship. The nation and kingdom that will not serve Him shall perish, or He will give a plague wherewith He will smite them. When they do serve and delight themselves in the Lord, what can go forth from Jerusalem but a glorious

testimony to His holiness, grace, and love? Think of the effect on their own souls, and through them on the homes and nations whence they had come. How would they see all around filled with the glory of the Lord! How laden will they be under its influence! What blessing will they know! They themselves will have learned to call the Redeemer "Blessed!" (Psalm lxxii. 17, 18.) And how will He delight in the praises of Israel, and they will delight in praising Him!

It is said of the nightingale that its most luscious notes are given when it has a listener. From its eminence it sees the passer-by delighting in its song, and, as if it knew that this was the purpose of its voice, puts on fresh power, and sings its song yet more sweetly. It is a simple illustration drawn from the humbler creation. But what will not the redeemed feel when they see how the Lord delights in their praise! What strains will awaken and re-awaken at the very thought! Oh, my soul, why not praise Him more, and desire Him more? David could say, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." And again—"My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." (Psalm lxiii. 1. R.V.) He *longed* for the courts of the Lord. Were we more in those



courts where He now is, we should bring with us to the world more of the power and unction of the place. Just as—

“When one who holds communion with the skies,  
Has filled his urn where the pure waters rise,  
And once more mingles with us meaner things,  
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings ;  
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,  
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.”

**XXX.**

**Holy unto the Lord.**

## HOLY UNTO THE LORD.

---

**"AND is it strange that I should joyful be,  
When everything in heaven and earth I see  
Through the wide world does evermore transpire  
In sweet agreement with His own desire?"—THOLUCK.**

## Thirtieth Part.

### HOLY UNTO THE LORD.

"There shall be upon the bells of the horses HOLY UNTO THE LORD."—ZECH. xiv. 20 (R.V.).

AND now our meditations of this delightful prophecy would be incomplete did we not notice the special predictions with which the prophet concludes. He says (chap. xiv. 20, 21), "There shall be upon the bells of the horses, HOLY UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy unto the Lord of hosts . . . and in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." A statement by no means so bare of interest as some may imagine. For what blessedness is this condition—"Holy unto the Lord!" No longer such a world as we now have; no longer mere questions on holiness, but a nation in true separation unto the Lord. The nation, if I may so speak, and the

world will be of one accord. No longer as with many now, practical holiness being intermittent; no longer professors, like the sacred vessels profanely prostituted to ungodly purposes as in Belshazzar's feast, towards which the mystic fingers on the wall were directed with "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.*" Not only will the people be holy, or the vessels of the sanctuary holy, but the utensils in daily use in the houses or occupations of the people will be holy.

But further, there is the promise relating to the horses, and the bells that will adorn them. These too will be "HOLY UNTO THE LORD." Noble truly as the horse now is, it had its greatest day in king Solomon's reign. Solomon was a foreshadowing of the millennial King. How munificent and splendid the account of his reign, in which the horse forms a prominent figure! (2 Chron. ix. 22, 27.) "Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year. And Solomon had *four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.* . . . And he ruled over all the kings from the river" (Eu-

phrates) "even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt. And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore-trees that are in the lowland for abundance. *And they brought horses for Solomon out of Egypt, and out of all lands.*" Munifical, as we have said, is this account, and truly different is it to that which the evangelists give—"Thy King cometh lowly, riding on the foal of an ass." Yet both manifest the one Person—the one as foretold in prophecy, the other as rehearsed in type; the one mingling humiliation with His presentation of Himself to the nation as Messiah, the other as being Messiah, and as having only glory and honour—the acknowledged King of kings and Lord of lords. What days for Jerusalem when the antitype will be far more splendid than any type could be! And these "bells," how will they attract to their sound, and the sound ever remind of the greatness of the change which has come over the world. The animal creation will be no longer subject to vanity, but "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." (Rom. viii. 21.) How happy it makes one to think of times like these! No longer a groaning animal creation, but each one restored to its Eden perfection.

The last word in our prophecy is, "There shall

be no more a Canaanite in the house of the Lord." "The Canaanites were the keenest business people of antiquity; their name, which originally meant a 'lowlander,' came to be synonymous with a 'trader;' while their famous cities of Sidon and Tyre were the seats of a wondrous commercial activity and energy. Even in Abraham's day the chimneys of their great glassworks and dyeing factories may have caught the eye from the inland hills, as they still did in the days of Christ; and their vast harbours crowded with sea-going ships and lined with great warehouses, may even in the days of the patriarch have been the glory of the land."\* In the day of the restored nation the land will be the Lord's—no more traffickers, using it for their own aggrandisement—none intruding into the house of the Lord.

Viewing the Canaanite as a type, what we find at conversion is a law in the members warring against the law of the mind. The flesh is in us warring against the Spirit. Our exemption waits not the days of the earth's glory, but will cease with our life here, when, "absent from the body," we shall be "present with the Lord."

\* GEIKIE.

**XXXI.**

**Eye-Witnesses and Joint-Heirs.**



## EYE-WITNESSES AND JOINT-HEIRS.

---

" THERE congregate the sons of light,  
Fair as the morning sky ;  
And taste of infinite delight  
Beneath their Saviour's eye.

" There, in the power of heavenly sight,  
They gaze upon the throne,  
And scan perfection's utmost height,  
And know as they are known.

" Their joy bursts forth in strains of love,  
In one harmonious song ;  
And through the heavenly courts above  
The echoes roll along."

## Thirty-first Part.

### EYE-WITNESSES AND JOINT-HEIRS.

“The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.”—ZECH. xiv. 5.

OUR prophecy, as we have seen, has shed a flood of light on the dispensation prior to Christ coming into the world, and on that which awaits its fulfilment at His coming again. We have had passing before our minds the “four great Powers” which have made the world’s history; the hope of the Jew in the return of his people to their land, and in the rebuilding of Jerusalem; the millennial era, in which is seen the Son of man as King and Priest, with His many crowns reigning over the earth, all nations being blessed under His benign rule; the enemy, Satan, bound in the bottomless pit; and the antichrist cast alive into the lake of fire, which is the second death. Besides Christ’s first advent, we have seen the great events attending His coming again, each one vividly passing before us; viz., the earth’s last war, when the Lord will break the nations with a rod of iron,

and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel; the mount of Olives, with the Lord standing upon it, and His wounds the subject of enquiry on the part of His restored people; the sweet surprise of an eventide growing into a glorious day, instead of deepening into a dark and dreadful night; the great mourning for sin, with the fountain opened for its removal; the living waters to water the new garden of the Lord, giving it life and healing and beauty; the feasts in the land after long ages of suffering, sin, and sorrow, with Him in the midst, a Prince and a Saviour, whose glory will fill the earth and skies, and whose whole course they will rehearse as they read the prophets who so grandly and touchingly have prophecied of Him. We have seen how God's world, that which He owns as such, is that only which is righteously related to Him; all not subject to Him shall perish.

Part of our prophecy has been fulfilled. We need only point to the four horns, or the branch, the tender bud, or the entry into Jerusalem, the thirty pieces of silver, and the wounded hands. Who does not see in their minuteness of fulfilment the foreknowledge of God, and the unfailing truth of His word? And what has thus been literally fulfilled is only a sample of the literal fulfilment of what remains.

We have said that in the whole of our prophecy

there is no notice whatever of heaven. It speaks only of *the future of this world*. Yet have we intimation of what is heavenly. A wonderful word is this, "The Lord my God *shall come, and all the saints with thee.*" He and they will come *from heaven*; for who are they but those spoken of in 1 Thess. iv.—risen and glorified ones, who, during past ages, died in faith, or, in our own dispensation, have fallen asleep in Jesus. There is no minute description, but enough is said to show that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory. Thus our own hope is special—according to the promises made to us who, being of Christ's body, are one with Him. The hopes of the Old Testament saints in like manner corresponded to the character and extent of the revelation made to them. Thus Adam, at the first, possessed the garden of which he was head and lord. So far as we are told, he knew of nothing more. That he expected, after his fall, a coming Deliverer we see from the promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." The same with Abel, whose offering was accepted by God; he recognized his sin, and told of the needed sacrifice. Enoch seems to have had hopes which were bounded by nothing here; he saw that the Lord would come, and myriads of His saints with Him. This formed an expectation different

from that of salvation. Noah beheld wondrous exemption from judgment. Abraham's hopes, along with those of Isaac and Jacob, though different, were not opposed; they had promise of a city not of this world—a *heavenly city*, whose builder and maker was God. Jacob said, "I have seen *God* face to face," and speaks of "*the truth* which thou hast showed unto thy servant." The patriarch Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth . . . yet in my flesh shall I see God." Here was a cluster of hopes, which spread themselves over death and the grave, and told of that life and incorruption which, in Christ, are so gloriously brought to light by the gospel. David foresaw, first, as to his state, "I shall behold thy face in righteousness;" and as to his hope, "I shall be *satisfied* when I awake with thy likeness." All the prophets had hopes according to their prophecies. Ezekiel speaks of his people being "removed far off among the nations," yet that God "will be there a little sanctuary!" (Chap. xi. 16.) Amos, "that they shall no more be plucked up out of their land" which God hath given them. (Chap. ix. 15.) Micah says, "He will tread our iniquities under foot." (Chap. vii. 19, R.V.) Joel says, "In Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape." (Chap. iii. 16.) Isaiah adds, "In all

their adversity He was no adversary" (chap. lxiii. 9, margin, R.V.); although our prophet Zechariah speaks of them as "the most miserable of sheep" (chap. xi. 9, margin, R.V.), which indeed in themselves they were. The Psalms tell of glories and blessings quite unknown to the first believers; such as the princes of the peoples (the nations) being gathered together to be the people of the God of Abraham. (Psalm xlvii. 9, 10, R.V.) The Song of Solomon sings of a love ineffable—in chap. v. 1 (margin, R.V.) the bride is told to "drink abundantly of" (His) "love." Isaiah, Hosea, Jeremiah, Zechariah, and many others, were each made the depository of what formed a wondrous combination of testimony concerning the sufferings of Christ and the glory to follow. Their theme was Christ. Other things occupied their minds. They foresaw their own deliverance with the restoration of their land, and the city which had once so long adorned Israel; also that meanwhile God would be a sanctuary for a little time. But these were as the light of the stars compared with the perfect day, as indicated by the holy mount. Magnificent grandeur has it given to the saints of this dispensation, that Peter and his companions had seen the Lord in His glory, and that Moses and Elias were in glory with Him.

We now seem to know not only what He will

be, what His form and glory, but what we ourselves shall be. Yet the transfiguration was not so much the glory of the Father's house as of the kingdom. As He said, "Some of you standing here shall not taste of death till you see the Son of man coming in His kingdom." It was of this, as to His personal glory, the prophets wrote, and which they expected to see when He would appear on the earth. Our special lot, being one with Him, is that of "JOINT-HEIRS." Thus all things are ours; a full right we have in Him. This right comes of the special place assigned us in the counsels and purposes of God. (See Eph. i., Colossians iii., Rom. viii.) Thus we are not Jews looking for a place here on this earth, nor are we of the nations that will be saved after the glory. Ours is what Paul calls an "*upward* calling." (Phil. iii. 14, margin, R.V.) We read of "the ages to come," doubtless the entire ages, those in which will be shown "the exceeding riches of His grace toward us in Christ Jesus." It is "*ages*;" not singular, but plural. There will be no monotony throughout their endless continuity. One age will succeed another with, doubtless, variations of glory. There will be no finality as to our bliss. Only the Divine Being rests in His own completeness; not so with His creatures. Like the rose-bud which opens into the full-blown rose, and the morning dawn into

succeeding day, so the millennial age will open out into the eternal state of the new heavens and the new earth; and in that state there will be other "ages to come," each one yielding a revenue of knowledge, of love, and of heavenly experience, which will be exceeded only in the ages still to come. The infinite can never be exhausted, and nothing less are the exceeding riches of His grace. What we have sought to show is, that our part in all this will be as joint participators with Christ—"eye-witnesses" and "joint-heirs" with Him of the glory on the earth, and the glories to be displayed throughout eternity.

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We would fain linger on this theme. But one thing more. It has been a joy to testify to the simplicity and reality of the word of God. From the exceeding charm of this prophecy we might have beguiled the imagination, and indulged in speculative inquiring; but no. We have dealt with it just as it is written, putting upon it no other interpretation than its own. Many, by questioning, make the word of God of none effect. There is no book more absolute in its claim to a simple understanding. Truly has Luther said, "There is but *one Scripture* inspired by the Spirit from above, pure and true in all things. The meaning of it is simple as is the truth of heaven itself. We find



its meaning by comparing scripture with scripture ; and it is to be inferred from the thread and connection of what is said. It is the touchstone for *testing all the opinions and maxims of men*. The word of God is a sword, it is a war, it is a ruin, it is a stumbling-block, it is perdition, and, as Amos has said, it is like a bear in the way, and a lioness in the forest, if despised." This is sufficiently solemn, and should lead those who doubt and question to consider. None *can* neglect it with impunity ; none despise it without the judgment of God some day overtaking them. By nature we are dark as to its truth. "For *the natural man receiveth* not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot know them." We become new creatures by faith in Christ Jesus. Should any who read these pages be ignorant of Him, what more precious compendium of all we need to know in order to an immediate peace with God, and the glorious hope of a life which is eternal than Isaiah liii. Let the reader well ponder how the prophet complainingly inquires—

Who hath believed our report,  
And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been manifested ?  
For He groweth up in their sight like a tender sucker ;  
And like a root from a thirsty soil :  
He hath no form, nor any beauty, that we should regard  
Him ;

Nor is His countenance such that we should desire Him.  
Despised, nor accounted in the number of men :  
A Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ;  
As one that hideth His face from us ;  
He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.  
Surely our infirmities He hath borne ;  
And our sorrows, He hath carried them ;  
Yet we thought Him judicially stricken ;  
Smitten of God, and afflicted.  
But He was wounded for our transgressions—  
Was smitten for our iniquities :  
The chastisement, by which our peace is effected, was  
laid upon Him ;  
And by His bruises we are healed.  
We all of us like sheep have strayed :  
We have turned aside, every one to his own way ;  
And Jehovah hath made to light upon Him the iniquity  
of us all.  
It was exacted, and He was made answerable, and He  
opened not His mouth.  
As a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
And as a sheep before her shearers,  
Is dumb : so He opened not His mouth.  
By an oppressive judgment He was taken off,  
And His manner of life who would declare ?  
For He was cut off from the land of the living,  
For the transgressions of My people He was smitten to  
death.  
And His grave was appointed with the wicked ;  
But with the rich man was His tomb,  
Although He had done no wrong,  
Neither was there any guile in His mouth.

Yet it pleased Jehovah to crush Him with affliction.  
If His soul shall make a propitiatory sacrifice,  
He shall see a seed, which shall prolong their days,  
And the gracious purpose of Jehovah shall prosper in  
His hands.

Of the travail of His soul He shall see (the fruit) and  
be satisfied,  
By the knowledge of Him shall My Servant justify many ;  
For the punishment of their iniquities He shall bear.  
Therefore will I distribute to Him the many for His  
portion.

And the mighty people shall He share for His spoil :  
Because He poured out His soul unto death,  
And was numbered with the transgressors,  
And He bare the sin of many,  
And made intercession for the transgressors.\*

We conclude, thus, with this word of words  
respecting the Son of God, the blessed and adora-  
ble One, whom in these pages as *the Christ of  
God* we have sought to pourtray. Nothing more  
is needed save that we breathe the prayer that  
a believing response may find its place in the  
breast of every one who may read this volume ;  
and that both the reader and the writer may,  
through God's sovereign grace, MEET IN THAT  
GLORY TO BE REVEALED, OF WHICH ALL WHO  
NOW BELIEVE ARE TO BE "EYE-WITNESSES AND  
JOINT-HEIRS."

\* Bishop LOWTH's rendering.

THIS volume, wherewithal I spake of Him,  
Is writ—labour of love pens nothing more  
Upon the page 't is thine to linger o'er ;  
Our souls are strands that lie around Truth's rim,  
And some upraise a barrier cold and dim,  
Repellant to the waves which round them pour ;  
And some stoop down—a sweet receptive shore,  
That the glad waters bathe them to the brim.

Then chimes their song in cadence full and free ;  
For not a ripple but is strong to raise  
The land's melodious litany of lays.  
Thus should our hearts be voiced in harmony,  
Since every wave of Truth from God's full sea  
Wakes the glad soul to yet diviner praise.



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