

THE GENTILE POWERS.

CONSISTING MAINLY OF

*NOTES OF LECTURES GIVEN AT WOOLWICH,
BRADFORD, LEWISHAM, ETC.*

ON

DANIEL AND REVELATION.

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DANIEL. II.



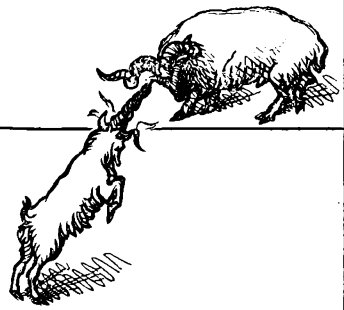
Stone cut out without hands.

DANIEL. VII.



Everlasting Dominion of the Son of Man.

DANIEL. VIII.



a King of Fierce countenance.

Broken without hand.

REV. XVII. XVIII. AND XIII.



Babylon is fallen is fallen.

NOTE.

THE Author has employed the first person, and the natural language of a lecture, as "I think," "I believe," as the simplest way of expressing what must be his opinions, even if hidden under such terms as "It is suggested," "May it not be," and the like. He does not attempt to speak on the more difficult prophetic questions; indeed he has chiefly confined himself to the plainer features of fulfilled prophecy, with a few words on what is yet to come, which he hopes, with the Lord's blessing, may be helpful to some readers.

THE GENTILE POWERS.



THE diagram before you is very simple. It may hardly seem worth while to employ it; for you are probably familiar with all the figures in it. I believe, however, that the arrangement, as far as it is that given in the word of God, is very important, and that it is well to keep it clearly before us. I believe that the whole history of the Gentile powers up to the time when they give place to Christ's kingdom, is briefly shown forth in these figures. Even as a mere key to past secular history I think it might be worth while to study this diagram. How much more valuable must it be to a Christian who knows that the things to come are as truly depicted in it as those that are past! Those who have considered this question, even a little, know that I am not overstating the case.

I do not attempt in this diagram, of course, to give a likeness of the actual figures seen in the different visions, but only a simple sketch of the forms specified, with such features as seem naturally to belong to them. None can say what the image of Nebuchadnezzar's vision was like, beyond the fact that it was a human form with certain characteristics. My object is to draw these in a simple way, so as to keep them before us;

and the same idea is attempted to be carried out with the various beasts.

The arrangement of the diagram is as follows: Each column deals with one vision or set of figures, the numbers of the chapters relating to them being written at the top. The columns are placed next to each other, so that the figures or words which refer to the same thing are brought side by side. Thus the head of gold of the image and the lion refer to Babylonia or Assyria; the arms, the bear, and the ram refer to Persia; the tunic and thighs of the image, the four-headed winged leopard and the goat refer to Greece; the iron and clay legs and feet, the ten-horned beast, the king of fierce countenance, and the seven-headed ten-horned beast on which the woman sits refer to Rome; the stone cut out without hands, the everlasting dominion of the Son of man, the words "broken without hand," and "Babylon is fallen," refer to the destruction of the Gentile powers and the establishment of Christ's kingdom on the earth. Run your finger down any column, then, and you follow one vision through from beginning to end. Run your finger horizontally across the diagram, and you have the same kingdom shown in the different visions. It will be seen that the third and fourth columns are only partly filled up. I suppose this is because each vision was prophetic, not retrospective. When Daniel saw the vision of the ram and the goat the Babylonian empire was almost at an end, and was not made the subject of the vision, perhaps on this account. So when John saw the vision of the woman on the beast, the Babylonian, Persian, and Grecian empires

were over, and the vision took up the Roman empire in a certain aspect peculiar to itself. It may be observed, however, that each series is continued up to the same end, that is to the coming in of Christ's kingdom.

Before commencing at the first figure—the image—a word on the subject of kingdoms generally may be useful; and we may begin by asking what is a kingdom, and how came such a thing on the earth? The Chartist reminds us that in Adam's day there was none, and I believe that he speaks truly; for the very fact of kingdom rule depends on conditions that did not then exist. The authority and power of a kingdom are maintained by means that imply the putting down of resistance, and this found no place till sin came into the world; nay, more, there is no mention of anything beyond patriarchal or family rule until after the flood. This does not prove, however, that a kingdom itself is wrong; it rather proves that the state of things calling for a kingdom is wrong. In these days efforts are made to soften down or remove the sharp features of kingdom rule. Take, for example, capital punishment. Philanthropic people are shocked at the law putting a murderer to death in cold blood; and such people suggest other courses, both as more likely to lead to reformation and more like the love of God. Probably their feeling has in it much that is right, but I believe their efforts show a want of discernment of God's dealings with man. Who first thought of sparing the murderer? Why God Himself (Gen. iv. 15), who put a mark on Cain to save him from being killed. And what was the result? Why almost the next thing we read is

that his descendant Lamech has killed his man, and claims immunity on the precedent of Cain. (v. 24.) Then gradually the earth became "filled with violence." (Gen. vi. 11.) This the Lord gives as a reason for its destruction by the flood. (Gen. vi. 13.) "The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold I will destroy them with the earth." This gives special force to the commandment to Noah on coming out of the ark (Gen. ix. 5), "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man."

Then followed kingdoms, the very first one mentioned being the same one which was selected by God to be the first Gentile power of the series before us; for (Gen. x. 9, 10) of Nimrod we are told that "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel" (margin, Babylon). It appears, then, that God having proved man under patriarchal rule, brought in instead of it kingdom rule, so that we have from Christ the injunction to "render to Cæsar the things that *are Cæsar's*," (Mark xii. 17; Matt. xxii. 21, &c.), as well as the words in Romans xiii. This subject might be pursued further. I even think such an expression as, "The *kingdom* of God is within you"* (Luke xvii. 21),

* It ought, however, to be noticed that in the new translation there is a *marginal* reading, "in the midst of you," which if correct would quite alter the meaning.

may point to the fact that in us exist elements which have to be put down and dealt with by the rule of a kingdom, a nature which has to be crucified and brought under, not improved or adopted. A kingdom then exists in an imperfect state of things on the earth, and, as I have said, this does not always imply any evil in the rule, but in those ruled (1 Tim. i. 9); for it will be found in connexion with Christ's own reign on the earth, in those that He puts down and rules with a rod of iron. (Rev. xii. 5.)

THE IMAGE.

We will now take the image. (Read Daniel ii.) Perhaps one of the first things that strikes us is the prominent fact that Nebuchadnezzar forgot his dream. Can we see any meaning in this? Pharaoh and his officers, as well as Nebuchadnezzar at another time, remembered their dreams? Why was this one forgotten? We could not attempt to answer such a question were it not that a very plain reason seems to suggest itself. All the other dreams related to events which would take place shortly, and so establish the truth of the interpretation. This one dealt with things in the far future. The credit of the interpretation however was very simply and directly established by the power to remind the king of his own dream, and Nebuchadnezzar, and perhaps others, learned to bow to God's word, and to know the Lord eventually.

Before discussing the image particularly, observe what a suitable figure of human rule it is. God *creates a man*, and man *makes an image*. In God's work

every part, within or without, has its individual relation to the whole, and if severed from it still remains something belonging to the body, without which the body is imperfect. Within and without all is created with the same end in view ; every part ministers to the whole. Man's work is an imitation of God's. The idea is not his own, the materials are not his own ; the outside only is formed by him. Cut a piece out of the interior of an image, and it is a mere fragment of material ; any relation to an image has ceased. So it is with all God's work and man's. God creates anew, and writes His laws in the heart. Man's law controls the outside, and so holds his kingdom in place ; the materials are such as he can find already made, and his kingdom at length utterly comes to an end. This comparison is true of the figure and the reality, of the image and created man, and of man's kingdom and God's perfect man with Christ as the Head (Eph. iv. 15, 16), although the direct comparison here is made between an image and a stone cut out without hands, rather than a living man.

This image, I believe, deals with the general character of each empire, and its order of succession. These may be distinguished from the incidents given in the second column, or with the circumstances told of individual kings in the third. In two respects the image specially portrays the character of each empire ; namely, the *nature of its government* and its *intrinsic strength*. Each metal in succession is less and less pure—that is, more and more liable to corrode ; but, on the other hand, each is harder than its predecessor,

and capable of cutting through it. Thus each form of government in succession is seen to be a *less pure monarchy*, less absolute, while each empire becomes more *powerful*, and more able to carry all before it. Each being ordained of God, I believe a message from God to each one may be found to have been sent.

THE HEAD OF GOLD.*

The first kingdom in every sense was Babylon or Assyria. As before said, "the beginning of his (Nimrod's) kingdom was Babel" (margin, Babylon). "Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh." (Gen. x. 10, 11.) These two were the two great cities of the Babylonian or Assyrian empire. The building of the tower of Babel is a remarkable picture of the attempt to set up a human power. (Gen. xi. 4.) The people said, "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." The chapter begins by telling of the bond of union which God had given to men—one language and one speech. This was not enough for the men of Babylon, who wanted to establish a unity of their own—something that they could pride themselves on, perhaps. The Lord then took away His bond of union, and quickly theirs came to an end. Often and often this

* In the figure of the image the head, arms, tunic, and sandals have been taken respectively from Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman statues and bas reliefs in the British Museum, as far as possible.

story, in one shape or another, has been repeated since. Men have arisen to draw others to them, and in doing so, pleading a desire for unity, confusion and division only have followed. "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you. . . . I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas." (1 Cor. i. 10-12.)

Two or three points mentioned with regard to the tower of Babel may be noticed here.

"*They had brick for stone.*" A stone as found in nature is God's work. It is formed and solidified thus by Him. A brick is man's work, formed in any shape man moulds it, and baked by a fire kindled by man. Believers are repeatedly spoken of under the figure of stones built in God's temple, the Church (Eph. ii. 20-22; 1 Peter ii. 5; John i. 42), the Lord Jesus being the chief corner-stone. Again, a brick seems a fit emblem of a worldly man. Conveniently shaped, as required to fit in anywhere, man's copy of a stone indeed, one can hardly fail to be reminded of the word "brick" having been used as a slang expression for a "good fellow" in a worldly sense.

"*Slime had they for mortar.*" God's people are really joined together by love (Col. ii. 2)—"knit together in love" (Col. iii. 14), "the bond of perfectness," "the truth in love." (Eph. iv. 15.) Mortar may typify this, and slime the untempered mortar (Ezek. xiii. 8-10) of lies by which the Jewish wall was falsely built. Society is held together by slime. We are so used to it that we may employ it unconsciously

if we are not careful, and "not at home," "request the honour," "your humble servant," are mild forms of slime as often used. "Our most religious and gracious" king or queen, used indiscriminately of any monarch in speaking to God, is a worse form of it. "His holiness" is another. Very strong expressions are used in the East, especially in Chinese society; but I would mention one curious example told me of native elephant drivers in India. Sitting on the neck of an elephant, who is refusing to cross a "nullah" or obstacle in a jungle, the driver addresses the beast somewhat as follows: "Brother, go on." "Brother, don't disgrace us." "Lord and brother, we must go on." "You hear what the Sahib says," till at last he suddenly drives his pointed weapon into the head of his "lord and brother" to spur him on. If such language appears strange to us, may it warn us to use the word "brother" and the word "Lord" only when our heart says "brother" or "Lord."

To return to the head of gold. Gold is the king of metals, and Nebuchadnezzar was a "king of kings." (Dan. ii. 37.) His power was absolute, "Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive." (Dan. v. 19.) Compare this with Darius bound to what he had signed by "the law of the Medes and the Persians" (Dan. vi. 14); or compare Nebuchadnezzar's decree (Dan. iii. 29) with that of Darius (Dan. vi. 26), and you see the difference in the power of the kings in the gold and silver monarchies. We feel that absolute power in the hand of man is a terrible thing, because we know man is unfit for it. One day God will have

it shown forth in perfection on the earth, when the Lord Jesus reigns, but, as Nebuchadnezzar learned, hitherto the "basest of men" (Dan. iv. 17) have reigned on the earth. Happily even the golden head has but power limited by God. We speak of the power of life and death, but it is a wrong expression. The power of death the king indeed in a sense has; he may order an execution; but the power of *life* he no more has than any other man in his kingdom. He can do no more to give life than leave a man alone, or minister to his wants, just as any doctor or friend might do.

When the Czar of all the Russias turned round the other day and saw his guards struck down under the shell thrown by the assassin, he could order the latter off to death, but he could not order his poor soldiers to live; nay, while he yet stood there the message of death came to him himself, and in an instant he lay mortally wounded and partly stripped, on the bare earth to which he was so soon to return. God alone says, "I am He, and there is no god with me; I kill and I *make* alive: I wound and I *heal*." (Deut. xxxii. 39.) When the devil tempted Eve to take hold of the balances held by God, the balance of knowing good and evil, when he tempted her to aim to be like a god, she did indeed seize *one end*; but the other end remained to tantalize her sight, but far from her reach. Evil and death she touched, but the knowledge of good and life only Christ puts into man's hand. Gold is connected with worship and glory, and Nebuchadnezzar learned to worship and give glory to God. (Dan. iv. 34-37.)

The gold did not last for long ; Daniel himself saw it pass away, and give place to the

BREAST AND ARMS OF SILVER.

This has a double character. The two arms in this column, the two sides of the bear, one up and one down, and the two horns of the ram, one higher than the other, may each in their own place speak of the Persian and the Median kingdom. I have drawn one arm of the image raised more than the other. This may be fanciful, but they must be in some position, and in man generally the right arm is stronger than the left.

Just as the authority was given by God to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. ii. 37 ; Jer. xxvii. 6-8), so was the king of Persia or Media appointed by Him. (Dan. v. 28-31 ; Isaiah xlv. 28 ; xlv. 1.) The two last references remind us that by Persia the Jews were brought back out of captivity into their own land (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22 ; Ezra i. 2), and silver is the metal connected with redemption. It is harder and baser than gold. Just as the Persian empire overcame that of Babylonia or Assyria, while the kings were less absolute in their authority. We have quoted Daniel vi. already for this.

THE BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRASS.

I would point out that for thighs the margin reads sides. I question if there is a very marked duplicate character in this kingdom. Originally one, it divided into four, as we shall see hereafter in the visions of the

beasts. In a sense Alexander united two kingdoms—Greece and Persia—by conquest and marriage, but he extended his conquests far beyond the boundaries of Persia, and the main grouping seems to be first one and then four, which does not appear to be indicated in the image. There is, however, the figure of the harder and baser nature of the metal, whether it be true brass or copper. That this empire is the Grecian is clearly said by Daniel viii. 21 and x. 20, which show that Greece was to succeed Persia, as history tells us took place. Ever superior in fighting power, when the death struggle took place Greece, the brass, cut through and subdued the Persian silver kingdom easily, Greece proving the harder. Nevertheless we know from history that Alexander the Great never was able to assume the state and exact the homage or obedience from his Grecian subjects that the Persian kings had in their kingdom; and the stay of his victorious march by the mutiny and opposition of his troops may be instanced in support of the statement that the brass was a baser metal than the silver.

This, I think, is the meaning of the brass, although I know it has been taken in connexion with the brazen armour worn by the Greeks. History says that Alexander the Great had the chapters in Daniel shown him by the high priest when he entered Jerusalem, and that in recognition of a message of encouragement from God he treated the Jews kindly.*

* Josephus says that Alexander himself had a dream which influenced him.

THE LEGS OF IRON AND FEET PART OF IRON AND
PART OF CLAY.

This empire is spoken of at greater length, and is of more interest, as playing a much more prominent part in the world's history than any of the preceding ones. That it refers to Rome no unprejudiced man can I suppose doubt. The Bible speaks of Rome as ruling the world after the destruction of Greece (Luke ii. 1, &c.), as we know she did. The two legs may refer to the eastern and western empires into which Rome became divided, but the division on which emphasis is laid in the case of the image, the dreadful beast, and the beast under the woman, is the final division of ten, indicated by the ten toes, ten horns, and again ten horns. The metal iron, it may be seen, is dwelt on; it appears in the teeth of the beast as well as in the image. It is curious that the crown of Italy is the "iron crown,"* having an actual ring of iron in it. Iron is easily corroded, but in the form of steel it cuts through every other metal, as noticed in Dan. ii. 40. The baseness, I suppose, is abundantly shown in the fact that emperors were elected by the people, and often indeed killed by them. As to authority from God, Christ speaks of this (Matt. xxii. 21), and speaks of it to Pilate. (John xix. 11.)

The hard character of the iron, even in its divided

* Tradition said the iron ring was forged from a nail of Christ's cross, made by order of Theudelinde for her husband, Agilulf, king of the Longobards, A.D. 591. It was placed on the heads of Charlemagne and Napoleon I., among others. — HAYDN'S *Dic. of Dates*.

condition (*v.* 41), seems abundantly borne out by the matter-of-course way in which English or other European troops are expected to defeat natives of Asia or Africa; and it may be observed that, although Russia is now pushing her way in fulfilment of her own destiny, still more of this cutting has been formerly done by the nations forming part of the old Roman empire, nor is there anything in the statement of these powers having so acted inconsistent with Russia doing the same in her time and place. Spain, Portugal, and England have conquered in America, suggesting the same action, though not applied to the earlier kingdoms of the image. France and England have conquered in Africa, and England in Asia. What is the clay? This, I think, is less easily answered than the iron. The clay certainly constituted the weakness, and caused the state of division eventually found in the feet of the image. Many think that the iron and clay are the opposing elements now represented by law and communism. There is something to be said for this view. While Rome rose to greatness as a republic, she had her laws enforced with iron rigidity at all times; and in war, at moments of special difficulty and danger, she placed herself under the powerful prompt rule of a dictator, as if the iron was thrust to the front when cutting work was required. These two elements then would remain unmixed to the end. If this is correct, it would imply that individual independence is wholly unsuited for strength against foreign enemies. It would also suggest that it had a principal part in breaking up the Roman empire. The spectacle

of party struggles paralyzing a city when the common enemy is at the gate is a familiar one. Individual grains of earth are harder than metal; indeed, they will scratch it, or destroy its edge; but earth has little cohesion. So the individuals in a state of lawless independence may be much more vigorous than those under an absolute rigid code of laws; but the latter have been forged and united into a mass,—but of this more when we come to the stone. The ten kingdoms might be enumerated in different ways, but I question if they need be very clearly manifested until the last days. It is difficult to fix the exact boundaries of the Roman empire, which changed from time to time. England, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Austria, and Turkey, in some shape, must come in I suppose. What part is played by the smaller countries, and those in Africa and Asia, it is difficult to say. The Latin tongue and Roman Catholic religion have covered a good deal of this same ground, though the Greek church and the Mahommedan creeds furnish exceptions, and England certainly has much in part with the northern countries of Europe. Ireland again stands in a peculiar position. She did not belong to Rome while the latter was entire, though she has received through England the Roman Catholic creed, and held it as if it were something national. It has often been urged that Ireland must separate from England, by those who expect to see the Roman empire distinctly revived under the antichrist. I believe that Mr. Dobbs, M.P. of the Irish House of Commons, spoke at length to this effect at the bar of the English House after the

union. The crushing of the Jews by this iron power I hope to notice in connection with another vision.

Eventually in the days of the ten toes, comes the destruction. These toes are doubtless the ten kings or kingdoms who are under the antichrist. Suddenly destruction falls on the whole. The stone cut out without hands, speaking of God's direct action, falls and crushes all other powers, becomes a mountain, and fills the whole earth. The stone we are told (*v.* 45) was itself cut out of a mountain.

I believe the mountain pictures God's kingdom in its nature. A nation under a rigid code of human laws has cohesion, but not individual hearty zeal.* Such is metal. Individual liberty may encourage individual zeal, but not cohesion. This is seen in the hard, gritty particles which make up even clay. God's kingdom alone has both. God alone has servants whose whole hearts' desire is enlisted in His service, and who work in perfect unity. Such service none of us have seen, unless in very happy instances where grace has produced a faint approach to it in the Church of God. Such is God's kingdom in heaven. This is, I believe,

* A Russian officer on a visit to our camp in the Crimea after peace was made, remarked on our men singing and playing games, adding, "If we tell them to sing, our men will sing, and if we tell them to play games, they will play games; but they do not do so of their own accord." Such an observation testifies strongly to the greater individuality of the English soldier; nevertheless, the Russian of that day may have been a better machine for creeping steadily across Asia. The less his individuality the better the unity, and the more perfect the obedience. This is metal in contrast with the clay.

the mountain from which the stone comes. Then this stone itself grows into a mountain. It transforms the earth into the likeness of the mountain from whence it came; that is, heaven; and so we have the fulfilment of the Lord's prayer. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." God's will is done now, for the Lord reigns, be the world never so unquiet; but it is done by enemies contrary to their own intention. The king of Assyria is an instance. (Isa. xxxvii. 26; x. 7.) This is not after the manner of the kingdom of heaven. That kingdom is ushered in with might to put down all authority (Rev. xix. 11), when the Lord Jesus comes, not on the ass, but on the horse, and takes His great power, and reigns. The rock with its cohesion and hardness is found in the armies on the white horses, yet the victory is wholly the Lord's (Rev. xix. 21; 2 Thess. ii. 8), and the salvation of His people is His work. It is because his vesture is dipped in blood that theirs are white. Christ's people are made like Him, and appear with Him; but in one thing, the work of their salvation, He stands alone.

Can you thank God for having taught you this? The work in us is done but imperfectly here, perfectly by-and-by; but the work of atonement for us was finished in the day that He sat down at the right hand of His Father. To have God's peace you must understand that He is our peace (Eph. ii. 14), and our redemption is His work alone. (Ps. xlix. 7, 8.) It is a happy thing to work for the Lord, and to know that our labour is not in vain for Him (1 Cor. xv. 58); but

we must not confuse this in any way with the question of the salvation of the soul. Christ's work is perfect. The moment a sinner turns to Him he is saved. If I am *sure* that I am a sinner, sure that Jesus died to save sinners, and *sure* that I am willing to be saved from all sin, then I may be *sure* that the Lord has saved me, if I trust Him and His work. Indeed, I ought to be afraid to doubt Him. (1 John v. 13, 18-20.) Yet I know as a fact that I long did so. If God makes our sins a real thing, no doubt we need something very real to assure us that they are gone; but it was for this that the Lord died, and the gospel came to us. A burdened debtor who is shown a genuine receipt for his bills would know that they were paid. It would not occur to him that the fact needed proof by the state of his feelings. Do not let us take the Lord's work for less than the payment of a debt, or His word as less certain than a receipt. It is happy to have happy feelings. We shall all have them in glory, far beyond the slight foretaste of them here. But whatever are our feelings He abideth faithful. "He cannot deny Himself;" "He cannot lie." What a wonderful salvation! One atom more power to realize the things that are freely given to us of God, to lift our heads above the waves and see the glory and rest above is worth more than all head knowledge. May the Lord give us to have Him in our hearts in our study of His word.

DANIEL VII. THE FOUR BEASTS.

"The four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four beasts came up." (Dan. vii. 2.) The sea

is probably the unstable, restless world of peoples and nations struggling, as in Rev. xvii. 15. Out of this, four powers or causes bring up the four beasts, which are the four great Gentile empires ruling in succession on the earth. A beast is generally a type of a nation or power. The fitness of the figure is apparent. A beast's obvious sphere of action and power is the earth, so is that of an earthly kingdom. Even if all the subjects of any kingdom were to be saved, and to enter glory, their nationality would cease, and that earthly kingdom would have come to an end. The characteristics of an earthly nation may be well illustrated by those of a beast, bird, or other animal; hence, perhaps, it follows that such figures are generally used for nations. Our Lord's parables concerning the kingdom of God contain other figures, such as a tree, seed, meal and leaven, or a pearl; although for individuals sheep and goats are occasionally used. When human kingdoms are dealt with, in their connection with the earth, we have animals in various parts of the Bible. Jacob, in Gen. xlix., speaks of a lion's whelp, a strong ass, a serpent, a hind, and a wolf; and Moses, in Deut. xxxiii., uses a bullock and a lion's whelp as figures of tribes; and Ezekiel uses a lioness (Ezek. xix.) or eagles (Ezek. xvii.) for kingdoms.

The Jewish people certainly, *in its relation to God* rather than the world, when it may be called a church rather than a kingdom, is often spoken of under the figure of a woman, as in Ezek. xvi., xxiii.; Isa. liv. 5, 6; Jer. iii. 20; Joel i. 8. It appears natural that a body of human beings, who alone have the power of

apprehending God in any measure, should thus be represented, and the relationship of either the Jewish assembly or the church itself to the Lord seems beautifully figured by that of a woman and her husband. Thus I think human features typify relation to God, those of beasts relation to the earth. But we shall presently have this to deal with more fully. In the meantime there are points in detail to notice about beasts. A head I believe is a form of government, a horn is an individual king. Although a head may be called a king, it is in the sense of a government; but the horn is distinctly an individual man, such as Alexander the Great, the goat's horn, for example. I am anxious to point out any general principles of this kind, because we can have more confidence in interpreting features on one uniform plan than if we adopt a different one from time to time, which might be the result of fancy. The fitness of the figures of heads and horns for governments and kings will surely be apparent. An animal may shed its horns without changing its character, just as one king may succeed another. The loss of the head is a much more serious matter, and would kill an animal in something the same way as the destruction of a form of government may in a sense terminate the existence of a kingdom.

In speaking of general lines of interpretation, I may make a few remarks on numbers, although the subject is too large to deal with here. Numbers are indicated frequently in these figures. For example, in the case of Persia we have two arms in the image, two horns in the ram, and in the bear one side is mentioned as raised

up, suggesting a second side not so raised, just as one horn is higher than the other. In the leopard we have Greece with four kingdoms, and in the goat with four horns. In the case of Rome we have the ten toes of the image, ten horns in the fourth beast, and ten horns in that under the woman. It may be observed that in each case the number is only seen in the image from the known structure of the human frame, while in the case of the beasts the numbers are frequently *distinctly specified*. To come then to numbers generally.

One, I believe, speaks of *power*, and is a number applying more to the things of God than of man. God is One (Deut. vi. 4; Zech. xiv. 9; 1 Cor. viii. 4, &c.), and when He acts or speaks once it is not to be added to. Thus Christ "*once* suffered," "the righteous for the unrighteous." (1 Peter iii. 18.) "*Once* in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Christ was "*once* offered to bear the sins of many." (Heb. ix. 26-28.) "The offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once* for all." (Heb. x. 10.) "And every priest indeed standeth day by day ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, the which can never take away sins: but He, when He had offered *one* sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." (Heb. x. 11, 12.) "For by *one* offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 14.) We might quote many passages. Take Eph. iv. 3, &c.: "Giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is *one* body, and *one* Spirit, even as also ye were called in *one* hope of your calling; *one* Lord, *one* faith,

one baptism, *one* God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." May I here press on you the fact, that if a thing is perfectly done, once is sufficient, and to add to it is to imply the reverse. Is there any here who desires to be saved, but has never fully rested on the perfect work of Christ, one who fails to see that his salvation is complete? See how the word of God insists that a thing once perfectly done is done for ever. God tells you that the Lord died, and put away sin once for all. He died on purpose to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Him.* If you desire to be saved, do not dare to doubt that the Lord paid the whole debt for you for

* The following was related to me by a converted Roman Catholic priest of a young friend of his own: A young man had entered a very strict order as a novice. He was sent out on some occasion when he had to walk along a road. As he walked a leaf of a book lay on the path in front of him, and the wind blew it along before him. Now it lay as if to invite him to pick it up. Now it moved on again. His vow forbade his reading anything belonging to the outer world, and he turned away. Still the leaf was moving in front of him. Then came a turn in the road which he took. To his surprise the leaf took the same turn, and there it was once more before him. This was too much, and he picked it up and read these words: "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. vii. 23-25.) Those words took that young man out of his position of human bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and he soon after died resting on the complete work of Christ.

ever. "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for it is He that shall save His people from their sins." (Matt. i. 21.) So His people have sins, but then He saves them from them. God knows how hard a task that is, and how hard it seems to you; so He says, "Christ is *able*" to do this.

Two is a witness number. It speaks of imperfection where two give greater security than one alone. It is suited to human weakness.

"One witness shall not rise up against a man . . . at the mouth of *two* witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established." (Deut. xix. 15.) So 1 Tim. v. 19, "*Two* or three witnesses." Moses and Elias appeared on the mount. The transfiguration was witnessed, we might say, "by the law and the prophets." (Rom. iii. 21.) Then we have the two witnesses (Rev. xi. 3); the *two* anointed ones (Zech. iv. 14). The disciples were sent *two* and *two*, and so on. Even in nature *two* appears to give the witness force to weak or imperfect things. We speak of the witness of our senses. I have two eyes. I could get on with one, but *two* is much better. Each eye takes a view from its own position. With near objects, we actually judge distances by an unconscious trigonometrical operation. Let anyone who doubts this try and snuff a candle or thread a needle with one eye shut, or attempt any similar task, and he will soon be convinced. I have two ears for the witness of hearing, and two nostrils to smell. On the other hand, each has but one tongue; and to bear witness to any other person two men are required.

Three is a perfect or divine number, though occasionally, as we have seen, a strong witness (1 John v. 8) —“the spirit, and the water, and the blood.”

The truth of God being three in one, has often been cavilled at, and really felt to be a difficulty by some; yet surely it is rather that the subject is too wonderful for us than contrary to our reason. Explanations we cannot find, but many illustrations of three in one in nature we have. I was first struck by this on being asked by a poor Christian woman to help her in the matter, when the illustration of water occurred to me. We meet it in three forms. As ice, it forms a solid mass; a palace has been built of ice. To wash us, it must become water. To act as a motive power, it must pass into steam. It is quite different in its action in these forms, yet we recognize it fully as one substance. May this not remind us that while God the Father is spoken of as the foundation and source of everything, we are washed when God comes to us as Christ like the water, and we are moved and have life by the Spirit even as the steam has moving power? Most metals probably have three forms—solid, liquid, and vaporous.* There are three dimensions in space—length, breadth, and height. There are three primary colours—blue, yellow, and red; and these three combine to form perfect white light; and I am told that there are three principal notes in music. So, again, a thing can stand truly on three legs, but not on four.

* If the existence of a fourth form of matter, or fourth dimension in space, can be proved, it hardly interferes with the illustration of three in one placed so obviously before us.

I remember the late Astronomer Royal at Greenwich objecting strongly to an instrument termed a collimeter being made with four legs. He said, "Nothing ever yet stood on four legs, nothing ever will stand on four legs." A three-legged thing, however, though imperfect, must bear on all its three legs. So we in our imperfection can rest on a threefold work. Three is also, of course, connected with resurrection (Matt. xii. 40; xxvii. 63, 64); and the number of times when three days and three times occur is too great to quote as references.

Four is perhaps generally the complete assembling of human things, a sort of double witness. Again, the four winds, or four quarters of the world; four living creatures (Rev. iv. 6, &c.); four gospels; the four winds of the heaven in this chapter (Dan. vii. 2; Ezek. xxxvii. 9; Matt. xxiv. 31); the city lieth four square (Rev. xxi. 16)—north, south, east, and west, and three gates in each; four horns to the altar; four sore judgments; and so on.

Five often occurs in the tabernacle. In other places it seems chiefly half of ten, like five wise and five foolish virgins. (Matt. xxv. 1, 2.)

Six is a number speaking of labour. Six days shalt thou work. (Ex. xx. 9.) Six years an Israelite might be sold to serve. Six often came in in the tabernacle, sometimes as half of twelve. Six hundred and sixty-six is the number of the beast—speaking of slavery, I should think.

Seven seems to be rest, or perfection on the earth—the sabbath. (Gen. ii. 2; Exod. xx. 10.) The references are far too many to give. In evil there are

seven nations cast out of Canaan (Deut. vii. 1); seven devils (Luke viii. 2); seven abominations (Prov. vi. 16; xxvi. 25); God's visitations, seven years of plenty and famine. (Gen. xli. 2.) Then there are sevens of clean beasts in the ark. (Gen. vii. 2.) Revelation is full of sevens—seven spirits of God, the seven horns, seven eyes of the lamb, seven stars, candlesticks, seals, trumpets, vials, thunders, the dragon's seven heads, and seven mountains, &c.

Eight speaks of a new beginning and of resurrection. "Sow again the eighth year" (Lev. xxv. 22); Noah, the eighth person, or "with seven others" (2 Peter ii. 5, N.V.); the beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth. (Rev. xvii. 11.) Then there is the Lord's-day following the seventh.

To end this I will only notice certain tens. *Ten* was in the tabernacle; but ten is often a human number, and then generally a bad one. Man has ten fingers and ten toes; hence he adds up in tens, and the decimal system has naturally grown up. God proves man with ten commandments (Exod. xxxiv. 28), Pharaoh with ten plagues. When ten spies gave a bad report, two gave a faithful witness. When Israel rebelled, ten tribes separated in self-will; *two* were left as a sort of witness. Two beasts before us have ten horns.

In history we have the case of the French revolution, when ungodly men put matters on what they judged to be a scientific basis; I believe that they replaced God's day of rest, one in seven, by man's, one in ten. Twelve does not here concern us.

Now to turn to the succession of the four beasts.

Just as Babylon among metals was gold the king of metals, so among beasts is the *lion* the king of beasts. The eagle's wings may speak of ambition. This beast, however, differs from the others in receiving a man's heart. Surely this, on the principle I have indicated, means the power to know God, and speaks of Nebuchadnezzar's being brought to know the Lord. This is one of the most striking instances of the grace of God. What we call the fourth chapter of Daniel does not consist of the words of Daniel; but from first to last the words are those of Nebuchadnezzar to us. He preaches "to all people, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth." As he is identified with his kingdom as a whole in the head of gold, so I believe he is with the lion, just as the last beast refers alike to individual king and nation. His wings are plucked off; but what a blessed exchange this is for the man's heart many since Nebuchadnezzar can testify.

The *bear* is simply, I suppose, an oppressive power, but inactive, the higher side corresponding to the higher horn of the ram which came up last. I suppose this refers to Cyrus the Persian overthrowing the Medo-Babylonian empire about 557 B.C. The three ribs in his mouth, corresponding to the three directions in which the ram pushes, have been supposed to be Lydia, Chaldea, and Egypt. Persia is specially spoken of as bringing back Israel (Isa. xlv. 28), as before noticed in connexion with silver and redemption.

The *leopard* with four heads seems to speak of Greece in its state of division into four kingdoms. The spots may refer to the variety of nations seen in

Alexander's army and court, and the wings to the ambition and rapidity of conquest of Alexander the Great.

The *fourth terrible beast*, Rome, is distinguished by its crushing down and breaking in pieces all the powers that oppose it. It has a different character from the previous kingdoms, of which more by-and-by. Among those who are oppressed under this kingdom are the Jews. By Jews I do not refer to Israel generally, but the two tribes who rejected and crucified the Lord. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the Jews were brought to the lowest condition. Israel specially had the privileges of the temple, the sacrifices, the priesthood, the land, and their king. At the present time they have no temple, no sacrifice, no priesthood, no land, and no king. Nevertheless the nation remains distinct, as a witness to the fulfilment of God's sentence on their sin. The description in Lev. xxvi. is a wonderful picture of their present condition. I can never forget the effect this chapter had on me after I had visited Jerusalem.*

* The sight of the poor trembling groups of Jews at the place of wailing seemed to suggest that they were humbling themselves in such a way as to meet the promise in Lev. xxvi. 40-42, till I learned the character of their prayers. They write petitions on paper, which they put into the crevices between the stones of a small portion of Herod's temple which is now above ground, probably formerly smothered in rubbish. The idea is that an angel reads these prayers, and after a time the papers may be removed by anyone. My wife had one given her, which we afterwards found was merely a prayer for the soul of some young man. I fear this represents the general character of the written petitions.

Israel has indeed suffered during the iron rule in all countries, both those belonging to the old Roman empire and Russia, which is, I suppose, her enemy "Gog." In England Jews have suffered comparatively little; yet their massacre on the day of Richard the First's coronation, with all the smaller incidents of persecution, tell of great severity. They have been banished from Spain, Portugal, and France; burnt in Spain, as religious offerings for sins, at *auto-da-fés*; compelled to act as executioners in North Africa; and ground down and oppressed in innumerable ways, till they might well despair. I have heard the Jews identified with the unjust steward of the parable (Luke xvi.), and I rather question whether the importunate widow, in a secondary sense, may not point to them. (Luke xviii.) A woman being a church or religious body, and the bride the natural figure of Christ's Church looking forward to the complete union with her Lord, the widow well figures the present position of Israel, who have had an earthly position of blessing completed, and then have lost it. The widow turns to the antichrist, the unjust judge, who proceeds to avenge her, but God contrasts this result with the prayer of the elect who cry to *Him*. Poor Zion at last says, "My Lord hath forgotten me" (Isa. xlix. 14), and then the Lord helps. The adversary, I think, may be Gog (Russia), but it would be foolish to do more than say what appearances seem to suggest.

The exact order of events in connection with Gog and Israel are difficult to trace, but the general position of the powers appears to be more plainly told.

Gog is a great northern power coveting the land of Israel. (Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix. ; Rev. xx. 8, 9.) Such a power does not appear to have existed when the book of Revelation was written ; but one exists now which has extended from the Baltic to Behring's Straits. Some think that Meshech and Tubal are Moscow and Tobolsk. However this may be, this great northern power finds an enemy, a power who is inclined to plead the cause of Israel verbally, at all events, if nothing more. Who is this enemy? England is naturally suggested by the political position of affairs in Europe and Asia. Some press upon us that England is some portion of the lost ten tribes; Ephraim seems the favourite. I have failed to see any proof of this in anything I have yet read or heard. I think England is, however, likely to be the power spoken of as Tarshish in prophecy. I am the more inclined to this view because I hear that it is the view held by Jewish rabbis.* I would recommend any reader to look out Tarshish in a concordance, and judge of this for himself from the words in which it is mentioned. There are passages it is true that would appear to indicate that a Tarshish was on the Red Sea, because ships to go to it were made at Ezion-gaber, on that sea. This I do not understand, unless there was a second Tarshish.

It seems as if the passages speaking of ships of Tarshish in connection with Tyre must refer to a Tarshish across the Mediterranean. Certainly Jonah must have

* Since this has been in type I have met with an article by J. Hytche, in *Israel's Watchman* for April, 1882, which speaks much as I have done about Tarshish.

sailed to this Tarshish (Jonah i. 3); for he sailed from Joppa (Jaffa). This is the Tarshish that it appears to me may represent England. It is often connected with isles. In Genesis x. 4, 5 we have Tarshish given as the name of one of the sons of Javan, the son of Japheth, by whom the *isles of the Gentiles* were divided. "Pass ye over to *Tarshish*; howl ye inhabitants of the *isle*." (Isa. xxiii. 6.) "Howl ye ships of *Tarshish*." (Isa. xxiii. 14.) This is in connection with Tyre. "The burden of *Tyre*, the *ships of Tarshish*." (Isa. xxiii. 1.) "*Tarshish* was thy [Tyre's] merchant." (Ezek. xxvii. 12.) "The ships of *Tarshish* did sing of thee." (Ezek. xxvii. 25.) It is connected with the Jews' return to the Holy Land. "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of *Tarshish* first, to bring thy sons from far." (Isa. lx. 9.) It appears from Tarshish came to Tyre silver, iron, tin, and lead. (Ezek. xxvii. 12.) Without forcing the word isle to mean literally an island, it seems that *Tarshish* was a detached distant place trading with Tyre by ships. The metals she supplies are those in which England traded in the earliest times. Some place Tarshish in Spain. My point, however, is not so much to insist on applying literally the word Tarshish to England, as to suggest that the part played by Tarshish in prophecy seems to fit to England, who, I think, may represent the power termed Tarshish in prophecy. Some have thought Tarshish was Cyprus. At present this would also suit England, as she owns Cyprus. When Gog threatens defenceless Israel (Ezek. xxxviii.), "Sheba, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the

young lions thereof," remonstrate with Gog (Ezek. xxxviii. 13), who does not appear to give much attention to the remonstrance. Who are Sheba and Dedan? and can we connect them with Tarshish?

Seeing that places are often identified with the names of their founders in the word of God, it is well to trace the founders Sheba and Dedan as we have done that of Tarshish. In Gen. x. 7. we read of Sheba and Dedan, the sons of Raamah, among the sons of Cush; or in Gen. xxv. 3 we read that Abraham's son Jokshan begat Sheba and Dedan, who apparently lived in the far east. (v. 6.) Dedan and certain isles apparently supplied Tyre with horns of ivory and ebony (Ezek. xxvii. 15); Sheba with spices, precious stones, and gold. (v. 22.) Each of the above suggests a locality in an eastern or south-eastern direction from Palestine, and probably reached by a journey chiefly or entirely over land. The queen of Sheba's train of camels bearing spices and gold (1 Kings x. 2) seems to indicate this.*

Man is continually humbled by the sad mistakes made in identifying political events with prophecy; there ought then to be the greatest diffidence in suggesting views of this kind, which may be shown by events to be entirely wrong, and which, if asserted positively, may cause young Christians to stumble. With much diffidence then I would suggest that the above seems to show that a power (Tarshish) with

* Wilberforce places Tarshish in Spain, and mentions two Dedans—one an island in the Persian Gulf, the other near India. (See *The Five Empires.*)

ships in the Mediterranean, coupled with others in the direction of Arabia and India (Sheba and Dedan), remonstrate with the great northern power (Gog), when the latter threatens Palestine, where the Jews are dwelling safely, having been brought back by ships (of Tarshish), and other means. This, of course, looks like Russia, opposed by England and her Indian and other colonies ("the young lions thereof"). I refrain from trying to fix the order of the events spoken of by Isaiah, and Ezekiel, and Zechariah, and the apostle John, which I feel would be difficult. There seems to be an invasion of Gog stopped by the Lord's power before the millennium, then a much more terrible attack by the power of the antichrist; and, lastly, after the millennium, a great gathering of Gog, Magog, and four quarters of the earth ending in final destruction. (Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix.; Zech. xiv.; Rev. xix. 19, xx. 7, 8.) Why the antichrist or beast is not prominently seen in the first invasion of Gog, and what relation he bears to Tarshish, whether perhaps he gains Tarshish after the latter has led the way in restoring the Jews to their land, may remain to be seen when the prophecies are fulfilled.

The fourth beast differs from its predecessors in more than the degree in which it subdues other nations. There is the development of a power that blasphemes and defies God, and brings upon itself swift destruction. The little horn had the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. (Dan. vii. 8, 20.) This is surely the same as in 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 8, &c., as well as in Dan. viii. 9. In the last-mentioned this power

appears to grow up out of Greece instead of Rome. I can only suppose that there will be some way in which the man of sin, while appearing in Rome, is to be traced back (perhaps individually) to Greece. I think a hint of connection with Greece is to be found in the Roman beast of Dan. vii., because while he has *iron* teeth he has *brazen* nails (Dan. vii. 19), which seems to connect him with the two last powers of the image, and so far to suggest the manner of agreement with Dan. viii. I believe the spiritual wickedness of this antichrist is shown in the fact of his human eyes and his speaking mouth, which last differs from that of a dumb animal. Again, taking human powers as connected with the apprehension of God, we see in awful contrast with the first power, who had the man's *heart* given to know the Lord, the *eyes* to see things of God, and *mouth* to speak of them. And these two with no heart for God, place the owner in a dreadful position, such as calls for the special judgment of God. This was not the character of Rome at first; it does not point to heathen Rome; it grew up afterwards. (Dan. vii. 8.) I believe the papacy is an antichrist, but not the last dreadful antichrist who is revealed out of the midst.

Without here going into the question as presented in Revelation, we commend to our readers the awful picture of judgment presented in Dan. vii. The simple reading of this should powerfully speak to the heart of any who is afraid of the day of Christ. When that day comes the only escape is to be found in Christ. Send, then, and desire conditions of peace with Him who cometh against thee. The matter, by God's grace,

can be settled in your own soul with the Lord. Tell Him you are a sinner, not in conventional language, however strong, but in such words of your own as bring those sins of yours out with feelings of *real shame and guilt*. As far as you know that you are a sinner, tell it all to God, and own how little you do remember your actual committed sins, and how little you know the repulsive, sinful heart you have. Pour out your heart to God, looking for complete deliverance to Christ, and thank God that your Saviour is able to do what He undertook. His work is to blot out all sin by the blood He shed. Yours is to own your utter helplessness to touch that question, to thank Him for having done all that work alone, and to look for grace to live for Him who "died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again." (2 Cor. v. 15.) "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom. viii. 31.)

THE RAM, GOAT, AND KING OF FIERCE COUNTENANCE.

In Dan. viii. a ram representing Persia (v. 20) is seen pushing westward and northward and southward, with two horns, one higher than the other. A he goat, Greece (v. 5, 21), comes from the west, not touching the earth, with a notable horn between his eyes (the first king is Alexander the Great, doubtless) who strikes and treads down the ram underfoot, as was fulfilled in Alexander's conquest of Persia. Four horns (I suppose Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus) spring

up to replace the first notable horn when it is broken ; and eventually comes the little horn which agrees closely with the little horn (Dan. vii. 8) seen in the Roman beast. The description dwells on the circumstances connected with the *horns* throughout. I think it therefore deals more with individual kings than the previous series.

We learn that the little horn's power is not his own, and that he takes away the daily sacrifice. (Dan. viii. 11.) This agrees with Dan. xii. 11, which also mentions that the abomination that maketh desolate is set up. (Dan. xi. 31 ; Matt. xxiv. 15 ; Mark xiii. 14.) This is not found in Luke xxi., which I believe specially refers to the destruction under Titus, when I do not believe that the abomination of desolation was set up. Rev. xiii. gives an awful account of the beast. I have already spoken of his relation both to Greece and Rome. In Rev. xiii. 2 he is connected with all the four beasts—the lion, bear, leopard, and dragon. “And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion : and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority.” To deal briefly now with this last dreadful power, he makes a covenant with the Jews, which he breaks in the midst of the week, and takes away the daily sacrifice (Dan. viii. 11, xi. 31, xii. 11, ix. 27) ; he does wonders (Dan. viii. 23, 24 ; 2 Thess. ii. 9 ; Rev. xiii. 2, 12–15) ; he speaks blasphemies (Dan. vii. 8, 11, 20, 25, viii. 11 ; 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4 ; Rev. xiii. 6) ; he persecutes the saints (Dan. vii. 21–25 ; Rev. xiii. 7).

He is destroyed by the fire of Christ's coming. (Dan. vii. 11, viii. 25 ; 2 Thess. ii. 8.) With regard to time, the Jews appear to have a week of restoration. It is thought by many that the seventy weeks determined on them (Dan. ix. 24)* consist of sixty-nine weeks and one week ; that is, first seven weeks, then sixty-two weeks. (Dan. ix. 25.) Then comes an interruption, as it has been termed, "a timeless time," to the Jews, being the times of the Gentiles ; after which the Jews are restored for one week—the seventieth—in the midst of which the antichrist takes away the daily sacrifice, and there is a period of the most terrible persecution that the world has ever known, which lasts till Christ comes.

These weeks then must be weeks of years, a day standing for a year, as in Lev. xxv. 8 and Ezek. iv. 5. We shall find periods spoken of under other expressions, such as "times," "months," and "days." In these, if a time stands for a year, a month for a month of thirty literal days, and single days when called days

* The command to rebuild Jerusalem, the walls, &c., is identified with that given to Nehemiah. (Neh. ii. 5, &c.) Date given, 454 B.C., not 445, as in Authorised Bible. Our Lord was crucified 29 A.D., from the usual point of reckoning. This makes 483 years (69 weeks), one then remains. I would point out one reason for supposing that these weeks and time only reckon at such periods when the Jews are holding their position as a nation ; namely, that the reckoning does not commence until the city is rebuilt. If the time when the prophecy is given was not to be reckoned, and the reckoning only was to commence when the city should begin to be rebuilt, the principle of reckoning above referred to seems to be well founded.

stand for days, while a year is supposed to consist of twelve months of thirty days each, we shall find the period of a half week, or three and a half years, again and again spoken of, as in Dan. vii. 25, time, times, and the dividing of time; Dan. xii. 7, time, times and a half; Rev. xi. 3, forty-two months; and again, 1,260 days; Rev. xii. 6, 1,260 days; Rev. xiii. 5, forty-two months. We shall have to consider other evils, but it appears that this reign of the beast is the most awful reign that ever takes place under the sun.

Some have endeavoured to identify it with events which have occurred on the earth. Granville Sharp actually called on Mr. Pitt, when he was Prime Minister, to press on him the necessity of shaping his policy with a view to the great Napoleon* proving to be the "little horn," and was much shocked at finding that Mr. Pitt had presumed to be a prime minister without "having even heard of the 'little horn.'" Far from speaking of this as a mark of weakness in Granville Sharp, I think many of us will feel that his heart and head too, were far in advance of most Christians of his day. Of course he was mistaken, for many reasons. Still, when the Lord took him to Himself soon after, we cannot but think that the earnest desire to serve

* The French Revolution and rise of Napoleon were like a shadow of the coming reign of antichrist. Out of a sea of infidelity and lawlessness rose an extraordinary man, who was crowned with the iron crown, and convened the Jewish Sanhedrim in Paris, in 1806, and was hailed as their deliverer by them.

his Lord, and to call attention to His word in a day of coldness and unbelief, was owned by Him as really as his efforts to free the slaves, and his sacrifice of his own government appointment for conscience' sake. It is a beautiful thing to see a man of his calibre willing to appear a fool for Christ's sake, and that in the judgment even of those of the Lord's people who are unable to appreciate him.

Rev. xiii. tells us more about the beast or antichrist's reign than any other passage. The head wounded to death, the second beast, which appears to be the same as the false prophet, and the image, are all difficulties to us now, so are the number and the name and mark. The number is that of a man (*v.* 18); and to be a good means of identification, probably it would not apply in its full sense to anything until the man himself comes. Nevertheless, just as the man is identified with his kingdom, his number may be found in it. Some have thought the word $\lambda\alpha\tau\epsilon\iota\nu\omicron\sigma$ contained it. This word applies generally I suppose to the Latin man, and masculine things. The number 666 (*v.* 18) is got from it in a very simple way in Greek; for "a," the first letter, stands for 1; " β " for 2, and so on. Thus any one who takes a Greek grammar, and looks out the numbers corresponding to the letters, will find $\lambda=30$, $\alpha=1$, $\tau=300$, $\epsilon=5$, $\iota=10$, $\nu=50$, $\omicron=70$, $\sigma=200$, which, added together, make 666. Dean Alford thinks that so remarkable a solution deserves distinct notice; nevertheless, he is satisfied it is not the real one. Mr. Lincoln, I find, objects to the word being spelt in this way. Perhaps it is a secondary way in which the

number is to be found. A rather curious fact once occurred to me. I have spoken of tens, and have thought that the decimal system will be in full force in the days of the beast. The French Revolution was almost a foretaste of his lawless ungodliness, and that brought in the decimal system, even as we have seen to the extent of displacing the Lord's-day by the tenth day, or one day in ten for rest. Now in Rev. viii. the third part of the earth, trees and waters, were destroyed. This leaves two-thirds for the beast's kingdom, which on the decimal system gives for the first three figures .666. However, .667 is really nearer to two-thirds, and this may be fanciful. On the whole we may do well not to expect these things to be seen till the Man of Sin is revealed, and surely we hope to be with the Lord before that takes place! The beast's seven heads and ten horns occur again in Rev. xii., and also Rev. xvii. I believe from Rev. xvii. 9 that the heads are successive kings or governments. This makes me inclined to think that the deadly wound (or "death stroke," New Translation) is given to the last head and healed. Perhaps the absence of crowns on heads or horns in Rev. xvii. shows that the kingdom is disintegrated during the rule of the woman, and brought together by the eighth head, the beast. The ten horns are ten kings (men) who reign with the beast, but they may be mere puppets under him. (Rev. xvii. 12, 13.) Hence, I suppose, in this vision the crowns or "diadems" are seen on the horns.

The heads, then, are crowned, not the horns in Rev. xii.; neither heads nor horns are crowned, as

noticed above, in Rev. xvii., of which more by-and-by ; while the horns are crowned in Rev. xiii.

The contrast between the beast or antichrist and Christ is very marked. Christ took a position of dependence on the Father, and came in His name. The dragon gives the beast his power, and throne, and great authority. (Rev. xiii. 2.) Christ is glorified, and leads us to God. (John xvii. 3, 4, 5.) The beast is wondered after, and worshipped, and the dragon for giving him his authority. (Rev. xiii.) Christ is the living one "who was dead, and is alive for evermore." (Rev. i. 18.) The beast recovers from a "death stroke," and he "was, and is not, and is himself an eighth." (Rev. xvii. 11.) The servants of the Lamb have His name on their foreheads. (Rev. xxii. 4.) Those of the beast have his name or number on their right hands or upon their foreheads. (Rev. xiii. 16.) Christ baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire which came down from heaven. (Acts ii.) The beast's prophet brings down fire from heaven in sight of men. (Rev. xiii. 14.) Christ is King of kings. (Rev. xix. 16.) The beast reigns over kings, apparently. (Rev. xvii. 13.) Christ came from above. (John vi. 41, &c.) The beast ascends out of the abyss (Rev. xvii. 8) ; and the parallel might be pushed further.

THE WOMAN SITTING ON THE BEAST.

Before speaking of the woman on the beast in the diagram, it may be well to notice the one described in Rev. xii. Believing that a woman is generally the

figure of a church, (not necessarily the Church of Christ), I conclude that in Rev. xii. is seen the Jewish Church under the figure of the woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. Joseph saw Israel, excluding himself, under the figure of the sun, moon, and eleven stars. (Gen. xxxvii. 9.) This woman gives birth to a man child, whom the dragon wants to devour, but who is caught up to God and to His throne. Surely this can only be the Lord Jesus Christ, this *man child*, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and who is caught up to God and to His throne. The Lord Jesus came in the Jewish assembly, or Church. The rest of the woman's seed who are persecuted by the dragon are perhaps the remnant who suffer under the antichrist. We have the three and a half years here (*v.* 6), 1260 days. I feel some difficulty, however, about the woman herself and her seed as both on the earth, and distinguished one from the other. There is one feature in the dragon that must not be lost sight of. The heads are seen crowned. This looks as if the antichrist kingdom was not shaped when the man child was caught up to the throne of God. I think that the heads rule first in succession, then comes the rule of the woman, and then the ten horns and the beast. The heads having crowns perhaps shows that the empire still is intact. At the time of the Lord's ascension this was the case.

Now to pass to Rev. xvii., the woman sitting on the scarlet-coloured beast. The chief features appear to be

as follow: She sitteth on many waters, which are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues (*vv.* 1, 15), corresponding perhaps to the great sea out of which the first beasts came. (*Dan.* vii. 2, 3.) Next come her relations with the kings of the earth (*v.* 2); the scarlet beast that carries her (*vv.* 3, 7), full of names of blasphemy, with seven heads and ten horns; the woman's purple and scarlet robe, her gold and precious stones, her cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication, her name "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (*v.* 5); and lastly, her being drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. Who is this woman? I have no doubt that she is Rome. The angel points her out as "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." (*v.* 18.) In what other way, then, could John understand it? He himself was suffering under the persecution of the only city that was then ruling over the kings of the earth; namely, Rome. Then the seven hills identify her. I do not believe, however, that the city had yet taken the form expressed by the figure before us. The Christian Church and the Jewish Church are termed brides in Scripture in certain places. Again, the Jewish Church is spoken of as a wife; she actually received an earthly portion (*Isa.* liv. 5, 6; *Jer.* iii. 20); and when she turns from the Lord, her sin is that of an unfaithful wife. (*Ezek.* xvi. 32, xxiii. 45.) The Church is looking forward to union with the Lord in glory, and the position now taken, whether falsely or in reality, is that of a bride,

not a wife ; and unfaithfulness is named as a sin corresponding to this position, as in this chapter. What is the sin thus indicated ? The answer seems plain enough. It is allowing earthly kings to have a position and power in the Church which belong only to the Lord. God's word then tells us that this sin, (which was unlikely enough in the day when the apostle John wrote), should come in by-and-by. Has it done so with a professing Church identified with the city of Rome ? I believe the whole position of the woman accurately agrees with that of the Church of Rome, and that *a woman sitting on a beast is a church supported on temporal power*. This is exactly according to the meaning we attach to the figures of a woman and a beast generally. The Lord directs us to pray for kings and all in authority (1 Tim. ii. 1, 2), but not to make compromises or terms with them. The things of Cæsar are to be rendered to Cæsar, and the things of God to God. Earthly power and money belong to Cæsar ; to obtain these the Church has exchanged things which belong to God. To trace this particularly, history must be studied. A pope certainly was supposed to be appointed by the rulers of the Church, not confessedly nominated by a king or emperor ; but a king has exercised power in so solemn a matter as pressing into a creed certain words which had been declared to be wrong by successive councils and popes supposed to be "infallible." I allude now to what is called the "filioque" clause in the Nicene Creed. The words, "and the Son," in the teeth of the decision of popes and councils, were inaugurated by King Rec-

cared, patronized by Charlemagne, and at the instigation of Henry II. adopted by the popes themselves. (See *The Church's Creed or the Crown's Creed*, by Ffoulkes.) The actual words I do not lay stress on; but the fact that, being declared wrong, a king should get them adopted. The scandal and shame of the whole history of this is sad indeed.

What then are the general relations of the woman and the beast under her? Sometimes we learn things from little children. My little baby girl, seeing the drawing before you, asked me, "How can she ride the beast without any reins?" Does she ride it? I thought. Riding it is one thing; sitting on it is another. My impression is that she rode it in a measure once, but that latterly it has carried her whither she would not. The names of blasphemy are connected with the temporal power. I suppose heathen blasphemy might meet the case. There are plenty of them connected with the Church of Rome, however; the Pope's titles — "His Holiness,"* "God's viceregent on earth," "Sponsus Ecclesiæ" (husband of the Church), besides the doctrine of infallibility, and, above all, the words used of the Virgin and saints, may be taken as examples. The seven heads appear to be seven successive governments (*vv.* 10, 11); the ten horns, ten men who reign as kings one hour with the beast. They are not seen crowned; observe this. I suppose that these kings only actually reign at the last stage of the woman's existence. (*v.* 12.) The purple and scarlet robe, I think, is ritual. Clothing typifies righteous-

* FROUDE, *Hist. of England*, vi. 287.

ness. When man first sinned he was taught that he must have the clothing or righteousness that came from the death of the giver; not fig leaves, but skins. (Gen. iii. 21.) White linen* is the righteousness, or righteous acts, of the saints. (Rev. xix. 8.) How far ritual may be looked to as righteousness I know to my sorrow, in the case of some whose hearts I have tried to direct to Christ. One very sad case will be felt bitterly by me as long as I live. Rome, I was informed, leads her children to trust to the sacraments and graces flowing from them, and by these she prepares them for meeting their God.

The gold and precious stones I take here to be earthly treasures. "You see, my son," a pope is reported to have said to a young man, to whom he was showing the treasures of the Vatican, "the day has passed when St. Peter had to say, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "Yes, holy father," replied the young man, "and so has the day when he could say, 'But such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.'"

* I am inclined to believe that beasts' skins and wool are the righteousness that is imputed to us on account of Christ's death, while linen is intrinsic, natural righteousness. This expression need not startle. God surely creates righteous creatures. Angels are such. I think each kind of righteousness is right in its place. The great matter is not to *confuse* them; *linen* and *woollen* must not be mixed. (Lev. xix. 19.) The priests wore linen. (Lev. xvi. 2, &c.) I believe this may be because they typified the Lord Jesus, who certainly went in with His own righteousness when He shed His blood for us.

When Israel took Jericho (a type of the world generally I believe), she fell through Achan coveting a wedge of gold and a Babylonish robe. The Church has stumbled over these since.

The cup, I suppose, contains the fruit of the woman's conduct. Then she is drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. How the Lord regards this sin (Acts ix. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 9) we well know, and how the Church of Rome has committed it, perhaps above all others; and if this ever formed a marked feature, it is sufficient as a mark of identification.

Most of us have read only too much of this in history,* and what we read in history we see marks of still. In these days we need to be reminded of the cloud of witnesses who by God's grace have suffered for the truth. Even in visiting historical places the marks of cruelty are found in increased proportion where the Church of Rome has had sway. Speaking even from my own experience, I would instance one or two. At Baden-Baden I was taken through the dungeons under the palace of the Grand Duke (das Neue Schloss). These dungeons have still the remains of their vast stone doors. Still may be seen the place of the stone bench on which the inquisitors sat, the rack chamber, and the spot where beneath the boards, is the pit termed the "oubliette." It is said that this fatal pit

* By imprisonment, by torment, by famine, by fire, almost 400 were destroyed. Something less than 300 were burnt in three years in Mary's reign.—"Burleigh's Execution of Justice," FROUDE, *Hist. of England*, vi. 533.

had been forgotten until a little dog fell through the planking that covered it, when at a depth of many yards were found ponderous wheels armed with rusty knives, and bones and rags were still clinging to them. Over this pit on a trap-door stood the criminal; opposite was a statue of the Virgin. We must wait for the day when all things are revealed to know how they whose bones were found, bore themselves when they stood on that fatal door, and fell among the grinding knives. We only know under whose auspices these deeds were done, and that when the Lord makes inquisition for blood (Ps. ix. 12), in her will be "found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth." (Rev. xviii. 24.)

Again, I may take Venice, where the Inquisition was established A.D. 1249. Walk through the palace, and see the suites of splendid galleries, with pictures of such events as the Doge winning victories for the Pope, and the Pope blessing the Doge. Then pass over the Bridge of Sighs, and descend into the dungeons, with floors below the level of the water, where prisoners were confined *in winter*. With every tide the water rose over their feet and legs. Cold would be seconded by fever, which would waste any prisoner's strength, even without the aid of torture or starvation. The lord might come and visit his prisoner, and if he found his spirit unbroken he might return to his grand world above, and leave him to his shivering, tide-broken nights and days for a while longer. Finally, if all was not enough, there were ready means of closing the struggle

at will; for one, a strong iron case, in which the prisoner's head might be firmly held, with a powerful screw crushing arrangement towards his brains. A place was made for the torturer to rest his elbow, and in a comfortable position listen to the groans or crushing of his victim's skull as he squeezed his brains out with the screw* at his leisure. The ruler apparently had everything his own way, everything on his side, everything *except God*.

How many, like Palissy, have gone down into the dungeons of their religious persecutors, and never been seen to come out again! or, in the full blaze of day, how many have been dragged to the stake, calumniated while silent, and possibly gagged, and dressed in strange clothes, with devils painted on them—all unable to testify the willingness with which they laid down their lives in the fire, except perhaps by the effort to hold their quivering bodies motionless in the flames! Well we shall know how many, when He cometh to judge the earth, and they rest with Him now. They were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

“Oh!” you say, “we all know that these things were done in times past, but it is wicked to attach that to Rome now.” To the individual Roman Catholics now living, who have not been guilty, God forbid that it should be attached; but I believe the same spirit that has been found in that church still haunts her, and is

* I did not see this iron case myself, but have seen it and others without screws described as having existed, and having been formerly shown here.

seen in glimpses now and then.* When you visit Regent's Park you do not praise the lions for letting children pass and repass them with impunity; you attribute their safety to the bars which enclose the lions. You know what would happen if they went inside the bars. So it may be if you put yourself in the power of Rome. I recently heard the case of a young monk, who knew and preached the gospel during the present generation. On his being found determined not to cease, he was sent to Rome to be dealt with by his superior. He died at Rome, and the priest who received his dying confession came to England, and brought a message to his family, which caused them to leave their church; indeed, such was the feeling, that that congregation was broken up. It is difficult to draw the exact line where severe discipline and failing health ends, and where starvation begins.

It is not necessary here to add much more about the woman. Yet there are other features that might well be noticed. She is called Babylon. We have seen how the building of the first Babel or Babylon was an effort to set up unity by human means, which became only confusion. So with the last Babylon. God sent

* In G. Sharp's *Remarks on Catechism revised by the four Roman Catholic archbishops of Ireland* (p. 10), he says: "I have before me a written deposition by Mrs. E. Vasconcellos, A.D. 1706. She was visited by a priest while in a fever and delirious, her husband being absent. After recovery she was told she had changed her religion, and commanded to worship a crucifix. When she was imprisoned in Lisbon she was burnt to the bone on her feet with hot irons, and threatened to be burnt with Jews.

diversity of tongues in judgment. Rome endeavours to put this right by performing all religious exercises throughout the world in one tongue. That tongue is a dead tongue, the Latin (666) tongue, which seems to be connected with the beast. Barbarism is the result. (1 Cor. xiv. 11.) It is seldom that we are allowed to undo the effect of a judgment of God. His way is rather to send grace to go through it. The Lord meets diversity of tongues by sending the gift of tongues to reach every man in the tongue wherein he was born. (Acts ii. 8.) I believe then that if the Lord spoke to you or me it would be in English, the tongue of our birth. Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and he tells us of his conversion: "I heard a voice saying unto me in the *Hebrew* tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts xxvi. 14.) Let us leave poor Rome, leave her as a traveller leaves Milan Cathedral, with its roof covered with its hundreds of pinnacles,* each one the image of a saint, and high above all the one figure that is ever prominent, the figure of the woman they worship. Sad it is that so blessed a woman should be made the occasion of idolatry. †

* The pinnacles are actual statues. There were 3,000 statues, including pinnacles, and those in niches on the exterior, many years ago.—See MURRAY'S *Guide*.

† In the Vatican is a colossal picture with many figures round the Pope; in front and on high God the Father and God the Son, and from between them the Virgin Mary coming forth, and casting a beam of light down on the Pope's face. In Antwerp is a picture by Rubens, of Christ endeavouring to strike the world with a thunderbolt, but the Virgin is interposing, while an old saint is getting it behind his mantle.

“Come forth, my people, out of her that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”*

Now the woman is the “mother of the harlots;” who are her daughters? I suppose those who are born of her, and bear a family likeness—those who have the features noticed, the state support, the relations with the kings of the earth, the scarlet robe, the gold and precious stones, the cup, and the drunkenness with the blood of saints and martyrs.

The Greek Church appears to be one. She is as old as Rome, no doubt, and can only be born of her in the sense of copying her; but look at the marks. She rests on temporal power. Her priests have even relative military rank. The Czar absolutely rules her in virtue simply of being the temporal ruler, and so she has her gold and silver. As to the purple robe, I could never see much to choose between the Greek Church’s ritual, with her pictures and incense, and that of Rome. As to blood of martyrs I can say little; but we are told that the knout has done its work of conversion on a large scale in parts of the empire.

This is only one daughter; the passage distinctly speaks of more than one. I believe another is the Church of England. In saying so I hope it will be

* The evils of the doctrine of purgatory, the intercession of the saints, the compulsory celibacy of the clergy, penance, indulgences, and all the superstition connected with relics, are against God’s word (1 Tim. iv. 1–5, 7, 8; Col. ii. 16–23; Gal. iv. 9), but are not perhaps directly connected with the subject in hand.

understood that I recognize that there are godly individuals in numbers in that body, who live in such communion with the Lord that, far from condemning them personally, I would gladly be like them; but if such really saw what they are connected with, they would surely come out of it. I speak of the system itself. Take the marks. Historically the Church of England was actually under the pope, and so came from Rome. We know that there were earlier churches in England and Scotland before Rome set down her foot in this land; but they were absorbed or crushed, and the present Church of England came out of Rome, and was formed under the auspices of Henry VIII. and Cranmer.* Henry was to all intents and purposes a pope himself. His bishops only held their licenses from him,† and when he died took out fresh ones in the name of Edward VI. Whereas the pope is supposed to be chosen for spiritual reasons, the title of the king of England is a simple matter of right to the throne. The individual may be a man whose heart is at enmity to God. Yet only by his authority can the bishops be appointed, and priests to administer the sacraments. To take an illustration from ordinary life: At Woolwich a few years since, the congregation of a

* See MACAULAY'S *History of England*, vol. i. chap. i.

† Bishops are lords in England in virtue of their spiritual appointment. Peter forbids elders to be lords over God's heritage. It has been urged that this is not the kind of lord contemplated in 1 Peter v. 3. At all events they are lords as far as it is possible to be such in England—lords in title, lords in money more or less, and lords in having seats in parliament.

certain church had been invited to the Lord's Supper, and the table was spread; but on that day the clergyman was a stranger, who had only taken deacon's orders. Consequently the congregation had to wait till a messenger, sent out then and there, could find and bring a "priest." The Lord said, "Take, eat;" and "drink ye all of it;" but these dear people were afraid to take Him at His word, unless they had a man appointed by a bishop selected by the king or queen's authority. Surely the relation of the Church of England with the king is far more distinct than that of Rome. A high church clergyman has admitted the evil to me, but remarked that the question of money was a very serious one. Exactly. "But whose image and superscription hath it?"

The scarlet robe is the next figure, the ritual, as I believe. How strong a family likeness may be found in this to Rome in many churches we all know! A lady friend of mine was taken to one where a man was rapidly going through his religious exercises with his back to the congregation. So fast and unintelligible were his words, that this lady, in complete simplicity, sadly asked the person next her if the prayers were "always in Latin." As to the value of the sacraments apart from faith in the recipient, I am reminded of one who, I was informed by a clergyman, was so feeble an infant that the clergyman who was suddenly sent for to christen it was spoken to as follows: "You saw it move, baptize it." I suppose such an incident is the natural outcome of infant baptism. I don't wish to exaggerate its significance, but surely it may well give cause for reflection to church people.

Lastly, as to the persecution of saints. Henry VIII. began it.* Anne Askew was racked, and then burnt, and many laid down their lives and were tortured in his reign. Cranmer himself burnt a man in the reign of Edward VI. Afterwards followed the times of the Stuarts. It was the Church of England that filled the prisons of the land with Quakers and Baptists in the reign of Charles II. When Bunyan was threatened with banishment and hanging, and replied, "As to this matter, I am at a point with you; for if I were out of the prison to-day I would preach the gospel again to-morrow by the help of God," it was the Church of England's authority that shut him up for twelve years, for "devilishly abstaining from coming to church."† To enforce conformity to her ritual has been a great object with her since the days of Laud. In Scotland many have been the victims. I do not of course speak now of Covenanters taken with arms in their hands, although their tortures in the boot, with wedge after wedge driven home, were probably borne in many cases for their Lord's sake. I speak of such cases as that of John Brown, the Christian carrier, shot while praying by Claverhouse, for no crime but "nonconformity." "Well, sir, well," cried his widow in her agony, "the

* Anne Askew was burnt, in 1546, for denying transubstantiation chiefly. This, consequently, may hardly seem a fair instance of Church of England persecution; yet the king had been appointed "supreme head of the church," the bishops had sworn obedience to him as such, and the Pope's name had been blotted out of the mass books in 1534.—FROUDE, *History of England*, vi. 229; *Gen. Biog.*, GATES.

† *Memoir of Bunyan*. By G. CHEEVER, D.D.

day of reckoning will come." I refrain from giving Claverhouse's reported answer. It may have been exaggerated by those present in their state of emotion. In like manner we might instance Peter Gillies and John Bryce, hanged, on May 5th, 1685, for "holding the pernicious doctrines" of those who had rebelled; or three labouring men, shot, on May 11th, 1685, for refusing to pray for the king, except conditionally that he was one of the elect; a poor lad shot the same day; and lastly, two women drowned. These showed a fortitude that deserves special mention. They were tied to stakes with their mouths below the high-tide level. Inch by inch the tide rose, and the elder was drowned in prolonged agony. The younger, Margaret Wilson, sang and prayed till the tide gradually choked her, and she lost her senses. Quickly she was cut loose, drawn on shore, and restored to consciousness. Neighbours implored her to yield, and pray for the king, so far as to say, "God save him." "May God save him, if it be God's will," she replied. "Sir, she has said it," they pleaded to the officer. "Will she take the abjuration?" he asked. "Never," cried the poor girl; "I am Christ's, let me go!" and once more the waters closed over her.*

These are only things in history; we hardly feel as if they ever happened. For all that, when He cometh to judge the earth, these things will come into remembrance. Let us hope that the days of persecution of the Church of England have nearly passed over. They were terrible in their day, little as we can realize it.

* MACAULAY'S *History*, vol. ii. ch. iv.; WODROW, iii. ix. 6.

There remain still the traces of the power to force conformity rather than to deal with real evil. Power there is to refuse to omit a word of the baptismal service for the sake of the conscience of those who yearn to remain in the church of their fathers if they may; power to object to give the communion to those whose weak conscience is exercised about kneeling;* power to forbid a clergyman to visit a dying man in the next parish; but no power to deal with bishops and clergy who hold views that would match those of the worst heretics who have been expelled from most nonconformist bodies.

We must not, however, confine the blame entirely to the Churches of Rome, Greece, and England. Whenever the sin is committed of giving place in Christ's Church to worldly influence, there is found a bit of Babylon. In the simplest bodies of Christians money has still too much weight. When a Christian man receives offerings from some body of Christians to whom he has ministered, I fear that the impression is almost always that he is the debtor rather than they. This is not what we read in Rom. xv. 27; 1 Cor. ix. 7-15. In the very manner of giving up money may be seen that too great a value is set upon it, much more in the holding of it back. May the Lord give to us to so live as to be free from the constant thought of money in any way!

And now once more about the greater questions. May the Lord's own people find grace to gather to the Lord, and follow the Lord only! May we be found

* I am referring to my own experience.

looking to Him as Head of His Church, each one having a sense of the Lord's presence, and so living in communion with Him! Those dearest to us, as Keble says, know very little of the thoughts of our hearts through each day. We lead lonely lives if we are not communing with the Lord as we go. May we be so in communion with Him, that it would be no start, no effort, as it were, to meet Him if He came suddenly! and He is coming *suddenly*.

This old world is not going on *for ever*, although it is 1882.

We may thank the Lord for giving us 2 Peter iii. and 2 Tim. iii., which, written by Peter and Paul after they knew that they themselves were going to *die*, seem spoken to us in these latter days in a way that we could hardly look for from one whose position was that of expecting the Lord, perhaps in his lifetime. It is hard to realize the coming of the Lord. It is hard to realize our own death. One of these must be coming near.

When we read of dreadful suffering and death, such as we have been speaking of, we recoil with a sense of relief to the ordinary quiet life we most of us live. Yet death comes. I believe I have read of one who recanted to escape burning, and who was afterwards burnt to death by his house accidentally catching fire.* Such a case reminds us of how death really comes to all, except those who remain to the coming of the Lord.

* In Froude's *History*, I think; but I cannot put my hand on it.

But what an awful thing is death to those who have never obeyed the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ! If you have never taken Christ at His word, death means eternal death to you. It is an awful thought to think even of the bodies of the lost lying in graveyards among us, hopelessly lost. If we knew them for certain, which, thank God, we do not, we might contemplate a body which in some shape is absolutely certain to be in hell! The first call will not wake that body. It is waiting for the *resurrection of damnation!* Are you not safe? Then close now with the gospel. You know you are a sinner; the Lord died on purpose to save sinners. Rest on that; set to your seal that God is true. "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." (Acts xvi. 31.)

It is a glorious thing to be ready for death, or for the Lord's coming, by belonging to Him—to go about the world as something that is His. I dare not despise any one that belongs to Him. When I am tempted to loathe myself, I feel that, after all, if I belong to Him, I am not to be despised. How happy it is to be redeemed and bought by Him, though still here! If you were buying goods in a shop you might ask for an article which the shopman might refuse you. You have the money perhaps, but he cannot let you buy it, because it has been bought and paid for by somebody else. Although in the shop with all the things for sale, it is the property of the buyer; it is his. It is only waiting to go to his home. So with us. The Lord Jesus Christ has bought me, if I am willing to be saved as a lost

sinner—saved by His death by the price He paid. He has bought me altogether, though still in the world with those who do not know Him. I am His; I am only waiting to be taken home. A man in America relates that he one night lodged near some poor slaves, who were being brought up in gangs, chained together to be sold. They knew not where they would be soon. In a few days they would all be scattered; perhaps those nearest and dearest to each other would never meet again on earth. In the night he heard some singing, and a strange ringing, tapping sound. On listening, he found the poor slaves were singing and beating their chains together as an accompaniment. The words they sang were, "He hath redeemed us," or, "I am redeemed, I am redeemed." Was not that music that the Lord heard? Why they will sing something very like that in glory, will they not? May the Lord give it to you to hear it sung there, and have part in it. Some of us can thank God that, among all the things given to men, He chose for us to learn to know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour. I have been speaking of things we *think*; here are some things to be *known*. "We *know* that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the Evil One. And we *know* that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we *know* Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. My little children, guard yourselves from idols." (1 John v. 19-21.)

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