

FROM

# AMAM TO BIZIOTHIAH:

(JOSH. xv. 26-28.)

A Record of the Soul's Progress, and a Witness  
to the Word.

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## NOTE.

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**T**HIS, which was the subject of a lecture at a recent Plainfield conference, (July, 1892,) has been printed, not only for the sake of the truth that it contains, but with the earnest hope that it may be used of God to draw wider and deeper attention to that numerical structure of the Word of God which in the five books of Moses has been, however imperfectly, exhibited in the first volume of *THE NUMERICAL BIBLE*. With a still more minute application of the principles therein developed, the book of Joshua is yielding still more than the former in the way of interpretation, the present being only a very brief illustration. May He whose Word it is use it in the revival and confirmation of faith in its full and verbal inspiration, and give it thus fresh power for sanctification in Christendom's closing days.

## FROM AMAM TO BIZIOTHIAH:

A RECORD OF THE SOUL'S PROGRESS, AND A WITNESS TO  
THE WORD.

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*Josh. xv. 26-28.*

TO-DAY we are in the presence of a most solemn thing. We see men who are professed teachers of the Word of God giving up the claim that it is really that. They allow that Scripture *contains* the word of God, but deny that it *is* the Word of God, or that its words are in every part from Him. That is what I believe and hold to, that every word is of Him. Of course, no one questions that there are mistakes in our translations, and even in the existing copies of the original. Neither translators nor those who copied from the old manuscripts were kept from the possibility of error in their work. But what *is* meant is that if we could get back to the original, and behind all the copies, we *should* find absolutely flawless accuracy in every part: in that sense, I do assert that we have verbal inspiration; and that its cosmogony, history, geography, as well as spiritual truth, is, one as much as the other, perfect. As the Lord asserts for Himself, so may we for all Scripture, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" If Scripture fails in truthfulness just where it can be tested, how can it be worthy to be believed in matters where we cannot test it?

I am not to-day going over any of the usual kind of evidence as to these points, however. God has given us,

I believe, for these times in which it is so much needed, a new key to the interpretation of His Word, enabling us to realize its complete inspiration more perfectly than ever yet, and to get at its meaning more perfectly also. Mathematics we speak of as what at least is absolute truth. Now it is capable of the fullest proof that God has, by means of the symbolism of numbers, brought in mathematics as a witness to the certainty and fullness of His Word. He has given it, in short, everywhere, and even, as it would appear, in an almost microscopical way, a *numerical structure*, which certifies it by *illuminating it*. Thus, if there are five books of Moses, there is a reason why there should be just that number, and why each book should stand where it does in its numerical place,—a reason founded upon the meaning of the number itself in Scripture, and the agreement of that meaning with the character of the book itself.

Just so with the divisions of each book, and with the divisions of those divisions, until, in some places, it goes down to *the very words themselves*,—each true division manifests itself as that by the same agreement between the character of the division and the meaning of the number of its place. And this is what I hope to show you now: nine words are all my text; and I believe I can demonstrate to you that each of these words is perfectly in place,—that its place accords with its meaning,—that is, its number declares its nature, the whole combining to bring out of the words a spiritual significance which proves the whole to be divine! And this I would gladly have subjected to the fullest and keenest criticism that can be given to it. I have no doubt whatever that it will stand it all; and that it will not only stand as a proof, not to be gainsaid, of the perfect inspiration of Scripture, but also as a witness that we may and must read our Bibles more closely than ever yet, and that so read, they have

an infinite store of blessing for us, which may He use, as He would, for sanctification to our souls!

If we take up the book of Joshua, every one is aware that there are in it whole chapters which consist almost entirely of names,—the boundary-lines of tribes, the cities belonging to them, etc. What are we to think of these chapters? what is their use? what spiritual significance have they? If you examine the commentaries, you will find literally nothing in the latter way. They will tell you where such or such a place is to be found or not to be found. They will give you criticisms upon the text, linguistic or archæological. But as for any thing that would speak to the heart of a child of God as of something from his Father to him: what, indeed, can you expect of it from a mere list of names?

It is a very serious question. For if indeed it be but a list of names,—if there be in it materials for history, geography,—any thing else you please, but nothing spiritual, then *why should* there be the need of inspiration to record it? To admit this as fact is to give the deniers of verbal inspiration their best possible argument, and liberty to the destructionist critics to do all they please with what, if taken out of our Bibles, no one would regret or miss.

Well, you say, out of Judah's hundred and fifteen cities, how many should we miss? Yes, but whose fault is this? Just having been through the whole, I can say, that with perhaps one doubtful exception, I know of none but stand in their place, figures in a continuous picture or series of pictures, of the greatest beauty, and deepest significance from end to end. Take one away out of any of these, there would be a loss indeed; and this we shall see out of the nine names before us.

Only a list of names? Look in the seventh of Hebrews, and see how much significance is to be found in a few names. "For this Melchisedek, 'king of righteousness,'

priest of the Most High God, . . . first being by interpretation, 'king of righteousness,' and after that, 'king of Salem,' which is to say, 'king of peace.'" Notice how the apostle not only translates the names, but how he insists too upon the order: "*first*, 'King of righteousness,' and *after that*, 'King of Salem,' which is, 'King of peace;'" what a withering contempt would be poured upon us by our fine critics to-day if we dared to insist upon such importance of the order, "first" and "after that"! and yet it can be justified most fully as having spiritual necessity. The Lord will in fact be "King of righteousness," acting in judgment to remove out of the way the evil, before He can become "King of Salem," and bring in peace. But if we were to go through Scripture like that, would it not give us everywhere plenty of matter for research? Would it not make us feel that there was treasure under our feet in every spot we trod upon in Scripture, and show us perhaps, in result, that in just the most barren-seeming spots the mines are? For, assuredly, here as in nature, not all the gold gleams upon the surface; and where it does so, it is witness to the richer veins that lie beneath. And Scripture searched in this way now, with honest, believing, patient industry, with what riches will it not repay us (after all that has been spent on it) to-day!

In this fifteenth of Joshua, the names of the cities of Judah fill a large part of the sixty-three verses. I am merely going to translate a few of them, and show how they read as Scripture puts them together. In such a book as "Pilgrim's Progress," the names are in English, and we are assured by simply reading them that they are intended to have spiritual significance. If we were Hebraists, we should find large quantities of Bible names just as simple as Bunyan's. "Melchisedek" is as clear to one who understands Hebrew, as "king of righteousness" is to us. I do not mean that every word will be as clear

as that by any means; yet there is significance all through, and to be found. Vocabularies differ much; but the meaning need not be uncertain if we will attend to the help that God has given us to assure ourselves what is the true one.

A list of names standing separately merely, we might be in doubt about. Words thus apart, and forming no sentences, might have easily different meanings attaching to them. Grouped in sentences they ought to speak. If God's mind be in them they ought to speak what would be worthy of the mind of God. We shall find that this is what these names really do. They are grouped for us, and as so grouped have evident relation to one another, and form connected lines of thought. I have spoken of them as pictures, and so they are, with their meanings on their faces, as good pictures will have: some of the most beautiful in God's Word, I believe, are to be found in these names. I care very little for what commentators can tell me about them; I care not very much whether they can find the ruins that stand for them to-day: but I do care very much to know that they have admonition, comfort, hope, for me to-day; and that God speaks in in them still in His own blessed way effectively. May our hearts realize this now!

If we look at these cities of Judah, we shall find that they are divided first of all according to the character of the district to which they belong: first, the South; then the vale, or rather, the lowland; then the mountains; then the wilderness. The cities of the south are numbered for us—29: though there is a difficulty about this, which I cannot now enter into; 29 is really the number.

In this large group, we have smaller ones also, which may be discerned by the absence of the usual conjunction thus: "Kabzeel, and Eder, and Jagur, and Kinah, and Dimonah, and Adadah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and

Ithnan,"—then comes the break,—“Ziph, and Telem, and Bealoth, and Hazor-hadattah, and Kerioth-hezron, which is Hazor”—(so it ought to be read): there we find a second break. The third group is the one we are to look at, and is cut off in a similar manner from the following one.

In this group there is still implied a smaller division; for 9 seems always to be in Scripture a  $3 \times 3$ , 3 multiplied by itself, and thus intensified. Our group is thus a *third* group, and a triple group of threes, and every name will have attached to it its appropriate number.

I need not say much now about the numbers. It is clear that we are only concerned with three of them, and it is enough for the present to remind ourselves that these have largely their significance from the Trinity, and 3 especially from the Spirit and His work.

The tribe of Judah represents the people of God as a worshiping people; “Judah” means “praise;” “now will I praise the Lord,” said Leah, when she had borne him. But the form of this praise is confession literally, “the fruit of the lips confessing His name.” To confess what He has done, what He is, is His sufficient praise; and what the cities of the South speak of is the power of God in behalf of His people. The first group thus of electing love and care; the second, of salvation; the third, with which we have now to do, with the work of the Spirit.

We have three stages, then, of this, and three names in each stage. The first, we would naturally say, must be new birth, for there is no work of the Spirit in us before new birth; and so it is: the *third* name of the first three is Moladah, “birth.” Third, being both the operation of the Spirit and a resurrection, or at least, a quickening out of death.

Can we know more precisely that such a birth is what is meant? The Old Testament has not the phrase at all:

can we be sure that we have here the thought? Yes, if we will look back at the word immediately preceding. It is the *second* name, and two is the number of sufficient testimony: "the testimony of two men is true," the Lord says, referring to Deuteronomy. The second word is *Shema*, "a report:" "faith cometh by hearing," says the apostle; rather, "a report," "and the report by the word of God." But faith comes in only in new birth: where faith is, life is. Of those who receive Christ it is written, "To them gave He authority to become the children of God"—this is the full sense of the Greek,—“who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

*Shema*, *Moladah*, give us, then, birth by the Spirit of God and divine testimony, the "report" of the gospel. Yet, strictly, to know that it is *new* birth we must go back to the first word of the three, which as yet we have omitted: it is *Amam*, "mother," or perhaps, "their mother." If we are to hear of new birth, we must first realize the old one, and its nature. For this purpose, "father" would be equivocal: God is our Father in new birth, and even by creation (the fall not being considered) we are "off-spring of God." But our *mother*, poor Eve, through her sin came into the world, and "how can he be clean," asks Job, "that is born of woman?" Save by the special power of God, is the inevitable answer, none; not one.

Thus all is clear: not one of these names is redundant,—not one could be spared; each adds a needed thought to the rest; each in its order, each fulfilling its numerical significance; the whole giving completely what is needed for the truth to be conveyed, and beyond that nothing. The first stage ends with the first spiritual work accomplished—new birth.

A momentous beginning; and which makes sure the

end. Eternal life has begun in the soul: we have become partakers of the divine nature; God is our Father: in all this there can be no change. Yet is there still within us that which is not of God, nay, which is in opposition to Him. "If Christ be in you," says the apostle, "the body is dead because of sin." Of him in whom the Spirit of God is, it is said, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit;" and new birth, instead of being the end of conflict, is more truly the beginning of it. The seventh of Romans is the history of a soul born again, with the new desires and affections of a child of God, and yet having to cry, "the good that I would I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do:" a "body of death" lying upon the now living man which he cannot deal with nor throw off. It is to this which the second series introduces us; this struggle and the deliverance which it recounts. The first word here is characteristic: it is—

"Hazar-gaddah," a compound word, meaning "an inclosure of conflict." Why an *inclosure*? Manifestly, an inclosure of conflict would be something shutting one up to this, like the amphitheatre of old for the gladiator slave: and this is a bondage, a slavery: what is it that pens us up to this unutterable misery, and permits no escape? What is it that gives power to the evil, not to the soul that seeks deliverance from it? The answer is simple, if the soul is simple: "the strength of sin is the *law*;" "sin taking occasion by the *commandment*, deceived me, and by it slew me; and that which was ordained to life I found to be unto death." And so all *do* find who honestly put themselves under it; for man being always the same, and God's principles the same, the experiment works out infallibly to the conclusion, no experiment that science knows can possibly be surer.

Christians, then, ought to be all perfectly agreed about this; it would seem so; alas! the fact is not as it would

seem. Many, in terms, know nothing about this conflict, —deny it to be the experience of a converted man at all; many more contradict this with the assertion that it is the continual, proper experience of every Christian man. As to the law, the popular Christian conscience is shocked by the assertion that the “law is the strength of sin,” and the popular faith is that Moses is the best friend to holiness, and that the rule of law is the only guarantee for conduct.

After all, can we be so sure about the experiment? As sure as we can be about Scripture: for Scripture vouches for the result. And the different experiences can be explained only in this way, that the terms of the experiment have not been adhered to.

If we will keep to Scripture all is plain. The law is “holy, just, and good;” but it is not on that account the strength of holiness. There is no need to doubt the goodness of a plow, because no wheat will be produced by the plowing. The plow is most necessary in order to a harvest, but it is quite as necessary that the plow should depart when it has done its work. The reign of the plow, the constant use of it over the field, would be the surest way of destroying the harvest.

Nothing is plainer in Scripture than that the law and grace are entire opposites; that the law is not of faith; that sin shall not have dominion over us, because we are *not* under the law, but under grace. Nothing is clearer in the apostle’s experience than that “without the law, sin was dead;” that he “was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, *sin* revived, and he died;” that so in his experience, the law, which was ordained to life, he found to be unto death. Nothing is plainer than that he gives this experience as in no wise merely his own, but that on this very account we have become “dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we

should be married to Another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God."

Observe well : this is no question of peace with God, or of works for justification. That question is taken up, and fully, elaborately answered in the third and fourth chapters of the same epistle. The seventh of Romans gives us the question so much agitating men's minds now,—finding, I fear, so little right settlement, because the statements here are so little listened to,—the question of holiness. It is a question of how sin shall not have dominion, and how we shall bring forth fruit unto God.

The dominion of law and of grace cannot be together : they are mutually destructive; or, to use the apostle's other figure, as surely as a wife cannot have two husbands at the same time, so the soul cannot be united to the law and to Christ together. But the law came first, and law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth. How, then, can we be delivered? By death, and by death alone: "Ye are become dead to the law." Not, the law is dead, but ye are. How? "By the body of Christ;" Christ as our Substitute having died for us, and died under the law's curse, "made a curse for us," our connection with law as Christians is ended and over. We are free, and belong to Him who has delivered us: we are free to serve in newness of spirit,—to bring forth fruit to God.

The law, then, is for the Christian only *Hazar-gaddah*. It is an "inclosure of conflict,"—nothing could more truly define it. It is the amphitheatre of the slave, shut up to a most unequal struggle. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" is the cry of despair under it. But before we go on to deliverance, let us notice how the numbers confirm the interpretation here.

*Hazar-gaddah* is the first name in the second group : its numbers are therefore 2 and 1. But 2 is the number

of law as a covenant : it has two parties, and here is the misery of it. God and man have each to fulfill their part. No fear for God ; but for man,—ah, who that knows him can trust him ? who that knows himself can trust himself ? And the number 2 is significantly also the number which speaks of *difference*, of *division* (it is the first number that divides), and so of conflict. As the number of the group, it confirms the thought that it is the truth as to the Law which occupies us.

And 1 is the number of rule; as an ordinal, the *first* implies supremacy. The "rule of law" thus exactly suits the numbers, as it does the meaning of "Hazar-gaddah;" the rule of law means a shutting up to strife,—an "inclosure of conflict."

But how do we find deliverance practically ? This brings us to the second name ; and the number 2 has its good side as well as its bad. All the numbers have both. On the good side, it is the number of help. "Two are better than one," says the preacher, "for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow." (Eccle. iv. 9, 10.) Thus in our language also, to "second" is to help. It is the Second Person of the Trinity who is the Saviour of men. The second book of Moses is Exodus, the book of redemption; and so one might go on.

How, then, do we find deliverance ? *Not* by any victory we can attain in the conflict. *Not* by any infusion of strength, by which God helps us to help ourselves. This cannot change the rule under which we are: we cannot struggle out from under law into grace. "*Who shall deliver?*" Why, Christ: there is none other: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." What is the method of this deliverance ? It is—

"Heshmon," "quiet reckoning:" that is to say, "faith." Yes, deliverance from the power of sin is attained by faith ; holiness is realized by faith. So much is sure.

But faith must have God's word to justify it, or it is not faith. What does this faith lay hold of, and find strength in? for it finds none in itself, or it would not be faith. It is in Christ, and in His death as delivering me from law, in His life as my Representative before God, so that I am in Him, "accepted in the Beloved," not only my sins put away, but my *self* put away from before God, with all that upon which my eyes were just now fixed: "knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed,"—really, "annulled," brought practically to nothing—"that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Rom. vi. 6.)

This is God's method: "Heshmon," "quiet reckoning." "*Reckon* yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (v. 11, R. V.) "Reckon yourselves to be dead:" *reckon*, not feel, or find; "reckon that your old man is dead," not because no evil stirs in you, but because Christ has died, and you have died with Him. *Reckon* in the work of the cross: you cannot *feel* the cross; take God's account of what it has done for you, and that you are "*in* Christ," a "man in Christ," identified with Christ where He is. Only faith can realize *that!*

Thus you will have, what comes next here, in the third place, under the resurrection number,—

"Beth-pelet," "the house of escape."

Yes, if you will take God's estimate of what you are, if you will accept Christ for *all* He is to you, then you will have the most blessed "escape" possible—an escape from yourself, an escape from self-occupation, from self-confidence and unprofitable lament over yourself, alike; an escape into the liberty of occupation with Christ, of joy in Him, and power for holiness: for in occupation with Him, and in identifying yourself in faith with Him with whom God has identified you, you will find (if this be

real) how the old things that held you lose their power, how the self-interest becomes *His* interests, how even the thought of *your own* holiness will have dropped, whether as a disturbing or a complacent thought. Christ Himself will be the Sun of glory, and what glory may get upon your face it will be but the glow of His brightness. "For we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

This is *Beth-pelet*, the "*house of escape.*" It is home for the heart, an object for the affections, a place of rest and happiness, "quiet from the fear of evil." In His house *He* rules, and rules out disturbance. Winds and waves obeyed Him of old in the open boat in Galilee; and the "house of escape" knows no tempest, no disturbance. Christ is Master: grace is the rule; love the sweet compelling power. *To maintain this place*, here there may be conflict; here the world will bring its attractions to draw you off; but run to your hiding-place—to this place whose door is ever open, where unchanging love has perpetual title to display itself to you: here is your refuge—refuge from *yourself* first of all—refuge from every wind that blows. Christ is Master, and with a sweet imperative infinitely beyond that of Moses,—"*Master and Lord*" of all.

Thus the second series ends; and again there is nothing in excess, nothing in defect. In this second series, note also that Christ is really as much in relation to it as in the first series it is the Father: children of the Father, in Christ before God, these have been the underlying truths respectively; though it is the Spirit's work which we are really following all through. Now in the third series to follow, it ought to be peculiarly the Spirit Himself that is before us, although as seen in His work, of course. And here, if the first name of the second series

speaks of the rule of law, the first of the third may well illustrate the "dominion of the Spirit." Strange and startling will the name be, then, that we find here! it is another "Hazar," "inclosure;" but no more the "conflict;" it is—

"Hazar-shual," the "inclosure of the jackal," the *jackal-pen!*

"Shual" is in our version always taken as the "fox," and this, it is believed, is sometimes the true meaning; but if so, it must at least have a wider significance. Samson's "foxes," of which they collected three hundred, were more likely jackals, which are gregarious, as the fox is not, and could more easily have been found in number. But there is another passage more decisive, where, speaking of his enemies, the Psalmist says (Ps. lxxiii. 10), "They shall fall by the sword, they shall become a portion for foxes;" for the jackal is a well-known carrion-feeder, as the fox again is not. The name "shual," which means "burrower," might apply to either.

But what are we to make of this word, then, with its sinister meaning, coming just where we might expect to find the dominion of the Spirit indicated? is there indeed any kinship between such thoughts? I believe so, assuredly; "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh:" what is that but saying, "Walk in the Spirit, and the jackal-nature is penned?" This unclean creature, with its earth-burrowing, carrion-feeding propensities, is it not an apt figure of what the flesh is whenever it has leave to show itself? And under the rule of the Spirit, might we not expect that the first thing we should be taught would be the effect upon the evil in us, if it will be allowed that any evil is indeed left?

I know that there are many Christians to-day who deny that in the "perfect man"—the saint in his matured and proper condition—the flesh still exists. Those Galatians,

they tell us, of whom it is said, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit," were no good examples of a Christian state. *They* may have had a jackal in a cage, perhaps scarcely so much as that. Had they kept him in, would he not have starved and died there? and why should the noisome beast be kept alive? It may be possible even to answer this. Even if it were not, the prior question to be settled is as to the fact.

Paul the apostle was certainly not himself a "foolish Galatian;" and if any mere man could be proposed for an example to others, he would be the man. Nay, he can even propose himself: three times over he says, "Be followers of me" (1 Cor. iv. 16; xi. 1; Phil. iii. 17); and in the last case adds, "And mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." Who, indeed, of all the apostles labored so much as he? or who could give such a record of what he had endured in service? "This one thing I do," speaks of the ardor of his concentration; and his "earnest expectation" and his hope is, in his own language, this: "that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, *as always*, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death." (Phil. i. 20.)

This being the man he was, what has he to say for himself of that absence of sin from his life of which many of its advocates can speak quite freely? Of his faithfulness as a minister of Christ, in the very chapter in which he bids us be followers of him, and while his testimony shows abundantly his spiritual stature, he says, "*For I know nothing against myself*; yet am I not hereby justified, but He that judgeth me is the Lord." (1 Cor. iv. 4.) That is, where his conduct might seem to himself to be most blameless, he dare not assert it: only the Lord fully knew, and in that sense he protests, "Yea, I judge not mine own self."

When he had been caught up into the third heaven, and heard there unspeakable things, yet because there was still in him a capacity for self-exaltation, "There was given to me," he declares, "a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." (2 Cor. xii. 7.) How plain, then, that there may be in us tendencies which do not even come out, and for which God's dealings with us may be needed lest they should come out,—tendencies which may be hidden too from ourselves! If such remained in this ardent apostle, spite of an activity, a zeal, a love, which had no equal, who shall dare to say that they are not in *him*? But these tendencies are the manifestations of a fallen nature,—of a heritage from her who fell by aspiring to be what she was not, and which were the successful work of him who himself fell by pride—"the condemnation of the devil."

Our rule is, to "walk as Christ walked:" how much here is it safe to claim? How much of any claim may be due to self-ignorance, and little standing in the light of God!

Scripture is clear enough as to the fact: but why the fact?—why merely pen the jackal? Such an inquiry may be reverently as well as irreverently made. It can, I believe, be measurably answered. The living man bound to the carcass would learn at least a horror of corruption. An apprehension of sin in this way, in the very light of God's grace, may be a lesson profitable to all eternity. And it is surely a triumph over evil to make it thus subservient to holiness. A training in humility, in watchfulness, in the ways of a holy government to which we are ever subject, may be of infinite value in the eternity to come.

Only let us remember! if we have the jackal, our responsibility is, to *have the jackal penned*. "Walk in the

Spirit, and ye shall *not* fulfill the lusts of the flesh." To walk in the Spirit is not to live a mere blameless life : it would be mere meaningless tautology to say, Walk blamelessly, and you will not do evil. To walk in the Spirit is to walk in occupation with Christ,—to "walk *in* Christ,"—to live as identified by grace with Him who is our Representative in the presence of God. It is to walk as separate from the world, because belonging to heaven,—strangers and pilgrims, our hearts where our treasure is, to set our mind on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. With our hearts *there*, our eyes *there*, the world will not attract us, the lusts of the flesh will find no object, the jackal will be penned ! And for this we *are* responsible, and for this we have the power. The Spirit of God is surely abundant power, and it is practical infidelity to doubt it.

How much more would one desire to say, but we must go on to the second word in this series—a beautiful and a simple one : it is—

"Beersheba," "the well of seven," or "the well of the oath." It is both, really. The word "to swear" is in Hebrew the word "to *seven*"—to give complete assurance: "an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife." (Heb. vi. 16.) At Beersheba also seven lambs were witness for Abraham that the well was his. For us, a perfect Christ before God has secured to us the well of water,—here, without any doubt, the type of the Spirit of God, the "living water." The numerical place is that of witness, as we know, and the Spirit of God as come into the world is indeed the Witness for Him who is gone out of it,—the joy and refreshment and power of the new life in the soul. Here we have, therefore, the positive side of that of which Hazar-shual gave us the negative side.

Blessed be God that we have the well of water ! Notice how accurate and beautiful is the figure here. Without

water, the tree would die in the midst of abundant food. Water is needed both to prepare the nourishment for the root, and to enable the root to take in the nourishment. And in the human body, no less than in the vegetable, the necessity is similar. Men have, without a miracle, passed through forty days without food, but how long would any one succeed in living without water? Oh that we knew better the infinite need that we have of the Spirit of God!

But notice, again, how man's responsibility is insisted on in the matter. The earth's unseen channels may be flooded with what he needs, but the well speaks of energy in getting at it, and of care needed even after access has been got. Desert sands, no less than the hands of Philistines, may choke the well. Men have proved widely how in both these ways the treasures of the Spirit may be sealed up from them again after they have been fully in faith's possession. But after all, the thing most to be dreaded is our own neglect. Let us remember that we may and do limit blessings which on God's part He has not limited for us. With all the Scripture-research to-day (thank God for it!), yet, alas! how few of us even think of the abundance which God has made our own! how few claim and realize the possession of the well!

"Water" stands, in Scripture, both for the Spirit and the Word. "Living water" is the Spirit of God acting in and vivifying the Word of God. The Word of God is the only test of what is of the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God cannot set aside or ignore what He has Himself indited for us. Just as the Word without the Spirit leads to rationalism and the dishonor of the Word, so the claim of the Spirit where the Word is slighted leads to enthusiasm and fanaticism and the dishonor of the Spirit. How many are governed by their emotions, or their sense of the fitness of things! How few of God's people are there

that have not some reserve-ground, where tradition, reasoning, and other things are permitted to assume control, and God's voice is hushed before these! Are *we* really "men of one book," proving how thoroughly Scripture can furnish to every good work? Ah, beloved, need we have to study and remember the lesson of Beersheba.

One word more, and we have done. It is in the same line with the rest of this series, of course. It speaks of the Spirit; but not to repeat what we have already had. As the third name of the third series, it ought in fact to give us the fullest and highest thought of all in this direction: so we shall find it does; the name is—

"Biziothiah," and Dr. Young, in his concordance, renders it, "the house of Jah's olives." I think it is more literal, and gives a better meaning, if we render it simply "*among* Jah's olives."

And this ought not to be difficult to interpret either. The olive, in Israel, was that out of which the oil so constantly used and spoken of was obtained; and we have one solemn, blessed word which can never permit us to forget the method of its extraction: that word is, "Gethsemane," "the oil-press." It was the pressure of the cross, now just before the Lord, which wrung out of Him what shows at once the depths to which He was descending, and the absolute submission, even there, of One who had come into the world only to do the Father's will in it. It was under this infinite pressure that His unique glory was exhibited upon whom the Spirit of God had come "as a dove," the bird of love and sorrow,—of sorrow which was that of love itself, and into which love brought Him. All was according to the Spirit throughout: the sorest pressure only brought forth the oil. It is the invariable type of the Spirit in His work, and that with which the prophet, priest, and king were anointed. But the olive was the home of the oil, so to speak: there was its abid-

ing-place; and if we are "among Jah's olives," then we are those not only ministered to, refreshed and sustained by the Spirit, but in whom the Spirit of God *dwells*: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, and ye are not your own?" "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'" (1 Cor. vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16.)

Here, then, is the supremest point reached in this series, for it is the seal and crown of all the rest. It was Christ's own peculiar excellency, that, as with the high-priest of old, who was but His type, He could be anointed without blood. For us, as we see in the priests afterward, the oil must be upon the blood. It is the completeness of Christ's work for us, the power of His blood to cleanse us from all sin, the absolute perfection which we have in Him, which enables God to put upon us thus the seal of His Spirit. "Behold, thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." The value of that changeless, perfect work is proclaimed in the power and joy of this abiding Presence. We are not our own: we are bought with a price: and because His who has redeemed us, the Spirit of God has come to take possession of us, to fill us with the brightness of His glory, to be in us the earnest of the inheritance, to display in us the power of the risen Lord our Saviour.

Only, in the mystery which reveals to us at once our height in creation, and at the same time the peril to which this necessarily links itself, it is for *us* still to say how far this blessedness shall be known by us,—*how far* we will yield ourselves to this sweet and marvelous control. Beloved, what do our hearts say to this magnificent grace of God? Shall we yield freely to the compulsion of a love which is satisfied with nothing else than our free

yielding? or shall we, by careless indifference and unbelief, do our best to limit the power of Omnipotence, and grieve the Holy Spirit of God by which we are sealed unto the day of redemption? That is the momentous question, which no one of us can settle for another, which we must, each one for himself, decide.



