

# THE LAW OF MOSES

AS

A RULE OF NATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL LIFE

AND

THE ENIGMATICAL ENUNCIATION  
OF DIVINE PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES.

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Hand of God*, *The Ways of Providence*, &c , &c.

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## Preface to the First Edition.

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**I**T would not be possible, in the present temper of the public mind, to offer a more uninteresting book than a treatise on the Law of Moses. The feeling of the general reader is, that the subject belongs not only to the ancient, but the antiquated; not only to the old, but the obsolete; not only to the lifeless, but the discredited and the untrue. But experience shows that there is no reliable guidance in the feeling of the general reader, or the temper of the public mind. Nothing is more changeable, nothing less founded on true reason. The general sentiment that regards the Law of Moses with aversion, professes to regard Christ as the supreme expositor of divine truth, without apparently being aware, or at all events without giving due weight to the fact, that Christ was a zealous upholder of the Law of Moses, and avowed it to be his mission to fulfil that Law—declaring with emphasis that “not one jot or one tittle would pass from the Law till all was fulfilled.” An enlightened mind has to make a choice between Christ and general sentiment. Considering how purely human and uninformed the public mind is on such matters, there can be no hesitation in choosing Christ, though such choice necessarily place a man in an insignificant minority with much present disadvantage. Public sentiment will change and pass away. Jesus says, “My word shall not pass away.” By this word, the Law of Moses is upheld as the Law of God. As such, it is entitled to all the attention and admiration to which the reader is invited in the following pages.

THE AUTHOR.

*September 20th, 1898*

## Preface to the Second Edition.

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**H**S was explained in a note to the first edition, this is the Author's last work. He died suddenly a day or two after writing the foregoing Preface, and the book was first published in the summer of 1899. Many things have happened since then, but the Lord Jesus is not yet enthroned upon Mount Zion with "Moses and Samuel" among his saints. It will certainly come, according to God's promise that "the law shall go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." This second edition of the book is now issued as a continuation of the testimony in hope of that promised day.

*Birmingham, July, 1910.*

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# THE LAW OF MOSES

*AS A RULE OF NATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL LIFE  
AND THE ENIGMATICAL ENUNCIATION OF DIVINE  
PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES.*

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## CHAPTER I.—LAW : ITS NEED AND BEAUTY.

**H**OW much the excellence of human life depends upon law : we do not at first realise how much ! We grow up under the feeling that the best thing for us is to be just let alone to follow the bent of our own sweet will. We learn at last that this is just the worst for any man or nation. Experience confounds false philosophy. Men are not as cabbage roses that will automatically unfold their blushing beauty, and exhale their fragrant odour if left alone ; they are rather as the apple trees that will grow crabs unless grafted with good slips. The dictum of Christ and Paul is found correct : “ In the flesh dwelleth no good thing ” (Jno. vi. 63 ; Rom. vii. 18).

The fact is nationally illustrated in barbarous races, and, individually, in the uneducated members of civilised communities. The extremest demonstration is seen when a child happens to be kidnapped and brought up in the woods away from human culture, of which there have been instances.

Modern literature is impregnated with false notions on this subject. These false notions are generated by a false method of study. Man is looked at as he develops under the surroundings of an established civilization, and because he is interesting when enlightened and subject to law, he is supposed to be innately good and rational, requiring only a proper self-evolution. Disastrous

results come from this theory when it is acted on in either public or family life. A lawless community, or stubborn and rebellious children bring misery when the hand of repressive discipline and kindly culture is absent. Human nature in itself is only a bundle of potentialities, which cannot be developed except by firm discipline under the wise administration of good laws. The best men of the best nations are those that have seen the most trouble, along with the possession of knowledge.

But what is law? In the abstract, it is a rule of action made obligatory; but its value must depend not only upon its obligatoriness, but upon its nature. Unless a law is calculated to evoke results of well-being, its obligatoriness will be a calamity. Its enforcement will oppress,—and destroy instead of blessing. Hence the importance of devising laws and rules that will work out for good. But who is able to do this? It evidently requires a very far-sighted acquaintance with human nature and its needs, to be qualified to prescribe a law which in all points will work out individual and social well-being. The world knows much of law of one kind or another. That it has not attained to the law that it needs, is manifest from its evil state, and the ceaseless law-tinkering and agitation for law-tinkering going on in every country.

Among all the systems of law that have appeared among men, there is only one that makes any admissible claim to be Divine; and that is the system known as the law of Moses. Of this we have the most ample information in the Bible, apart from which we could have no reliable knowledge of it, for Jewish tradition and Rabbinical gloss tend rather to obscure than to reveal its features. We could wish for nothing fuller or more satisfactory on the subject than we get in the Bible; and we must assume on the present occasion that the Bible is good authority in spite of all the hostile endeavours of German, French, and British criticism. That body of criticism seems a weighty affair to people who make no endeavour to master the subject for themselves. In the abstract it is a mighty mass, but reduced to its elements, it only amounts to the opinions of men groping in obscurities, who hazard suggestions in a learned style, and catch up and send round each others' suggestions with the effect of holding each other up in their uncertainties. A single authoritative declaration of the resurrected Christ is as destructive to the whole mass as a spark of fire would be to a mountain of gunpowder.

We have more than a single word. Christ says that God spoke to Moses (Mark xii. 26), and that Moses gave the law (Jno. vii. 19) ; and that the books containing it are his writings (Jno. v. 46-47), and that it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than for one tittle of the law to fail (Luke xvi. 17). This is decisive against a whole world of speculation or doubt. We may trust absolutely, on Christ's authority, to the unmixed divinity of the law given by the instrumentality of Moses. We are certain not to be deceived or disappointed in Christ's view of the case : who can say as much for the merely speculative critics of these late days ?

If the law of Moses were not divine, there could be no object in considering it. A merely human conception of what was suitable for an age long gone by would be of no practical interest to men of our age, and of no value for guidance in a state of things so radically different. If it could be shown there were good things in it, they could only appear good on a principle that would leave us at liberty to discard or modify them according to our particular bias. Moses, in that case, would be down on our own level ; and we probably should not feel disposed to submit our judgment to his on the mere score of antiquity, but probably the reverse, as we should naturally hold a later and longer experience to be a better guide than the experience of Moses at so early a time.

It is as a divine system that its study becomes so important. There is something in a work of God for us to profitably exercise our faculties on. A divinely prescribed rule of human action must be wise ; and a ritual system that is divinely declared to be an allegory of the principles and the purposes before the divine mind in His dealings with the human race, cannot but be interesting and profitable when worked out by the clues divinely supplied (as they are in the later writings of inspiration, by the apostles).

The study of the law of Moses on this basis will lead us to share the intense admiration of it expressed in various parts of the Bible—panegyrics that otherwise appear as the mere extravagances of sentimentalism. Such for example as the language of David : “ O, how love I thy law ; it is my meditation all the day.” And again, “ The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver ” ; and again, “ I hate vain thoughts ; but thy law do I love ” ; and again, “ The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea,

than much fine gold ; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them thy servant is warned, and in keeping of them is great reward " (Psa. cxix. 97, 72, 113 : xix. 9-11).

Moses himself speaks thus on the subject : " Behold I have taught you judgments and statutes, even as the Lord my God commanded me. Keep, therefore, and do them ; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes, and shall say, ' Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people ; for what nation is there that hath *statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law* which I set before you this day ? ' " (Deut. iv. 5-8). Paul in another way utters the same praise : " The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and good. . . . The law is spiritual, but I am carnal and sold under sin " (Rom. vii. 14).

That the law should be strenuously enjoined on Israel is natural in view of its divine character. One of the most interesting of all the interesting incidents connected with Israel's settlement in the Land of Promise, when they came out of Egypt, was the public endorsement of its leading features by the assembled tribes in the valley formed by the two hills of Ebal and Gerizim—as commanded, and the imprecation of a curse on those who should fail to keep it. The particulars will be found in Deut. xxvii. 2-26 ; Joshua viii. 33-35. In the presence of the massed multitudes, the Levites, stationed in the hollow, and within hearing of all (as travellers have found who have experimented), briefly recited the principal commandments of the law in rotation, and the whole multitude, at the end of each sentence, ejaculated an endorsing " Amen ! " which must have sounded like a wave breaking on the shore. It was also a commandment (Deut. xxxi. 11-13) that, always when Israel should gather at the feasts (which was three times in a year—Deut. xvi. 16), the law should be read in their hearing.

Before leaving them, Moses was very earnest in his entreaties that they should be obedient. He impressed upon them that their well-being depended upon it : " If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law . . . See," said he, " I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments that thou mayest live and

multiply. . . . I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deut. xxx. 10, 15, 19). There is no more interesting chapter in the whole Bible than the long chapter in which he describes the blessings and the curses that were associated with the keeping or the breaking of the law (Deut. xxviii.), or the similar recital in Lev. xxvi. Joshua, before his death, spoke to them in a similar vein: "Take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses, the servant of the Lord, charged you, to love the Lord your God and to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments, and to cleave unto Him and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul" (Josh. xxii. 5).

Such later sayings as the following are the natural corollaries of the subject:—"Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son, but . . . he that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination" (Prov. xxviii. 7, 9); "He that keepeth the law, happy is he" (Ibid xxix. 18); "As the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness and their blossom shall go up as dust, *because they have cast away the law of the Lord*, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. v. 24). "The land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof *because they have transgressed the laws*, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant" (xxiv. 5).

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#### AIMS AND SHADOWS.

These things concern the law as a rule of action during the present mortal life. But we learn from apostolic teaching that there was (1) a deeper meaning, and (2) a more far-reaching aim. The deeper meaning is briefly expressed in the statement of Paul, that, "the law was a *shadow* of good things to come." The more far-reaching aim is revealed in the declaration that "The law entered that the offence might abound," and "That every mouth might be stopped and all the world become guilty before God" (Rom. v. 20; iii. 19)—a statement that is unintelligible until we discover that the object was to make man feel his native powerlessness, and that he might be placed in a position in which salvation should be a gift by favour of God on the condition of faith leading to obedience.

We look at these two points a little more closely before passing on to the study of the law in its details. Their separation will simplify and help the study. We find that the "shadow" feature of the law had two aspects: FIRST, the figurative exemplification of the actual situation of things between God and man—as when Paul alleges that the tabernacle was "a figure *for the time then present*," and explains the solitary entrance of the high priest once a year into the holiest of all with the blood of animals to be a signification by the Holy Spirit "that the way into the holiest of all was *not yet made manifest* whilst the first tabernacle was yet standing" (Heb. ix. 9, 8). And SECOND, the *foreshadowing*, or shewing beforehand in an enigmatical manner, the purpose of God as to the method by which He should open the way for free communion with Himself on the part of sinful man. This second aspect of the matter is plainly affirmed in the statement that "the law was a shadow of good things *to come*:" that the law was "*the form of knowledge and of the truth*" (Rom. ii. 20), and that the body (or substance) of the law-shadows "is of Christ" (Col. ii. 17); further, that the promulgated righteousness of God by faith in Christ without the law was "*witnessed by the law*" (Rom. iii. 21). This view of the matter enables us to understand how Christ could say that he had come to fulfil "THE LAW and the prophets," and that "till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law *till all be FULFILLED*" (Matt. v. 17, 18).

Keeping carefully distinct these two elements of the typical law—which might be described as the present and the future significance of the general shadows—we shall be the better able to see what the law was designed to teach without falling into the mistake sometimes made of attributing to the law a power which it did not and never was intended to possess. We shall find it was a shadow both of the ruptured relations of God and man and of the means by which He should restore those ruptured relations in His own time; but not having in itself the justifying efficacy that some in Paul's day imagined (Acts xv. 5, 24; Gal. v. 4; iv. 21-31), but, on the contrary, was a purely temporary institution destined to pass away when its mission should be accomplished in silencing man and developing God's righteousness in Christ (Gal. iii. 19-21; iv. 3-5; Rom. iii. 19-20; Heb. vii. 18-19; viii. 7-13; x. 3-4).

Our enquiry, when we come to this part of the subject (which will not be at the first), will be: which of these typical features of

the law enlighten us concerning the actual position of man in his state of separation from God? and which of them tell us of Christ as the great purposed healer of the woe?

Over-arching the whole as a rainbow, is that larger mission of the law, which men are so liable to omit or fail to appreciate, viz., a clearing of the way for the manifestation of the kindness of God.

This is the last lesson we learn: the beauty we last perceive. Naturally so; it belongs to God's point of view; and our own point of view is our first, and for a long time, our only point of view. God's kindness is full and bountiful and unconstrained, but in the matter of admitting created beings to a participation in His open friendship and divine nature, it has its limitations and conditions of so strict a character that one act of insubordination on the part of Adam sufficed to put an end to it. The work of restoration is being carried out on the basis of this principle being vindicated. There must be no boasting, says Paul. Most reasonable. Boasting is barbarism, even between man and man who are equal. What is it towards God, who is the fountain of all being? God will be head. He is so, and it is only reasonable that the fact should be recognised. Where is there any monarch or human official of any kind who would consent to work where his authority was challenged or dignity affronted? If this is a tolerable principle of action amongst fellow-mortals, is it not absolutely indispensable with God, who is the author of our life and the strength and support and wisdom of all creation? Yet it is a principle that man ignores in his pride. It is a principle that God asserts by bringing all men under condemnation first of all. He has done this by the law of Moses. Unless there is forgiveness, there can be no salvation. Forgiveness is favour (grace), and God requires the honour of "faith" towards Himself as a condition of the favour. "Where is boasting then?" enquires Paul; "It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith." "It is of faith that it might be by grace"—"that God in all things might be glorified:" "that no flesh should glory in his sight. . . . that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (Rom. iii. 27; iv. 16; 1 Cor. i. 29, 31).

The principle is perfect in its reasonableness and ravishing in its beauty: for it secures the highest happiness of which man is capable (either in his corruptible or his incorruptible state), when he bows before God in grateful and reverential submission, and at the same time it admits of the great Increate finding pleasure in

man. There is, therefore, a depth of true philosophy unsuspected in the words of Paul: "The law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. v. 20, 21). In a new and brilliant light appears that other Scripture: "God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon them all. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath seen His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed to him again. For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom. xi. 32-36).





## CHAPTER II.—BEFORE THE LAW OF MOSES.

**T**O see the law in its right place, we must look at the circumstances going before. We must not imagine that the world was without law from God in the times before the law of Moses. There is the clearest evidence that law, commandment and statute were in force, and that men were righteous or wicked according to their attitude towards these during that time. Thus of Abraham God said to Isaac, he “kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws” (Gen. xxvi. 5), which was centuries before the giving of the law. So, of Abraham’s contemporaries, it is testified, in the case of the subjects of Abimelech, king of Gerar, that they were “a righteous nation,” and the king a man of integrity (Gen. xx. 4, 6); and, in the case of the Sodomites, that “they were sinners before the Lord exceedingly” (Gen. xiii. 13). The abstract possibility of finding righteous men in Sodom was admitted in the Lord’s response to Abraham’s question: “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes” (xviii. 26), and the existence of godlessness as the prevalent quality of man at that time is recognised in the remark of Abraham to Abimelech, “Surely the fear of God is not in this place” (xx. 11).

Indeed, the entire history of the world before that time, as given in the Bible, is a history of man’s relation to God. When Adam was driven out of Eden, his relation to God was not suspended, though changed by the sentence of death affecting all mankind. Man was under command to walk in the way of God, but, at the end of over 1,600 years, “the wickedness of man was great on the earth”: “all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth”: and God said, “I will destroy man whom I have created” (vi. 5, 12, 7). There were exceptions to this state of things besides Noah in his day. Not only Abel, in the day when the human race was limited to Adam’s family circle, but afterwards, in the days of Seth, we read that “men (in a communal capacity) began to call on the name of the Lord” (iv. 26). Enoch also was a prominent example, of whom we read that “he walked with God and was not,

for God took him" (v. 24), on which Paul's comment is: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found because God had translated him; for, before his translation, he had this testimony that *he pleased God*" (Heb. xi. 5).

In the days of Noah, things had attained a bad development. There was a complete abandonment of the restraints of divine law among the population, and God saw fit to remove them by a flood, saving "only Noah." The flood was not an ending of the Lord's law among men, but the assertion of submission to God as the divinely desired rule of life for all men. The reason of Noah's exemption from the universal destruction was expressed thus: "Thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation" (vii. 1). The continued life of himself and family was to be on the basis of submission to God: "Behold I establish my covenant with you and with your seed after you . . . between me and all flesh that is upon the earth" (ix. 9, 17).

The divine claims upon human submission as the law of human life became more manifest as men again multiplied upon the earth. They proposed to make themselves a name by building a great tower as a rallying point which should prevent their weakening through dispersal. But they were not allowed to carry out their ideas. God interfered with their enterprise, confounded their speech, and "scattered them abroad upon the face of all the earth." After this scattering, the activity of divine law becomes luminously visible in the office of "Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God," who blessed Abraham on his return from the rescue of Lot. We should not have known from the casual mention of him in Gen. xiv. 18-20 how great and real a man he was, if he had not been referred to in Psa. cx. as exemplifying the nature of Christ's priesthood, and if he had not been the subject of extended comment by Paul in Heb. vii., where we are asked to "consider how great this man was to whom the patriarch, Abraham, gave the tenth of the spoils . . . first being by interpretation king of righteousness and after that also King of Salem, which is King of Peace" (verses 4, 2). We know very little as to the details of his position, his origin or his work: but there he stands before us, in the centre of human life as it was in those days, representing the claims of divine law among the descendants of Noah, who though far declined from the standard of Noah's righteousness, had yet 470 years to run before the cup

of their iniquity (in the case of the Amorites) was considered "full" (xv. 16).

When we come to the case of Abraham, we do not come to the introduction of a new principle, but to the beginning of a new form of the same principle. The call to separate himself from his ancestral kindred and to leave his native country and depart to another country that God would show him ; and the promise that God would make of him a great nation and should ultimately bless the whole family of man in him, required a faith special to himself ; but did not begin the operation of the law of faith. Paul traces this law right back to Eden, introducing Abel as its first exemplification (Heb. xi. 4), Abraham standing only fourth on his list of illustrations. He was the root from which faith and obedience expanded into a national form, embodying the system of the law of Moses. But the law was operative towards the race generally before his time. The reason of a new start in him appears to have been that the procedure employed when mankind were few in number, and comparatively tractable, was no longer suitable when they were developing in extensive populations on all hands, and sinking slowly into a state like that which prevailed before the flood. The altering circumstances required the creation of a national kernel or basis of divine operations in order that God's ultimate purpose to bring the human race into reconciliation with himself might be accomplished. This gradual transition from a general to a national administration of divine law—this narrowing of already active divine operations with the descendants of Noah to relations with a particular family organised into a nation—enables us to understand the apparently anomalous circumstance that there were "commandments, and statutes, and laws" before the law of Moses (Gen. xxvi. 5), and that there were "priests that came near to the Lord" before the consecration of Aaron or the separation of the tribe of Levi (Exodus xix. 22). Divine law and priesthood were in fact as old as Eden. They came into operation immediately after Adam's expulsion on account of disobedience ; but in a form suited to the extremely limited circumstances of human life when Adam's family circle for centuries formed the only population of the earth. A public and official priest was not required when every obedient man offered his own sacrifice. Every obedient man was his own priest, as appears in the case of Abel, Noah, Melchizedek, and Abraham. In the same way, Levi, the son of Jacob, before Jacob had become a nation, appears to have

acted as priest, and to have received divine recognition in the matter, by reason of the special aptitudes referred to in Malachi ii. 5-6. His sons would be likely to take after him in the matter, and appear to have acted for the other members of the family and afterwards for the tribes before the formal separation of the Levitical tribe in the wilderness.

These considerations throw light on the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and on the circumstances filling up the period between the confirmation of the covenant with Abraham and the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. They account for the appearance of Melchizedek as a priest during the life of Abraham. They account for Abraham building an altar and offering sacrifice when he came into the land of Canaan (Gen. xii. 6-7), and for the recognition of God among those with whom Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob came in contact during their sojourn in the land, such as Abimelech, King of Gerar (Gen. xx. 4), Eliezer of Damascus, Abraham's eldest servant (xxiv. 35), Laban and Bethuel (xxiv. 50), Ahuzzah, one of Abimelech's courtiers, and Phicol, captain of his army (xxvi. 28) : also for such lingering traces of the knowledge of God (though mixed with superstition) as exemplified in the case of Balaam, and even the Egyptian priests (Num. xxii. 8 ; Exodus viii. 19). There were everywhere the perverted remnants and dying memories of the law of God which had come through Noah from previous times. The very idolatries and ritualisms and sacrifices of the Egyptians, Hittites, and other nations were vestiges of the divine "way" which had again become corrupted in all the earth. Religion had degenerated from a thing of enlightenment and obedience to a system of tradition and slavish compliance. The first promulgated revelation had spent its force, so far as man was concerned, and if the race was not again to be a failure (fit only to be swept away by a second flood), the divine work had to be placed on the basis of a national organism which would generate a sufficiently constraining influence to develop suitable individual units, though it might not thoroughly affect the mass. Nothing was to be done with the national organisations extant. A new start had to be made : new ground cleared : a new nation made. This was done in the call of Abraham and his posterity. There was a necessary preliminary of 430 years, which gave scope not only for the multiplication of Abraham's descendants, but for the perfecting of prominent individuals among them for a part in the final and permanent upshot of the work (in the immortal age beyond)—

Luke xiii. 28. Among these are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Levi, and Moses, of whom we are expressly informed, and probably many others whose cases are not recorded. By faith were all these exercised and developed, but not to the exclusion of obedience, which has always been the corollary and test of acceptable faith. Of Abraham, the most distinguished of them all, James exclaims, "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by faith was works made perfect!" (Jas. ii. 22). They were all of them obedient to the (unrepealed) "statutes and commandments and laws," which Abraham kept to God's well pleasing (Gen. xxvi. 4-5). "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off."

As regards the bulk of Abraham's posterity, by the time they had become numerous enough to be a nation for rescue from the Egyptians who enslaved them, they were in little better condition than the Egyptians themselves. We learn this from God's message to them by Ezekiel (chap. xx. 8), from which it appears they were addicted to the worship of the idols of Egypt. God had said (verse 7), "Defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt. But," He says, "they rebelled against me and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt." It is a question insoluble, on all human principles of action, why God should have redeemed Israel from Egypt under these circumstances. Human thoughts can imagine a fitness in the rescue of a deserving nation; but why should God have interfered on behalf of a nation to whom Moses said: "Not for thy righteousness or for the uprightness of thine heart dost thou go to possess the land . . . for thou art a stiffnecked people" (Deut. ix. 5); of whom David said: "Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt" (Psa. cvi. 7); and concerning whom Isaiah was commanded, "Write it before them on a table and note it in a book that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever, that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord" (Isaiah xxx. 9).

There is an answer; but it is an answer whose force is not felt till the mind has learnt in the furnace of deep affliction, that man is nothing but a transient appearance, and that God is the only intrinsic reality. God gives the answer in the context of the above-quoted statement of Israel's state in Egypt: "I wrought for my name's sake that it should not be polluted before the

heathen among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt." This answer is identical with what we read in the above-quoted psalm : " He saved them for his name's sake *that he might make his mighty power to be known* " (Psa. cvi. 8).

It is a first principle of the subject, therefore, that Israel's deliverance from Egypt and organisation into a nation, was irrespective of Israel's state, and was wholly a measure with divine aims, with the promotion of which Israel as a nation in the first instance had very little sympathy. Yet it was needful that they should be brought into a state of willingness to co-operate, and finally into a state of fitness for use as an instrument in the work. These two objects were secured by the admirable methods adopted. As regards the first, Israel was brought into great affliction. Egypt's jealousy was excited in reference to Israel's increase and prosperity ; and Pharaoh's suggestion found a ready response among his people, that they should " deal wisely " with the alien race and set over them taskmasters to afflict them. " And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour, and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field." Finally, they ordered the destruction of all male Hebrew babies in the hope of stopping their increase. No wonder that " the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried and their cry came up unto God." The persecution continued at least 80 years, for we find Moses himself cast out as a babe under the edict for the drowning of the children, and we find the oppression in full rigour when he stands before Pharaoh at 80 years of age to demand their release.

Such a prolonged experience of extreme hardship was well calculated to humble and predispose the nation for what was to come with the arrival of Moses, and it was probably also a punishment for the state of practical apostacy into which Israel had sunk. However this may be, the moment Moses presented himself along with Aaron with the commission received at the burning bush, and the signs attesting his authority, " the people believed, and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel and that He had looked upon their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshipped " (Ex. iv. 31).

We have in another work (*The Visible Hand of God*) considered and traced the negotiations that passed between Moses

and Pharaoh on the subject of Israel's demanded release, and the stupendous displays of divine power that occurred in all the land of Egypt to compel Pharaoh to let Israel go. We need not repeat that line of contemplation here. We pass over the six months or so during which the resistance of Egypt was gradually broken in the ten successive plagues, and behold the children of Israel after the first passover, and after the appalling visitation of death in every Egyptian house, leave the country in orderly array, and march from Rameses to Succoth, and thence in a series of marches to the shore of the Red Sea, where they are caught as in a trap, pursued by Pharaoh, and delivered by the miraculous opening of the sea, through which they march to the opposite shore, while Pharaoh and his following host are drowned.

Safe on the eastern side of the sea, they unite in the magnificent song of deliverance set forth in Exodus xv. Afterwards they pursue their way to Horeb, which they reach in about two months. Here in the rocky solitudes of the wilderness and under the shadow of the frowning heights of Sinai, they encamp at the end of what may be termed the first act in the national drama. Miraculously delivered at the end of nearly a century of oppression, they are in the best circumstances in which a multitude could be placed for receiving that communication and impress of divine law which it was the object of all these experiences to prepare them for.

Every measure was now adopted which was calculated to turn the situation to the best possible use for the object in view. First, Moses, the mediator or intermediary in the whole operation, is called to the top of the mount to receive a message for the mustered multitude. Nothing more appropriate could be conceived. God could have spoken to Moses in the presence of the whole congregation, or He could have spoken direct to the whole congregation, as He did presently for a particular purpose; but there were reasons against both of these modes at this moment. A message to Moses in their hearing would have been lacking in the dignity and impressiveness that always accompany well-timed reserve, and there could not indeed in that case have been any object in limiting the communication to Moses. A message direct to themselves was out of the question on many grounds. They were an assembly of unenlightened, faithless and rebellious men, though for the moment in the interested and grateful mood that is produced in the least intelligent of men by the conferring of a great

benefit. They were not such as it was possible that God could have any direct dealings with. With Moses, it was different : he was "faithful in all his house," as God Himself testified a short time afterwards, adding, "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold" (Num. xii. 7-8). It was therefore beautiful and appropriate that the first thing done on the completion of their journey from Egypt should be to call Moses to the solemn privacy of the top of Sinai.

"And Moses went up unto God." The first communication he received was most natural to the situation. He was directed to fix Israel's attention on the events of the last nine months, with a view to their divinely-intended purport : "Thus shalt thou say unto the house of Jacob, and say unto the children of Israel, ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians and how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people : for all the earth is Mine" (Ex. xix. 3-5). What a suitable opening to the most wonderful negotiation that ever took place upon the earth ! Moses went down to the people with the brief but pregnant message—inviting them, on the basis of what had happened in their sight and hearing during nine exciting months, to offer a voluntary subjection of their own wills to God, as the condition of their selection. What answer could the people make but the answer they gave : "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." Thus was the foundation of the first covenant laid, in knowledge and consent, to be presently ratified by sacrifice.

Moses took back the answer to the Lord. Next we have a step characterised by all the reasonableness and majesty that always appertain to divine procedure. God would manifest Himself in a sensible manner in the presence of the whole congregation that there might be no room for doubt hereafter as to the reality of His part in their transactions. They had seen the miracles performed in Egypt, but it had been as yet a matter of faith with them that they were the works of God. Moses had told them so, and in all the circumstances, their belief was reasonable ; but God would now put the matter beyond all doubt by speaking to Moses in their hearing, so that faith in the work of Moses might not be a matter of reasonable tradition, but might be established for ever upon the actual evidence of their senses : "Lo, I came unto thee in

a thick cloud *that the people may hear when I speak with thee and BELIEVE THEE FOR EVER*" (Ex. xix. 9). Not only so, but what He should say should also be addressed to the congregation themselves, and should be a declaration of the first principles of the covenant He should make with them as a nation—a compendium of the whole law He should deliver to them—as we discover from the speech divinely delivered from the summit of Sinai in the hearing of "600,000 men, besides women and children."





### CHAPTER III.—AT SINAI.

IT was fitting that there should be due preparation for the stupendous event of an audible address from the mouth of Almighty God (personated by an angel—Acts. vii. 53 ; Heb. ii. 2) to a mustered nation at the foot of Mount Sinai. There had been a measure of preparation in all that filled up the interval since the selection of Abraham and the appointment of circumcision as the token of the covenant and the condition of their choice. Their deep affliction in Egypt, following the pure prosperity of Joseph's time (like the seven years of famine after a similar period of great plenty), prepared them to give themselves up willingly into the hands of the deliverer when he appeared. And the observance of the Passover in anticipation of the last and most crushing plague on the eve of their departure from "the iron furnace of their affliction, even Egypt" (Deut. iv. 20), enabled them to feel they were under the protection of the God of their fathers. (*Circumcision and the Passover, preceding the law, were afterwards incorporated in the law, and will most naturally engage our attention when we meet them there*). But now they were actually to "meet with God" (Ex. xix. 17). So they were commanded to "be ready against the third day ; for on the third day the Lord will (not only speak but) come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai." They were to "wash their clothes," and abstain from the common defilements of domestic life, and to keep at a respectful distance from the mount at whose base they were encamped. The terrible penalty of death was attached to non-compliance.

The people were entirely compliant ; and on the morning of the third day, there were awful tokens of the promised interview between God and a nation. The top of the mountain was concealed in dense cloud, intermittently illuminated by the play of lightning. From the cloud ascended thick volumes of smoke as from a furnace. Roars of thunder pealed forth at intervals, the earth trembled under their feet. In the midst of all these terror-inspiring manifestations, the steady strident sound of a loud trumpet note was heard from the summit, "sounding long and

waxing louder and louder." On a sudden the tumult ceased, and in the silence, "the Lord spake unto all the assembly out of the midst of the fire and the cloud and the thick darkness WITH A GREAT VOICE" (Deut. v. 22). The whole assembly heard the pealing words which filled the air to the following effect :—

"I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of any thing that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: In it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house: thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's."

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Moses, in rehearsing these impressive circumstances forty years afterwards, says the Lord spoke these words "with a great voice, and *he added no more*" (Deut. v. 22). This cannot mean that he added no commandments after the ten commandments, for he immediately proceeds to narrate that the ten commandments

having been delivered, the Lord ordered Israel to their tents, and said to Moses, "But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee *all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments which thou shalt teach them*" (Deut. v. 30-31). It means, then, that the voice that proclaimed the ten commandments stopped abruptly at the prohibition of covetousness. Nothing was added to the oral delivery from the mount—no tapering off—no peroration—no gradual and ornamental finish, as there had been no exordium or appropriate introduction—no rounded periods—none of the mere arts of rhetoric: nothing beyond solemn substance and meaning. There must have been something very impressive in this sudden cessation of "the great voice," as there was in its sudden commencement in the pause after the terrific overture. The whole method of their communication seems to mark off the ten "words" or commandments with a special emphasis, as possessing a peculiar and leading importance: for not only were they rehearsed in the hearing of the whole assembly, but immediately afterwards, as Moses records, "the Lord wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto him" for special preservation.

It is customary to speak of these ten commandments as "the moral law." This is an objectionable description on two grounds: it takes for granted a false theory of "morality," and it ignores the divine estimate and description of the ten commandments. The false assumption of human philosophy is that "the moral law" is as natural and spontaneous a thing as the physical laws of the universe. It is assumed that the ten commandments are as natural as the law that you must have air to breathe and food to eat before you can live, and that their obligation arises from the constitution of things, and not from their having been enjoined by divine authority. The "moral law" is thus thought of as a part of nature, and not as the appointment of God. This view will upon study be found a fallacy, and like all fallacies, it works confusion in the applications of knowledge. If the so-called moral law were an element in the nature of things, it would be found asserting itself like the law of gravitation or the law of eating and drinking. Instead of that, man left to himself is an ignorant savage, who kills and steals with as little scruple as a lion or a tiger. He has no idea of wrong in these acts. He never exhibits the conception of moral restraint till the idea has been introduced to him by some process of instruction. Even Paul (in Rom. ii. 12-15), where he is supposed to sanction the idea of an instinctive sense of right

and wrong among "the Gentiles which have not the law," recognises that men are only "a law unto themselves," and "do by nature the things contained in the law," when "the work of the law" has been "*written in their hearts*" (see verse 15). It is very few Gentiles who have been the subject of this operation. His testimony of the world in general harmonises with experience to this day, that "the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God" (Rom. viii. 7), and that the Gentiles unilluminated "walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, and are without God and have no hope" (Eph. iv. 18; ii. 12). Those who had had "the work of the law written in their hearts" had had it so written by the pen ministration of the Spirit of God by the instrumentality of the apostles, as Paul says: "Written not with ink but with the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (2 Cor. iii. 3). These were "the Gentiles" of whom Paul writes in Rom. ii. The rest he speaks of as "other Gentiles who walk in the vanity of their minds" (Eph. iv. 17).

If the ten commandments were the moral law, and the moral law were "a law of nature," killing could never be right, whereas the killing of the Canaanites became Israel's duty (Deut. xx. 15-17), and the killing of the Amalekites, Saul's duty, for failure in which Saul was ejected from the kingship (1 Sam. xv. 3, 23). It is the wrong view of the subject that creates what are called "the moral difficulties of the Old Testament." People holding it read of the slaughter of the Canaanites and many other things with a shock which there is no ground for at all. Duty is the obedience of the commandments of God, and not the following of a supposed natural bias. Natural bias may be whim and darkness. The keeping of the commandments of God is the following of the light, whatever the commandments are. He makes alive, and has a right to kill, and when he says "Kill," it is wickedness to refrain. The slaughter of the wicked Canaanites was by the order of God, and became an act of righteousness. So with all the other so-called "difficulties." They are difficulties that vanish with a right understanding.

The ten commandments are only to be rightly estimated by God's own description of them. He calls them (Ex. xix. 5) "My covenant." Moses says: "He wrote upon the tables *the words of the covenant*, THE TEN COMMANDMENTS" (Ex. xxxiv. 28). Also in his rehearsal to Israel on the plains of Moab, at the end of the forty years, he said: "The Lord spake unto you out of the midst

of the fire. . . . And He declared unto you *His covenant*, EVEN TEN COMMANDMENTS, and He wrote them upon two tables of stone." The rest of the law is treated as an appendix to these: "And he commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it" (Deut. iv. 13-14). The "sanctuary" and "ordinances of divine service," prescribed in what is called the ritual and ceremonial law, in its detail, are scripturally treated as mere appurtenances and amplifications of "the first covenant" promulgated from Sinai in the ten commandments (Heb. ix. 1). Of the allegorical significances contained in these, it will be our duty to enquire by-and-bye.

The Mosaic view of the ten commandments as God's covenant with Israel, agrees with the historical allusions they contain, and with the fact that they were addressed exclusively to Israel. A "moral law," in the sense of modern parlance, would be as much the concern of the Chinese and the Babylonians as of the Jews: it would be of universal application—and it would not start off with a circumstance so local and historical as the Exodus, which is the substance of the first commandment and the basis of the other nine: "I am the Lord thy God, *which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt.*" It is, in fact, unsuitable and unjust to the subject to regard the ten commandments in any other light than that in which the Mosaic record exhibits them: namely, as a speech from God to Israel, defining the leading maxims on the basis of their consent to which, He would choose them as His people: "Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven." "Now, therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people, for all the earth is Mine" (Ex. xix. 22-3-6).

This view is also in accord with the undoubted and otherwise extraordinary declaration of the New Testament that this covenant, "written and engraven on stones," has been *done away*. Paul calls it "the ministration of death, written and engraven on stones," because a curse was pronounced on everyone that should infringe any of its enactments (Deut. xxvii. 26). James's application of this curse is so stringent as to make a man an offender against all who transgressed one of the commandments. His argument is (Jas. ii. 10): "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point is guilty of all: for He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now, if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the

law." Because, therefore, the Mosaic law condemned to death those who should disobey any of the ten commandments, or their engrafted corollaries, and because no man was capable of a spotless obedience (save Christ), they were in their totality a "ministration of death, written and engraven on stones"; and had they continued in force against men, their condemnation would have been inevitable and their salvation impossible. Consequently, it was necessary that they should be "done away," as Paul three times expresses it in 2 Cor. iii. 7-14; or "taken out of the way," as he has it in Col. ii. 14—not taken out of the way, in the sense of being abandoned as a rule of acceptable behaviour before God, but taken out of the way in the sense of Christ discharging their whole claims in every sense and then dying under the curse of the law of which they formed the kernel or foundation—a law which in another clause enacted "Cursed is he that hangeth on a tree," and therefore cursed Jesus who so hung: as Paul declares, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. iii. 13). When Christ rose after thus bearing the curse of the law, the law had expended its cursing power on him, and was therefore "taken out of the way" in him, so that all who put on his name and came under his authority in faith and baptism were "free from that law." This is Paul's argument in Rom. vii. 1-4, to which the reader is referred. The pith of it is in the assertion of verse 4, "Ye are become *dead to the law by the body of Christ* that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead" . . . and in the further statement in verse 6, "We are *delivered from the law*, that (law) being dead wherein we were held." Therefore, as he says in Rom. vi. 14, and substantially in Gal. iv. (the whole chapter), "Ye are not under the law, but under grace" (or favour), being recipients of the kindness of God in the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, and participating jointly with Christ in the heirship of the good things wrought out by the righteousness of Christ.

But though the covenant of Sinai is thus "done away in Christ," it is not done away in the sense of abolishing the excellent rules of action which that covenant enjoined. The new law in Christ, which believers come under, revives those rules in a stronger and more efficient form. Paul is very clear on this point, in which he is supported by the highest demands of reason. He enquires,

“ Shall we sin (that is, shall we do the things that the law forbids), because we are not under the law but under grace? ” (Rom. vi. 15). He meets the suggestion with an emphatic “ God forbid. ” “ Being made free from sin, ye became the *servants of righteousness* ” (verse 18). The new form of God’s wisdom in Christ is that “ the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, *who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit* ” (Rom. viii. 4). The meaning of this is practical, and not mystical and ceremonial as some people make it. Paul interprets for us thus : “ Love one another, for *he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law* ; FOR THIS (the ten commandments), Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet :—and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour* : THEREFORE *love is the fulfilling of the law* ” (Rom. xiii. 8-10).

The position of the matter is therefore perfectly clear. The law, so excellent in itself, would have given life, if men had been able to keep it, as Christ and Paul unitedly declare (Luke x. 25-28 ; Rom. vii. 10), but because they were unable to keep it in the absolute perfection required, it condemned them, and stopped every boasting mouth, and made all the world guilty before God (Rom. iii. 19), establishing such a situation that if salvation was to come, it could only come by the kindness of God, in the particular form He might appoint, which indeed was the result aimed at, as Paul declares in Rom. v. 20-21. The law was unable to confer life because men were unable through weakness to keep it ; it became instead a cause of death (Rom. vii. 10 ; viii. 3 ; Gal. iii. 21). Salvation, therefore, could not come by the works of the law, but had to come in another way, namely, by forgiveness through grace (or favour) ; but not unconditional forgiveness. Through Christ forgiveness was preached and offered : that is, “ By him, *all that believed* were to be justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses ” (Acts xiii. 39).

When we say “ through Christ, ” we bring into view the fact that the law has been made operative in him. He was “ made under the law ” (Gal. iv. 4), to which he was obedient in all things ; and for his obedience “ even unto death ” he became “ the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth ” (Rom. x. 4). Thus the law was made effectual through Christ.

The law was not a failure ; God's word never " returns to Him void." It accomplished its mission in two directions. It condemned Israel, who were disobedient—every man of them, more or less—" stopping every mouth," and it bestowed its blessing on Christ, who " magnified the law and made it honourable " (Isaiah xlii. 21). The mode of his death brought him under its curse, but without the surrender of his righteousness, since his submission to that mode of death was in itself an act of obedience. It was necessary that he should bear its curse away " to redeem them that were under the law." It was therefore necessary it should come upon him, yet that it should come righteously, that all the ways of God might be consistent one with another.

The law was a rule of procedure towards mortal men. It ceased to be a rule of procedure towards Christ when he died and rose again. As a rule of procedure towards all others, it could only condemn them, because they are all transgressors. Therefore, righteousness for transgressors in the sense of forgiveness unto life eternal cannot come by the law. This was Paul's great contention against the Judaism of his day. His argument is drawn to a focus in the statement of Gal. ii. 21, " If righteousness come by the law, then is Christ dead in vain." But he has not died in vain. He died to declare the righteousness of God as the ground of invitation for sinners to receive forgiveness. He died to remove the old covenant as a rule of procedure towards men.

The ten commandments are no longer a rule of procedure towards them. They are done away with, with the reservations already indicated ; done away as a ground of title to life eternal, but not done away as illustrating to us the will of God as to what men ought to be. All men who walk obediently in Christ walk according to these most excellent rules.

The " learned " of this world misconceive the subject altogether. While they truly recognise the limited or tribal character of the Sinaitic enunciation, they draw wrong conclusions from it through the effects of a wrong theory in another direction. They assume that all men are immortal, and on a footing of equal acceptability to God, and that therefore a system like the Mosaic system, which limited its proposals to a particular nation, and ignored the rest of mankind, must have had a human origin. The argument really turns the other way ; that the Mosaic limitations being divine are a confutation of popular views as to the nature and position of the human race.

The ten commandments as the authentic formulation of divine will concerning the deportment of individual man are of unspeakable moment. They embody the fundamental principles that regulate human life.



#### CHAPTER IV.—THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

**T**HIS analysis of the Ten Commandments reveals an arrangement of them that in itself is eloquent of many things. The *first four* relate to GOD : the *fifth* to FAMILY : and the last five to a man's relation to OTHER MEN. In this order we have an exhibition of the true relations of human life in their several degrees of importance, as divinely estimated—all depending one on the other, and each of them essential to a true economy of human life—yet some before others. There are relations of life that are first, and there are such as are last, while all having a needful place. The grouping of the Ten Commandments reveals them in their true order. Here they are : 1, God ; 2, family ; 3, society. This is a perfect order. It is not the order recognised in current civilisation, yet it is the order that all experience shows to be essential to human well-being. If God and family obligations are not paramount in a man's view of life, the door is opened to every form of insidious lawlessness, which, however elegant in its methods, works blight and ruin to life in its practical evolutions. In this, the system of wisdom revealed in the Bible, of which the Ten Commandments are the foundation, differs from all humanly-evolved systems. The civilisations of Greece and Rome were arid and ignoble by comparison. Religion was a degrading idolatry instead of an ennobling worship of the Supreme ; a mere custom of superstition that could not lift the mind of man from its natural gravitation earthwards, but rather help to drag and to keep it there by a ritual in harmony with the basest instincts. And as for family life, there was no such thing in the most vigorous republics of Greece. In Rome, it was a more distinct institution ; but lacked the sweetness and social cohesiveness that come with reverence for age and conscientious submission to father and mother. Modern society has much in it that would sink it to the same level. God and family obligations are made light of. Duty to neighbour is degenerating to mere gregariousness. The drift is towards selfishness with hideous results.

The Ten Commandments stand before us in eclipsing beauty and light by the side of the most polished social economies of modern times : but how shall we appraise them when we contrast or compare them with the dark systems in vogue in the time of Moses? This is the true way of judging of the character of the Mosaic Law. The modern world has become so largely impregnated, though in a diluted form, with the principles of the Mosaic Law, that the Mosaic Law is liable to appear but a mere version of the universal moralities, whereas when we compare it with the modes and principles of life current at the time the law was given, we see it in its unapproachable originality and grandeur. It is true we know but little of the social life lived by the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, &c. , but it is certain from what little we do know—(supplemented largely in recent years by the decipherment of the monumental hieroglyphics of the East)—that ancient life was little superior to the sterile and stunted and mummified order of things extant at the present day in China or Japan. The uprise of the Law of Moses in the midst of such a state of things was as extraordinary and unnatural as it would be for the cedars of Lebanon to suddenly show themselves in the sandy wastes of Sahara. It can only be accounted for by Divine interposition.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT is remarkable in more ways than one. "I am the Lord thy God *which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt*, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods but me." In this official declaration of Himself to Israel, intended to loom up in history before the eyes of all generations, God connected Himself with an historical act, and not with universal creatorship. He might have said, "I am the Lord thy God which created heaven and earth." He affirms this casually in the fourth, and often enough afterwards in His messages by the prophets, but here, in what may be called the supreme assertion of His Godship, He draws attention to the limited and insignificant circumstance (as some imagine it) of His having delivered Israel from the oppression of the Egyptians.

What is the meaning of this? It bears in two directions, clearly and strongly. As affecting the living congregation of people to whom the Ten Commandments were actually delivered, it was much more effective to appeal to their experience (what they had seen and heard) than to an assertion to be taken on trust, whether by intellectual discernment or dogmatic revelation. That God made heaven and earth they might believe : but that God had

brought them out of Egypt, *they knew*. This was the strong point of Moses's appeal to them afterwards: "YOUR EYES HAVE SEEN . . . all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes. . . . The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, *but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day*" (Deut. iv. 3, 34; v. 3). To connect Himself, then, with what they had experienced, was to go powerfully home to knowledge and conviction.

It was also to identify Himself with those transactions in a way that excluded all doubt as to their historic veracity for subsequent generations. Men must either disbelieve in the divine authorship of the Decalogue or admit the divine nature of the events of the Exodus. The two things are bound together in the Ten Commandments. They cannot be separated. To believe that God gave the law to Moses, and yet attribute a mythical character to the Mosaic narrative of Israel's deliverance, is an illogical and an absurd performance. This is one of the most astounding inconsistencies of the age. It is an inexcusable violation of reason; the facts in the hands of the community, in the shape of the Bible, and all the history connected with it, exclude any other conclusion than the one that God is the author of the Ten Commandments and that therefore their opening declaration is true that He brought Israel out of Egypt "by signs and wonders, and a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm" (Deut. iv. 34).

There was a depth of philosophy (as men call it) in such a performance as the exodus, that readily commends itself to a mind in earnest search for God. It is defined in the simple declaration of Moses to Israel: "Unto thee it was shewed THAT THOU MIGHTEST KNOW THAT THE LORD HE IS GOD, and none else beside him" (Deut. iv. 35). How else was God to reveal Himself than by openly and visibly taking part in human affairs? Man has no ability to discern the nature of the Universe of Power in which he is so insignificant an atom. So far as the exercise of his flickering reason is concerned, it may be one thing or another or a thousand things. The diversity of human speculations shows this. Though men have all the same facts to work on in the main, their thoughts range in every shape and colour, from the childish Hindoo notion of an elephant being at the bottom of things, to the refined Agnosticism of the nineteenth century which refuses to profess any knowledge, yet all the while nursing a belief in blind force as the inexplicable Father of all. Therefore, it is evident

that if man was to have a real knowledge of God, God must show Himself. This is what He has done, and the ten Commandments are a monument of the fact, and the whole history of the Exodus, the most precious illustration of truth that exists under the sun, instead of being the childish mass of fable to which human learning (so-called) has reduced it.

Thus our knowledge of God rests—not upon feeling or theory or intellectual induction—which are all very untrustworthy, but rests as all human knowledge rests, upon the evidence of our senses. God interfered in the question of Israel *versus* Egypt; expressly that the great fact might be brought within the range of human senses that God exists as a conscious, personal, omnipotent Being, holding all creation in His hand. This was the constantly avowed object of the miraculous interpositions on Israel's behalf (See Deut. iv. 32-40; Exodus viii. 10-22; ix. 14-16, 29; x. 2; Psa. cvi. 12). Consequently, we are placed in a position that compels and enables us to lay all our theories down in the presence of the Mosaic achievements in Egypt and the wilderness; and to connect all scientific facts and phenomena with the stupendous fact demonstrated by these achievements (and afterwards confirmed by the transactions of a thousand years, ending with the splendid appearance, death and resurrection of Christ) that the root of all power lies in the God of Israel—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The logic of the first commandment becomes irresistible: "I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt—out of the house of bondage, *thou shalt have no other gods before me.*" Could conclusion spring more irresistibly from premises? If God did all the wonderful things their eyes had seen, finishing with the overthrow of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea (see *The Visible Hand of God*), was it not proof that He was God? and if He was God how was it possible that reason could leave a place for any other Deity? for it was a further declaration of truth by Moses. "The Lord our God is ONE LORD," and by God "I am God and *there is none else.*" Consequently, they were shut up to the power of the first commandment. God, in bringing them out of Egypt, had given them evidence that He was the only God: what else could follow than the command: "Thou shall have no other gods before me." Other nations had other gods: but they were mere figments of the imagination.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT naturally sprang out of this line of thought: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of any thing. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." This was an important prohibition in an age when the custom of idolatry was so rife: perhaps it is more important even now than people imagine. They were not only not to bow down to graven images, but they were not to make such things, because of God's jealousy of the honour that belongs to Him only. What is this modern habit (borrowed from the ancient Greek habit) of putting up statues in honour of so-called heroes but an elevating of man to a position which no man can legitimately occupy in the actual relation of things? What is man but living dust—a flower—a life-blossom, who owes any gift he has to God who made him: why should he be exalted to the place of homage implied in the erection of a statue? An impotent, sinful, condemned creature—"in his best estate altogether vanity,"—why should he be placed on a pedestal of crystallised and worshipful importance? The Scriptures truly testify, "Great men are a lie, and poor men are vanity." Its truth is apparent when seen with the calm eye of pure reason, with which so few people scan their surroundings. This age of statues and busts and portrait paintings must be as offensive to God as the sincere idolatries of the Moloch worshippers. The day of judgment will declare it. Its verdict has been written in advance. "The lofty looks of man (which the system of human monuments does so much to foster) will be brought down and the Lord alone exalted in that day." It is a remarkable fact that while the likenesses of Greek and Roman, and even Egyptian, celebrities have been preserved in stone, there is not a trace of the personal resemblance of Yahweh's servants anywhere, not even of Moses or Christ, whose modern pictures are of course the merest figments of fancy. In this, we have a reflex effect of the commandment before us. The learned have their way of accounting for this, of course. They talk grandiloquently of Jewish lack in art and sculpture, and of the fine genius of the Greeks for these things—a style of talk which is all on the surface. The Jews have no lack of appreciation for the beautiful, and are certainly behind no nation in their relish for personal compliments, either in the giving or the taking. That these susceptibilities should not have developed a turn for the monumental art shown by other nations, is a natural

wonder inexplicable apart from the restraint imposed by the covenant of Sinai.

The reason for the prohibition of graven images, may strike the mind harshly at its first impact : but afterwards it will be found to have wisdom and even common-sense at the bottom of it : “ for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.” Jealousy is displeasure at preference shown for another. In man this may be, and usually is, a petty and unenlightened and unreasonable feeling. It usually results from a desire to be preferred without reference to the well-being of those who may be affected. It has no basis beyond the instinct that enables us to find pleasure in being approved and respected—a most useful instinct in its place, but ignoble and hurtful as a ruling motive. But, with God, the sentiment of jealousy stands upon a totally different footing. While it is the fact that preference for Himself affords Him satisfaction, He knows that in this preference alone lies man’s highest good, and that preference in another direction is preference for an emptiness and a nullity, and therefore a preference that will work nothing but harm and ruin in the end. In addition to this, preference for Him is reasonable and just, because He is the Author and Owner of all things. Preference for any other object of reverence is irrational and unjust. Consequently, that He should be “ jealous ” of His honour is a zeal wholly in the direction of that which is good and beautiful, and that He should punish those who hate Him, even to the third and fourth generation, while showing mercy to those who love Him and keep His commandments, is just and proper and beautiful also in working out the right relation of things.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT comes in logical sequence to the first two. If God’s name, and therefore Being and Authority, were made light of or held in the light esteem implied in familiar and irreverent allusion, it would be of small moment to God or man that no other God was recognised and no graven images made or worshipped. It is an indispensable corollary of belief in God, that His name should be had in reverence, and should never escape human lips in the spirit of flippancy—not to speak of profanity. There are those who think that the meaning was that men should not take a false oath ; that if they swore by the name of God to do a thing, there was a sacred obligation of performance

that God would never release : that God would hold the man guilty who invoked His name to a covenant he did not perform. The scope of the subject requires that something much higher than this should have been intended. God is certainly displeased with covenant-breakers and perjured persons : but His displeasure does not arise from the fact of His name having been used to pledge them to performance, but because the person promising or covenanting has failed to perform, whether the promise or covenant were entered upon with the name of God on the person's lips or not. It is the profane or flippant use of God's name that is condemned at any time, for any use in any connection. We never read of the non-performance of a covenant being described as taking the name of the Lord in vain : but we read the illustrative case of " the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian," who blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed, and who (being put in ward that the mind of the Lord might be shown), was condemned to death (Lev. xxiv. 11-15). The spirit of unutterable reverence towards God is the spirit which every institution of the law was calculated and intended to generate. Sacrifice means nothing so much as this. The position of the tabernacle in the midst of the assembly, guarded on every side by the ranked tents of the Levites, taught no other lesson. The first petition of " the Lord's Prayer " enforces it : " Hallowed be Thy name." How often occurs the interjection throughout the law : " I the Lord your God am holy." " Fear thy God." " He is worthy to be had in reverence of all them that come near Him." " He is a great God and a great King above all gods . . . O come let us worship and bow down : let us kneel before the Lord our maker . . . He is greatly to be praised : He is to be feared above all gods : for all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. Honour and majesty are before Him : strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name . . . O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness ; fear before Him all the earth " (Psa. xciv.-xcvi. and other places).

The very pith of the third commandment is the spirit that moved David to exclaim " O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men." This is the spirit of the truth, apart from which the system of the truth is but a skeleton of dry bones. It led him to desire the mani-

festation of the glory of God with an ardour that he could only compare with the fierce thirst of the hart kept a long time from water. There is a great distance between this state of mind and the state of mind that would take the name of the Lord in vain. The latter state of mind is the more common state of mind : and, therefore, it is a matter of command that we avoid the foolish habit of taking the name of the Lord in vain ; and a matter of intimation that God will hold guilty the man who indulges in it. The existence of a command with this terrible adjunct is a help against the folly when we remember it, as to which, it is never to be forgotten that the mercy of the Lord is in store for “ those who remember His commandments, to do them.”

The fourth commandment pursues and strengthens the same great idea in setting apart one day in seven for the special contemplation of divine ideas : “ honouring the Lord not doing thine own ways nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words ” (Isa. lviii. 13). But this commandment involves a variety of considerations, which must be reserved for another chapter.





## CHAPTER V.—THE SABBATH LAW.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT (“Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy”) is more remarkable in some respects than any of the others with which it is associated. It is more artificial, if we can apply such a term to any appointment of God. To worship God, to abstain from hurting man, are ideas that the unaided human mind might work out, and has worked out in a dim way from a contemplation of the constitution of things as they are; but to suspend all ordinary occupations once in seven days is foreign to all human impressions of what is expedient: to mere human thought, it seems such a waste of time. There is a self-evident stamp of divinity in such an arrangement. As a matter of fact, the Sabbath law has not occurred to any race or nation. It belongs to Israel alone. It was one of the characteristic ingredients in Zion’s affliction that the adversaries “mocked at her Sabbaths” (Lam. i. 7). The Sabbath observance, wherever found, is traceable to the Mosaic code. It is peculiarly and exclusively a Bible institution.

Experimentally, it is found to be a beneficial institution—this weekly recurrence of rest for man and beast. It seems adapted to a need of nature; it allows the machinery of life to work longer and more easily than if kept uninterruptedly at work. In this sense it is scarcely to be described as “artificial.” Its tendency to recuperate the physical forces after the exhaustions of labour, and to give the mind an opportunity of rising into higher exercises than are possible in the ceaseless activities required in the provision of daily bread, has struck all thoughtful minds as a feature of excellence not to be exaggerated. More blessed is the British nation in its partial conformity to this law than her Continental neighbours, with whom the Sabbath is more a day of pleasure and public ceremonial. Blessed will the whole world be when the Sabbath becomes a universal institution of human life, under the law that will go forth from Mount Zion to willing and obedient nations (Is. lxvi. 23 : ii. 3).

That it was ordained with a purpose over and above the mere comfort and physical well-being of man, is manifest from the divine comments to be found in the law and the prophets. These speak of the Sabbath as a "sign" intended to keep God before the mind of Israel. Thus in Ex. xxxi. 13, 17, we read, "My Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy unto you; every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death." Again, by Ezekiel, 800 years afterwards, God says, "I gave them also my Sabbaths . . . And I said, Hallow my Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God" (Ezek. xx. 12, 20). From this it follows that the mere suspension of labour was not a complete keeping of the Sabbath. Acceptable keeping of the Sabbath involved the exercise of mental discernment in relation to God. It required the mind to be fixed on Him in a special manner, as expressed in the message by Isaiah, "If thou turn away thy foot from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places on the earth" (Isa. lviii. 13). The reverse attitude is deprecated in those who said, "Behold, what a weariness is it!" "When will the Sabbath be gone that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small and the shekel great and falsifying the balances by deceit. The Lord God hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this?" &c. (Mal. i. 13; Amos viii. 5). Even the eunuchs were commended who "keep my Sabbaths and choose the things that please me and take hold of my covenant" (Isa. lvi. 4). Nothing better could be conceived—nothing more suited to man's spiritual requirements—than this compulsory suspension of secular activity once in seven days, and this overt concentration of the mind, in a special manner, on the Creator who in all natural life is out of sight, and therefore liable to drop out of mind.

It was not at Sinai an entirely new feature of the will of God, though formally incorporated for the first time in a national constitution. In this respect it stood in the same position as the command to worship and the interdict against murder and theft, which were all features of the divine "way" among men before

their promulgation from Sinai. The very form of its enactment shows it was not new: "*Remember* the Sabbath day." This implies that it had been previously recognised, which was the fact, though not quite in the stringent form required by the law. We find it taken into account before Israel had got so far as Sinai, namely, when the manna was given: it was said to them that on the sixth day, they should gather double quantity, and on the seventh day none, because it was "the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord" (Ex. xvi. 22-26). How came the Sabbath to be arranged for before the Sabbath law was given from Sinai? Evidently, because, like sacrifice, it had been an element in the divine system among men since the day that God at the beginning "rested from all his work which he had created and made; and blessed the seventh day and sanctified it," &c. (Gen. ii. 2, 3). To this historical origin, indeed, the very command on Sinai ascribes it: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it."

Here our faith is rudely challenged by the science of the age, and it is not well that we ignore the challenge. The unanswered challenge of any kind of truth is liable to prove an unstopped leak in the ship through which the waters gradually encroach, however dry and comfortable things may seem on deck. The challenges can all be answered, provided you go deeply enough into them. The challenge in this case relates to the allegation that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth," and that the stupendous work was done about 6,000 years ago. Science presses upon our attention the fact that the earth contains evidence of having existed many ages—six thousand years many times over; and that the geologically-indicated phases of its development from stage to stage point to millenniums of years for each stage rather than single days. The argument founded upon these facts is that a system of things cannot be divine which, like the Mosaic system, contradicts so flatly the manifest truth of nature.

There is cogency in the argument, and it must be met. If the facts were wholly as alleged, it would be impossible to meet it. But they are not so. The Bible does not tell us when the earth was brought into being. It tells us that it was made "in the beginning," but this is not fixing a date. It is only telling there was a beginning, which is self-evident, however far back

it may be put. The "beginning" and the beginning of the six days are not identical. The six days' work was undoubtedly 6,000 years ago, and the six days' work included the making of the earth in the sense in which a country is made when established and developed, but it did not include the making of it in the sense of bringing it into existence for the first time. The evidence proves this. It shows the earth existent "without form and void, and darkness on the face of the deep" at the beginning of the work (Gen. i. 2). It is impossible to lay too much stress upon the casual glimpse which these words afford us of the pre-Adamite condition of the earth. It is but a sentence, and yet it is a whole revelation on the point. It is like a rent in the back-wall of the human era, through which we peer backwards into a long vista of darkness, whose length cannot be measured; and if Science says there were millions of years in it, we say, as believers in the Bible, "Very well, the Bible allows for it in its opening sentence."

The six days' work relates only to the process by which, from the earth point of view (for the story is written for the inhabitants of the earth), the earth was brought from the condition in which that work found it. For reasons not disclosed, the earth had been submerged in water, and enveloped in darkness, which is the state in which it is first introduced to view. It had evidently been a long time in that state—with which the geological indications agree. How long is not revealed, either by the Bible or science. The moment arrived when, to Divine Wisdom, it seemed meet and proper to break into this state of things, and bring the earth into a habitable state.

Though God did the work, the work was committed into the hands of the angels, "who excel in strength and do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word." This is proved by the inspired rendering of the Hebrew *Elohim* (the word for God in Gen. i.) into the Greek *αγγελοι*, the word for angels in the New Testament. (Compare Psa. xcvi. 7 with Heb. i. 6); also by the consultation among the creative operators: "The man is become as *one of us* to know good and *evil*" (Gen. iii. 22). The fact also explains to us the otherwise unintelligible idea of "God (*Elohim*) resting and being refreshed" after the six days' work (Gen. ii. 1). It is a fact that does not clash with the One Creator's relation to the matter. Though angels were the operators, the eternal Yah was the power working through them;

and therefore the verb *created* is in the singular, though the noun *Elohim* is plural. *The Eternal Spirit working by the angels* is the key-thought in the case—the conception that meets all the requirements, and solves all the apparent difficulties. It is a conception constantly illustrated in the events of Israel's history, as in the appearance of the angel in the bush to Moses "The God of Abraham" (Ex. iii. 2, 6), and the description of God in Sinai as "the angel" (Acts vii. 38, 53), and the law as "the word spoken by angels" (Heb. ii. 2).

The six days' work began with the arrival of the angels upon the scene. The scene was one of total darkness—not clear darkness, but Egyptian darkness—darkness that might be felt—darkness caused by the prevalence of vapour impenetrable, which, as yet uncondensed atmosphere, had no power of segregating into cloud and aqueous deposit. It was the state described in Job xxxviii. 9, "I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness the swaddling band for it." "Let there be light," said the Creative Power, in its angelic instruments, and instantly the darkness was irradiated before a way had been opened for the sun's bright rays. When men visit some underground darkness in which light is desirable, they strike a match and light a lamp. The angels have facilities in this respect of which we know nothing. They can evoke light from the common elements around them, by the exercise of volition. They can cause their own bodies to glow with electric brightness, of which their Bible history furnishes many illustrations. It was no difficulty for them to cause light before the sun—which seems such a staggerer to some of our wise critics. They (the angels) have many ways of operating. Perhaps they so rarified the cloud-fog that overspread the earth as to allow a dim diffusion of sunlight such as we have on a dull day, and so caused night and day to be incipiently apparent, "for the evening and the morning were the first day." Whichever way they did it, they could do it, and they did it, and performed a great feat of power which was enough for one day. On the second day, they so acted on the attenuated atmosphere as to condense it into a ponderable body, capable of floating the lighter aqueous vapours as clouds, and precipitating the heavier elements as water, thus establishing a firmament which "divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament." This also was an operation involving an inconceivable expenditure of power, when the immense mass of the atmosphere

acted on is considered. Next day, the ground at the bottom of the wide waste of waters covering the earth was so upheaved by the same power brought to bear as to project portions of it above the water, and cause the gathering of the displaced waters into the hollows caused by displaced bottom, in fulfilment of the fiat : "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." The formation of grass, herb, and tree on the upheaved land was the next development in natural order. And now the situation called for the cheering and invigorating beams of the sun. So the fiat went forth, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven." To an ordinary spectator, there were no sun, moon, and stars at this stage. There was only a sombre, leaden, light-suffused sky, such as we often see. It would seem, therefore, to such an observer, that when the fiat had taken effect in rendering the atmosphere completely transparent that the sun, moon, and stars were "made" for the first time. But as with the earth itself, so with these bodies ; they existed before, but were only now made apparent for the first time. For all practical purposes, to an inhabitant of the earth for whom this record was written, they were "made" on the fourth day : actually they were "made (to appear)." The other days need not engage our attention. When the six days were ended, the earth had been transformed from a dark and lifeless prison house to a beautiful and well-furnished habitation of life and light. "On the seventh day, God ended his work which he had made."

Dr. Thomas has the following trenchant remarks which we reproduce from *Elpis Israel*, because of the great importance of a correct understanding of the matter in this day of scientific opposition to the Bible :—

"Let the reader peruse the history of the creation as a revelation to himself as an inhabitant of the earth. It informs him of the order in which the things narrated would have developed themselves to his view had he been placed on some projecting rock, the spectator of the events detailed. He must remember this. The Mosaic account is not a revelation to the inhabitants of other orbs remote from the earth, of the formation of the boundless universe : but to man, as a constituent of the terrestrial system. This will explain why light is said to have been created four days before the sun, moon, and stars. To an observer on the earth, this was *the order of their appearance* ; and in relation to him a *primary*

creation, though absolutely pre-existent for millions of ages before the Adamic era."

"The *duration* of the earth's revolutions round the sun previous to the work of the first day is not revealed; but the evidence produced by the strata of our globe shows that the period was long continued. There are indeed hints, casually dropped in the Scriptures, which would seem to indicate that our planet was inhabited by a race of beings anterior to the formation of man. Peter says that 'the angels,' or pre-Adamic inhabitants of the earth, 'sinned,' and Jude, in speaking of the same subject, reveals to us the nature of their transgression. He says, verse 6, 'the angels maintained not their original state, but forsook their own habitation.' From which it would appear that they had the ability to leave their dwelling if they pleased; secondly, that they were sometimes commissioned as messengers to other parts of the universe—this their name (*angelos*, one sent) implies; thirdly, that they were forbidden to leave their habitation without special command to do so; and fourthly, that they violated this injunction and left it. Having transgressed the divine law, God would not forgive them, 'but casting them down,' or driving them back, 'He committed them to everlasting chains of intense darkness, to be reserved for judgment.' Hence it is clear, when they were driven back to their habitation, some further catastrophe befel them by which their committal to darkness was effected. This probably consisted in the total wreck of their abode, and their entire submergence, with all the mammoths of their estate, under the waters of an overwhelming flood. Reduced to this extremity, the earth became, 'without form and empty, and darkness overspread the deep waters.' Its mountains, hills, valleys, plains, seas, rivers, and fountains of waters, which gave diversity of *form* to the surface of our globe, all disappeared, and it became *void*, or empty, no living creatures, angels, quadrupeds, birds or fishes being found any more upon it.

"Fragments, however, of the wreck of this pre-Adamic world have been brought to light by geological research, to the records of which we refer the reader for a detailed account of its discoveries, with this remark, that its organic remains, coal fields and strata, belong to the ages before the formation of man rather than to the era of the creation or the Noachic flood. This view of the matter will remove a host of difficulties which have hitherto

disturbed the harmony between the conclusions of geologists and the Mosaic account of the physical constitution of our globe.

“Geologists have endeavoured to extend the six days into six thousand years. But this with the Scriptural data we have adduced is quite unnecessary. Instead of six thousand they can avail themselves of sixty thousand ; for the Scriptures reveal no length of time during which the terrene angels dwelt upon our globe. The six days of Genesis were unquestionably six diurnal revolutions of the earth upon its axis. This is clear from the tenor of the Sabbath law. ‘Six days shalt thou labour (O Israel) and do all thy work ; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God ; in it thou shalt not do any work, for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.’ Would it be any fit reason that, because the Lord worked six periods of a thousand or more years each, and had ceased about two thousand until the giving of the law, therefore the Israelites were to work six periods of twelve hours, and do no work on a seventh period or day of like duration ? Would any Israelite or Gentile, unspoiled by vain philosophy, come to the conclusion of the geologists by reading the Sabbath law ? We believe not. Six days of ordinary length were ample time for Omnipotence with all the power of the universe at command to reform the earth, and to place the few animals upon it necessary for the beginning of a new order of things upon the globe.” So far Dr. Thomas.

To those who are not anxious to have the Bible vindicated, this explanation will seem strained and unnatural. It has to be observed in reply that every form of apparently discrepant truth has some time or other to appear in this unfavourable light. The explanations of some of the most familiar phenomena of nature, such as the enlargement of the moon at harvest time, the variation of the tides, the equinoctial gales, &c., appear far-fetched and improbable to those who are not acquainted with astronomical science, and are flatly scouted by those who reject the Newtonian system. The explanations of damaging evidence in a true case often appear lame to those who are not in touch with all the facts. The reasonable and necessary rule in all cases is to govern the doubtful and the unknown by that which is known and certain. The application of this rule to the case in hand compels the adoption of some such understanding as has been advanced, of

“the reason annexed to the fourth commandment.” Either the Lord in some sense made heaven and earth in six days, or the Bible is a human and fabulous writing. It is impossible that the intellect can receive the second of these alternatives when all the facts in the case are fully marshalled. With Christ at our right hand, we are bound to come to Genesis with the conviction that it is true, and that its statements must therefore be capable of harmonisation with all other truth. If the process of harmonisation should seem forced, it is only an appearance inseparable from the peculiar position of the facts. That the process can be accomplished at all is a sufficient satisfaction of the demands of reason, though reason might have preferred that there should be no need for the process.

We have, therefore, to accept, without reserve, the statement of the Fourth Commandment that the Sabbath primarily originated in the extraordinary fact that “in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed” (Ex. xxxi. 17). The idea of the “refreshment” of Deity has given the scoffer a theme of jest. There is no cause for jest at all when the matter is understood in the light of the facts hinted at a little way back. The angels, as the instruments and users of the energy employed in the work, are not to be thought of as inexhaustible Deity. Their power, though inconceivably higher than human, must be subject to a limitation unknown to “the Creator of the ends of the earth, who fainteth not, neither is weary.” It is not, therefore, an inconceivable or anomalous idea that after the stupendous power put forth in the re-organization of this sublunary creation in six days, the Elohim should have welcomed the suspension of creative work on the seventh day, as affording an opportunity of replenishing spent energy by re-absorption from the Eternal Fountain. This, at all events, is the Scripturally alleged occasion of the appointment of the seventh day of the week as a Sabbath of rest. “And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”

It is as if God said, “I (in the sense defined) rested on the seventh day : you rest.” Man’s work during the six days of the week is nothing to the work performed during the six days of creative work ; but in relation to the strength of man, it is as great as the six days creative work in relation to the strength of the angels. There is, therefore, a fitness in ordaining the Sabbath

law on such a ground. There were other reasons, however, as we have seen. One of these reasons had special reference to Israel in the day of the Sabbath enactment at Sinai. It is not mentioned in the original promulgation of the Ten Commandments ; but it was added forty years afterwards, apparently as a commentary by Moses, in whom the spirit of God was, on the occasion of his grand rehearsal of the Exodian incidents, on the plains of Moab, at the end of their forty years wandering in the wilderness : “ Remember, that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm : *therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day* ” (Deut. v. 15). The Sabbath was to be a continual memorial to Israel of their miraculous deliverance from Egypt.





## CHAPTER VI.—THE SABBATH IN GENTILE TIMES.

THE Sabbath to this day distinguishes Israel from the other nations, and separates them from the communities among whom they live. The fact is forced on attention in passing through any great European city on a Saturday. The closed shutters of many a shop tells of the Sabbath and the synagogue, and therefore of God having brought Israel from Egypt. It is one of the many Mosaic institutions which has survived in their dispersion. They offer no sacrifices ; they have no high priest or temple ; but next to the practice of circumcision, they are to be known in all countries by their suspension of secular employment on the seventh day.

It is a singular fact that in a certain form, the Sabbath law has become incorporate with the religious systems of Gentile Europe and its offshoots. It is a fact suggestive of many more thoughts that can appropriately be followed out in the present connection. For one thing it is an operation of Providence that has conferred some blessedness in advance upon the Japhetic people. It is impossible that public or private life can come to a truly good development without a periodic cessation of secular work. It was not in Gentile sagacity to see this for themselves. The institution has been established among them without their sagacity. It has been established among them as the result of the establishment of "Christianity," though it is no part of "Christianity." In this respect it is a "sign" among them that God raised Christ from the dead, just as the Mosaic Sabbath was a sign that God brought Israel out of Egypt. It is a curious situation that without the law of Moses, with which the Gentiles have nothing to do, the Gentiles, by a mistaken appropriation of the law of Moses, have come to an observance of the law of Moses through Christ, who was the end of the law of Moses for every one believing in him. It is not difficult to see how this intricate evolution has come about, and how, out of evil, God has permitted an amount of good to come that could not have been humanly foreseen.

From the day of Pentecost, A.D. 34, to the accession of Constantine as emperor of the Romans, A.D. 312, was a period during which the apostolic testimony for the resurrection of Christ had so leavened the Roman empire with conviction, that a Roman emperor sympathising with the Christian belief was able, at the head of a Roman army pervaded with a similar sympathy, to overthrow the Pagan government at Rome that had for nearly three centuries made war against the inextinguishable Christian faith. The overthrow of Paganism was so complete for the time that there arose the necessity for a new system of jurisprudence, civil and ecclesiastical. In constructing this new system, Constantine naturally sought the assistance of the heads of the new faith, which by his hand had overthrown the old. In this way the moulding of the new system, in its ecclesiastical elements, inevitably came into the hands of the bishops; and from them Constantine received with approbation the institution of the weekly Sabbath, which he promulgated as the law of the empire.

The Mosaic law enjoined the observance of the seventh day: Constantine appointed the day after, or the first day of the week, as the Sabbath. There are some in our day who make this a reason for contending for the observance of the seventh, and not the first day of the week. If it were a question of Moses *versus* Constantine, this contention would be unanswerable. But in truth it is not a question of one or the other for the brethren of the Lord. Constantine is not their lawgiver; and they are certainly "not under the law" (Rom. vi. 14-15), but under Christ, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. x. 4), and who never enjoined the observance of the Sabbath.

How, then, came the bishops to recommend to Constantine the observance of the Mosaic Sabbath on the first day of the week? There are two well-authenticated facts in the case that supply the answer. The first is, that the disciples in the apostolic age, by apostolic precept and example, established the practice of "assembling themselves together" on "the first day of the week" for "the breaking of bread in remembrance of the Lord" (Luke xxii. 19-20; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 17, 23-28: xvi. 2; Heb. x. 25), probably out of historic harmony with the fact that on that day the Lord first showed himself alive to the disciples after his resurrection, and ate and drank with them (Luke xxiv.). This practice being established during the life-time of the apostles would

naturally become the practice of believers in whatever part of the world ecclesias were formed. As a matter of fact, it is testified by several of the ecclesiastical writers of the second and third centuries that such was the practice everywhere. This accounts for the transmission of the first day of the week to Constantine's time as the day of Christian assembly.

But how came it to be invested with a Mosaic character? Here the second fact comes to our aid, viz.: that during the lifetime of the apostles there was a large party among believers (who were mostly Jewish at first) who contended strenuously for the observance of the law of Moses, concurrently with submission to the gospel, as a condition of acceptability with God. No one can be an attentive and habitual reader of the New Testament without knowing this. On the very threshold of the apostolic enterprise we read, in Acts xv. 5, 24, of "certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed," who contended "that it was needful to circumcise the Gentile believers, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Paul's epistle bears evidence of the contentious activity of this class years afterwards in parts widely distant from Judea. "Tell me," he exclaims, in writing to the Galatians, "*ye that desire to be under the law*, do ye not hear the law?" and he proceeds to unfold an argument intended to prove that Christ is of no use to those who put themselves under the law (Gal. v. 4), and that it is the duty of his brethren "to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage" (verse 1). That his argument would be effectual with some, there cannot be a doubt; but that it failed to silence and convince the agitators, we have positive evidence in the letters written afterwards, in which he recurs to the subject itself, and renews his warnings against the Judaisers (Phil. iii. 2, 3, 6-9; Col. ii. 13-17; 1 Tim. i. 6-7; 2 Tim. ii. 14, 18; Titus i. 10-14). Not only so, but he foretold their triumph in the community that had been developed by the labours of the apostles (Acts xx. 29; 2 Tim. ii. 17; iii. 13; iv. 3, 4). The epistles of John, written forty years later, show us the great strides that had been made within that time in the fulfilment of the prophecy. The thing had really begun in Paul's day, for he had to say, "All they that be of Asia (the Lesser) are turned away from me" (2 Tim. i. 15). But in John's day, John had to say "Many false prophets (teachers) are gone out into the world . . . the world heareth them" (1 John iv. 1, 5).

Consequently, we should make a great mistake if we looked upon the community headed up by the bishops under Constantine as a community founded upon apostolic principles in their purity and truth. It was a community that had been widely leavened with Judaism, as illustrated in their observance of "Easter" and other feasts of a Jewish origin, the substitution of "baptism" on the eighth day in the room of circumcision, the exaltation of the original simple "pastors and teachers" into the position of priests and Levites, the exaction of tithes for their maintenance, and the transmutation of the first day assembly for the breaking of bread, into the place of the Mosaic Sabbath. Nevertheless, out of the corruption came this good result. A Sabbath rest once in seven days became a law of Europe—a result which ameliorated the barbarism of the nations, and at the same time secured legal liberty, as at this day, for the true friends of Christ everywhere to hold that memorial assembly which is so necessary to their spiritual well-being.

The attempt to enforce the Mosaic Sabbath as a rule of individual duty for the friends of Christ in this age is in direct violation of Christ's teaching as to their relation to the Mosaic law, and the law of the Sabbath in particular, whether by himself or his apostles. He is never found by his own mouth enjoining the law of Moses on believers. He rather seeks to fasten attention on himself. Though he was born under the law (Gal. iv. 4) and obedient in all things (Heb. v. 8-9), he places himself above the law in the precepts he enjoins, as manifest from the recurring phrase in "the sermon on the mount:" "*Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time,*" thus and so ("hate thine enemy"). "BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, love your enemies" (Matt. v. 43-44; also 21, 27, 31, 33, and 38). This over-vaulting authority is also asserted in those remarkable expressions: "A greater than Solomon is here . . . a greater than Jonas is here . . . in this place is one greater than the temple" (Luke xi. 31-32; Matt. xii. 6). Jesus truly came to fulfil the law, but he came to "fulfil" in a much higher sense than merely conforming to the letter of its enactment. He came to end it by accomplishing in himself all that it foreshadowed, plucking the sting out of it by giving himself up to its curse in suffering himself to be crucified.

These things are testified, and will not be ignored by minds in earnest about truth. The testimony is explicit. "Christ is the end of the law" (Rom. x. 4). "The law is a shadow of good

things to come . . . the body is of Christ" (Heb. x. 1 ; Col. ii. 17). He "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. ii. 14). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' . . . The law was our schoolmaster . . . We are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal. iii. 13, 24, 25).

It follows that the statement of Heb. viii. 8 is a simple assertion of fact that "there is verily a *disannulling of the commandment* going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof, for the law made nothing perfect but (in the sense of) the bringing in of a better hope." If the law is "disannulled," the Sabbath as a part of it is displaced from the position it occupied under Moses. Its observance is no longer essential to the righteousness that is acceptable to God. Its neglect no longer exposes the offender to death as it once did (Ex. xxxi. 15). The Israelites were not allowed to kindle a fire or leave their dwellings on the Sabbath day (Ex. xxxv. 3). A man was stoned to death for gathering sticks on that day (Num. xv. 33). But this severity, which was necessary for the protection of the institution, has been relaxed. The day itself is obsolete as a religious exercise, that is to say, obsolete by Divine appointment. The change dates from the first appearing of Christ. He proclaimed himself "Lord also of the Sabbath day," in the sense of having authority to do work on that day if he saw fit in the execution of his mission (Mark ii. 28). The Sabbath, intended as a blessing, had in Christ's day degenerated into a day of oppressive restraint and formalism ; and Christ had to remind his generation that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark ii. 27). In all cases in which he appears in connection with the Sabbath, it is in opposition to those who stickled for what might be called a sabbatarian treatment of the day. Let the following illustrate :—

1. A synagogue ruler had testily said to the people who were so attentive to Jesus : "There are six days in which men ought to work. In them, therefore, let them come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." Jesus said : "Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath day loose his ox or his ass from the stall and lead him away to watering, and ought not this woman . . . to be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" (Luke xiii. 14).

2. On another occasion the Pharisees having found fault with the disciples for plucking the ears of corn as they passed through a field on the Sabbath day, Jesus said: "Have ye not read in the law how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple *profane the Sabbath*, and are blameless? But I say unto you that in this place is one greater than the temple. If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned *the guiltless*. For the Son of Man is *Lord even of the Sabbath day*" (Matt. xii. 5-8).

3. "And it came to pass on another Sabbath that he entered into the synagogue and taught . . . and the Scribes and Pharisees watched him whether he would heal on the Sabbath day. . . . And Jesus said unto them, I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it? And looking round about upon them, he said unto the man (with the withered hand), Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so, and his hand was restored whole as the other" (Luke vi. 6).

4. "He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath day, and they watched him. And behold, there was a certain man before him who had the dropsy, and Jesus said, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? And they held their peace. . . . And they could not answer him again to these things" (Luke xiv. 1, 6).

5. "After this, there was a feast of the Jews. . . . And Jesus saith unto him (an impotent man), 'Rise, take up thy bed and walk.' And immediately the man was made whole and took up his bed and walked. And the same day was the Sabbath Day. The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, 'It is the Sabbath Day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.'" He answered them, 'He that made me whole, the same said unto me, *'Take up thy bed and walk.'* . . . Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath Day. But Jesus answered them, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.' Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him because he had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (Jno. v. 1, 8-11, 16-18).

6. "If a man on the Sabbath Day receive circumcision that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry at me

because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath" (Jno. vii. 23).

7. "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man that was blind from his birth. And . . . he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, 'Go wash in the pool of Siloam' (which is by interpretation, sent). He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing. . . . And it was the Sabbath Day when Jesus *made the clay* and opened his eyes. . . . 'Therefore,' said some of the Pharisees, 'this man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath Day'" (Jno. ix. 1, 5, 14, 16).

There can be no mistaking the attitude on the Sabbath question illustrated by these passages from the life of Christ. There are no others of a contrary tenour. As for the apostles, they not only teach, as we have seen, that the law of Moses is "done away in Christ" (2 Cor. iii. 11-14), but they single out the Sabbath for special indication. Paul says to the Colossians, Christ having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon or of THE SABBATH, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ" (Col. ii. 16, 17). Paul's fear of the Galatians was founded on the fact that they "observed DAYS and months and times and years" (Gal. iv. 10). He reminded them that Christ was "made under the law that he might redeem them that were under the law" (verses 4, 5), who before time were "under the elements" of that system (verse 3), but had now "received the adoption of sons," which made it an utterly incongruous thing in the eyes of Paul that they should "turn again to the weak and beggarly elements" of the law. "Tell me," says he, "ye that desire to be *under the law*," and proceeded with the allegory of Sarah and Hagar (verses 9, 21). To the Romans he plainly says that the observance of days which was imperative under Moses is a matter of indifference to those who stand in Christ. "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day regardeth it unto the Lord. He that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it" (Rom. xiv. 5, 6).

It is evident, therefore, that those make a great mistake who speak of "the Christian Sabbath" in the sense of its being a day

to be observed by believers in Christ as the seventh day was observed under Moses. In fact, there is no such thing in scriptural truth as "the Christian Sabbath." It is a misnomer, in so far as it may imply appointment by Christ. Christ appointed no Sabbath, and the Sabbath of Moses was the seventh and not the first day of the week. Christ appointed the assembly of his brethren to break bread in remembrance of him, and by apostolic usage, this assembly was held on the first day of the week, but this is a different thing from keeping the day holy as a day. On this we have no command, and "where there is no law, there is no transgression." The Sabbatarians, whether of the first or seventh day type, are seeking to impose a yoke where God has imposed none. True it is that "the law is good if a man use it lawfully" (1 Tim. i. 8), and that the cessation from secular work once in seven days is a good thing. A man is at liberty to do this if he choose, and to set the day apart for special exercises in a religious direction if he choose; but he has no authority to lay down an imperative law for himself or others where God has imposed none. The only law laid upon believers in such a manner is to "forsake not the assembly of themselves together"; and apostolic example leads them to obey this law on the first day of the week, and to make the breaking of bread "in remembrance" of Christ the chief feature of it. The command to keep any particular day "holy" belongs to the law of Moses, which has been corruptly copied by State Christianity and a false church. The abuse has been carried to such absurd lengths in the Greek and Latin communions that there is no part of the year's calendar that is not dotted over with so-called "holy" days. The Sabbath will be re-instituted in the "kingdom restored to Israel" along with the passover and other feasts (Ezek. xlv. 17-21); but that will concern the mortal populations who have the privilege to be ruled by the saints. It does not concern either the one or the other now in this era of downtreading of all things divine. The only divine work that is going on now is the preparation of a people for the Lord's own use as fellow-rulers with him in the glory to be revealed; and their preparation is by the belief and obedience of the gospel and not by any of the institutions of Moses, which for the time being have all been taken out of the way.

The argument that finds warrant in Eden for an obligatory Sabbath (seventh day or first) has its full answer in the fact that the practice of Eden before sin had entered is no guide for these

expatriated times. Any contention based on pre-Mosaic practice must apply also to the sacrifice of animals, for that is also an element in the antediluvian service. If the answer be made that sacrifice was superseded by the death of Christ, it has to be rejoined that the same is also true of the Sabbath; "the body (or substance) of which is of Christ," as Paul says in the words already quoted. We have the true Sabbath in Christ, who said "I will give you rest," or Sabbath. Under the law, a man laboured in his own works to establish his own righteousness with a sense of burden that was grievous to be borne, feeling it a yoke, as Peter says, which they were not able to bear (Acts xv. 10). The "strength of sin," as a destroyer, lay "in the law," as Paul testifies (1 Cor. xv. 56). It condemned sinners to death, and all were sinners, who "through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14). But in Christ, their righteousness was by faith of him (Rom. iii. 21-22), not their own righteousness, which was by the law, but the righteousness which was of God by faith (Phil. iii. 9). Therefore all who entered Christ entered the true Sabbath keeping, in ceasing from their own works, as the ground of their hope towards God. The offered favour of God with forgiveness became the ground of their hope, and imparted peace and joy. This was the "rest" into which, in a preliminary form, Paul taught that believers entered. "He that is entered into his rest *hath ceased from his own works* as God did from His" (on the seventh day) (Heb. iv. 10). It all has reference to the final Sabbath of the kingdom, the rest that remaineth for the people of God in the seventh period of a thousand years; when all the toil-worn human race will cease from their vain efforts to work out their own blessedness, and accept in grateful humility the long-covenanted blessedness of Abraham and his seed which will come on all who yield to needful faith and submission.





## CHAPTER VII.—THE REST OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

WE have lingered on the Fourth Commandment, because of its complexity in some respects, and the important bearing of its several elements. The remaining commandments are simpler, though not less important.

With the exception of the fifth, they are all negatives, interdicts, forbiddings—telling men what *not* to do. We discover on reflection how large a part of tolerable human conduct is determined by this. Man is capable of doing many things inconsistent with the well-being of his fellow-man. He has more in his power in this respect than any of the animals. His very talents fit him to be more offensive than they ; and the desire for his own advantage renders him liable to employ those talents in the hurt and destruction of all who stand in the way of the gratification of his desires. Hence, the very great importance of these interdicts, the observance of which constitutes the difference between civilization and barbarism.

The excellent result of their observance is manifest to all, but the obligation to observe them is only feebly recognised, as the result of wrong views as to the nature of their obligation. Men imagine that because they are good rules of conduct, the obligation to submit to them arises from their intrinsic excellence, and not from the exterior authority prescribing them, whereas it will be found that the obligation to obey them rests on their authority, and not on their nature at all. Their authority arises from the fact that God has enacted them, and not from the character of the things enacted. The things enacted are good, but this is only a secondary phase.

Clear views are very essential here. Uncertain or fallacious views are at the bottom of all the moral laxities undermining society everywhere. If a man imagine he is only bound to obey laws that are agreeable to him, or that commend themselves to him, he will insensibly ignore the disagreeable laws and tolerate the agreeable ones if convenient. Obedience as the law of

righteousness will be set aside, and the power of the commandments destroyed. Man in that case will be his own law-giver, with the sorry result that there will be no law. Human inclination will be the rule of action, which will draw all into a bog at last. "Thou shalt not" has no power, unless the speaker has authority to forbid. And who has authority to prescribe limitations to the exercise of created power but the Creator Himself! When this authority is recognised, and God's authorship of the Commandments is admitted, the Commandments have great power.

We live in an age when it is considered a sign of intellectual weakness to accord this recognition, and when it is looked upon as the fitting part of old ladies and Sunday-school children only, to stand in fear of the Commandments of God. Let this be searched to the foundation, and it will be found that the intellectual weakness is on the other side.

The world is clever, but not half clever enough. If it were as knowing as it thinks it is, it would break through the glammers of sophistical philosophy, which its scribes and babblers have so industriously woven around its faculties for the last two hundred years, and stand forth in the clear-sighted perceptions of common-sense with the imperative resolution to walk wise and sensible ways on the common road, instead of lying in the ditch like a maudlin inebriate, apostrophising his superior qualities and sinking deeper in the mire.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT ("Honour thy father and thy mother") is the first commandment of the ten having to do with human affairs; and it is an injunction of the positive sort. It is not a prohibition. It is mentioned by Paul as "the first commandment with promise." Its position in these respects seems to mark it with a peculiar emphasis—as if God set this commandment high among the indications of His will; as if it were said, "to not do the things condemned in the remaining commandments is good, but to do this which is commanded is better." And surely there is no more beautiful sight under the sun than to see intellectual children, young or old, doing honour to father and mother; and nothing uglier in the wickedness that now covers the earth than the habit of making light of parental authority, and of treating father and mother with disrespect. It was one of God's complaints against Israel that there were among them those that "made light of father and mother." It must be no less odious to Him to hear the universal flippancies in which father and mother are referred to

among "Christianised" Gentiles, in terms the opposite of reverential or even decent.

Carlyle well said that the lack of reverence was one of the fatalest maladies of the present age. Public and private well-being withers for want of it. Instead of reverence, there is conceit and scorn and frivolity. The fountain of all reverences is reverence for God. What is to be done in an age that accounts reverence for God a superstition? It cannot be cured by argument. It can only be fitly dealt with by those strokes of judgment which belong to the Second Coming of Christ, so nearly due by all the signs. When the proclamation is made, "Fear God and give Him glory, for the hour of His judgment is come," there will be a beginning of events that will strike into the hearts of men that fear that cannot be insinuated by the utmost arts of logic and entreaty in times of safety. "When thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." When the fear of God prevails, the honour of father and mother will accompany.

It is a commandment founded deeply on the reason of things. It ensures the development in the child of the highest faculty of the mind—the faculty of worship—the ultimate purpose of man's existence. When the child comes into the world, its mind is a blank in all directions. Everything depends upon exercise as to how development will take place. If the child hears nothing but laughter and scorn and profanity, its higher capacities never will open: it will assimilate to surroundings, and grow up an insipid buffoon. But let it be taught that reverence and obedience to father and mother are duties which must be enforced, it will grow up in that deferential mood and attitude which will readily be transferred to God, when enlightenment opens the understanding in that high direction. The fear of parents is the best education in the fear of God. The commandment concerns the highest well-being of the child.

It is also most reasonable as regards the parents. "Honour to whom honour is due," saith the word of inspiration by Paul. To whom should honour be paid if not by offspring to those who have been the means of their existence, and who have toiled in the midst of many anxieties and sorrows to open their way and remove their difficulties in the opening sphere of life? To whom should children deferentially submit if not to those who have gone before them in the struggle with evil, and who necessarily have more of the knowledge that can come only with experience? What if there

are sometimes foolish parents, it is less an evil that the children of these (in all probability no wiser) should honour and obey father and mother, than that a good and a just rule should be relaxed in thousands of other cases where it is for the good of the children that the authority of father and mother should be the unquestioned law of the house. It is the will of God that it should be so, and this is the end of the matter. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," he did not exclude a feature of his will having so prominent a place in the Ten Commandments, and so expressly re-enacted in apostolic teaching. The blessedness of mankind that is coming will arise from the doing of the will of God and the consequent blessing of God in all things. Conspicuous among the blessed ways of that happy day will be the universal spectacle of wise parents reverentially obeyed, and well-trained children in subjection with all gravity. It is a pleasing feature of Jewish life that parents are highly esteemed to their latest breath. Gentile life will never be blessed till a similar state of things prevails amongst them.

The child brought up to honour father and mother will more easily conform to the commandments that follow than the child that is allowed to follow its own inclination. The natural mind, left to itself, Paul truly testifies, "is not subject to the law of God." This law enjoins in THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT, "Thou shalt not kill." Nothing is more natural than to kill when anger is roused, or self-interest is obstructed by another. That murder is not common we owe to the modifying effect of this commandment operating in many generations, and to the restraints of human law arising out of it. Everybody allows that killing fellow-creatures is wrong; but there is nothing in the abstract to make it so. It is divine law alone that has created the moral aspect of the act. A man kills vermin without any sense of wrong-doing; so also he freely takes the life of the lower animals when they are required for food. There is nothing physically different in the act of killing a man. It is only God's interdiction that has made the difference. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man." Law is powerful when its authority is recognised. It builds a stronger wall than stone around human life. Such a law was necessary. Human cleverness and human resentment combined would have destroyed the human race long ago if individual men had been at liberty to kill their neighbour when inclined to do so. The beasts do so, but they are not only

incapable of receiving a law, they do not require such a law. They are not intelligent enough to be dangerous to each other except on the limited scale that is needful to check over-propagation.

But there is a higher protection to life than law, and that is love. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10). Law came first, but the work of God in its second stage aims at securing the objects of the law by bringing about the condition of mind that will spontaneously lead to the performance of the demands of law. By the second stage we are to understand the fulfilment of the law in Christ, who was not only obedient to the law Himself, but gave commandments that lead to its best obedience in all who obey Him. The point is illustrated in the very case in question. Jesus, referring to it, says: "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, *thou shalt not kill*, BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." So that under the law of Christ, anger becomes the crime that killing was under the law of Moses. The law of Christ is very express on the point. He himself says: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. (If ye love me, keep my commandments.) By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another" (John xiii. 34 [xiv. 15] 35). And John, his beloved disciple, commenting on the subject, by the Spirit, says in his first epistle, "He that saith I know him and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. He that hateth his brother is in darkness and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth. . . . Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love" (1 John ii. 4, 11 : iv. 7, 8).

Consequently, the obligation to love is one of the obligations of the truth, and the failure to love is coming short of the truth. The love demanded is even greater than the love of the brethren, which is an easy thing where men are brethren in deed and in truth. It goes beyond the loving of those who are lovable. It is called for in directions where nature fails to yield it: "Love ye your enemies, bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you" (Matt. v. 44). At first sight it might seem impossible to love by command; but experience disproves this impression. While it is true that mere injunction in the abstract will not enable a man

to overcome his antipathies, it is also true that the edict of one who is loved has power to constrain against natural inclinations. "Love him for my sake" is an appeal of which we all know the power in human connections some time or other in life. The power is in the ratio of our love for the person speaking. If Christ says this, the same principle holds good. We will find it easy to do what he commands if his love is strong in us, and if we have him before our eyes in the sense of Paul's exhortation to "Let Christ dwell in our hearts by faith." Hence the secret of triumph lies in knowing Christ and forming that intimacy with him that results from daily familiarity with the word of his truth. Knowledge comes before love. How can we love anyone of whom we are ignorant? To know the lovely is to love, but if you know not the loveliness, the loveliness exists in vain for you. Where or how can we become effectually acquainted with the loveliness of it, but in contact with the record in which the loveliness is displayed?

When we begin to know "the love of Christ that passeth knowledge" (Eph. iii. 19), we shall find ourselves beginning to be able to do what he commands, even when it goes against the grain. We shall be able to do good to them that hate us, and certainly to refrain from rendering evil to them who do evil to us. To have the heart open to love in all directions for his sake brings even now "the peace of God that passeth all understanding," and will at last be requited by such a harvest of love as shall surpass our utmost dreams, in the day when God shall root the wicked and the unloving out of the earth, and suffer only His own tried and loving family, who will be united in Him to one another by everlasting bonds of incorruptibility and life that will never pass away.

It might not seem as if THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT yielded any such insight into the wisdom of God. It is far otherwise when we consider all things. Sexual affinity is the one thing above all our other faculties requiring the powerful regulation of law. It is a necessity in the present state of existence, and, in its right employment, a source of pure blessing, whether we consider the individual benefits it confers, or the immortal race that will finally people the earth as the result (in part) of its action. But, left to itself, there is no more potent blaster and destroyer of the human species. It is like fire—one of the most useful servants of man, but requiring the most rigorous confinement in grates and bars. Nothing but the stern and imperative restriction of law is equal to its management. Apart from law there is no guidance.

“Where there is no law, there is no transgression.” If God had not laid down a law, there would have been nothing but a human sense of expediency to regulate the most powerful of human inclinations—which all experience and all history show to be futile. But the law of God having spoken, sin is created when the limits of the law are transcended, and thus a powerful barrier is put up against the torrent of human passion—that is, where the law is revered, which it is by all the children of God, for those who do not revere His law are not His children (as all Scriptures declare).

David said, “Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law.” There is no more common cause of sorrow in our eyes than the almost universal disposition to get rid of divine law in this matter by sophistries born of lust, and to substitute plausible theories that undermine morality and lead men and women to destruction. There are “great swelling words” and small insinuating suggestions; there are elegant poetisings and romancings, and vulgar indecencies and profanities; there are pretentious and sententious philosophical theories, which even ladies shame their sex by countenancing, and there are disgusting flippancies of unblushing fools, all of which are to be classified under a common heading of ignorant rebellion. The rebelliousness is self-conceit, for the law of God is plain and express. The ignorance may not be so apparent, but it is the true root of the mischief. Either there is a want of conviction that God has spoken—the most common because due to neglect of the sources of conviction—which is one form of ignorance; or there is a want of confidence in the wisdom of what He has communicated, which is another form of ignorance.

To knowledge, the matter stands in a perfectly plain position. Two principles cover the whole ground. 1. The adjustment of male and female is just as purely mechanical as the adjustment of food to the mouth. 2. The intervention of the law of God, and this alone, imparts a moral character to the relation. When this is perceived, there is no room for the defiling sophistries by which the simplest matter of right and wrong is obscured, and men and women nonplussed to their own destruction. Remove law, and there is nothing but the deceitful winds and currents of inclination which draw to perdition. Let law remain, and we have a simple rule which is light and life, a safe anchorage, and a sure foundation. It is fortunately not a matter in which human will has any jurisdiction. Whatever men may think or do with the

law, the law is there, reiterated a hundred times in the Scriptures both of the prophets and the apostles. It is the law of God whether men know it or not. It is the joy of those who are enlightened. These have a very short and decisive answer to all demoralising theories and speculations on the relations of the sexes: "Get thee behind me, Satan," they say to libertinism in every shape and form — whether free love, promiscuous use, harlotry or temporary marriages by so-called "affinity." "It is wrong because God forbids it, and for no other reason, and there cannot be a moment's compromise with what is wrong." Marry whom you will, but once married, man and woman are one flesh by Divine law, and "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge," to their utter destruction (Heb. xiii. 4).

As in the case of murder, so in this. The law of Christ lifts the matter a stage higher, and kills disobedience in its very inception. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you that whoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Hence Christ not only forbids adultery, but forbids the thoughts and feelings that lead to it. Doubtless, many an earnest mind has groaned under the stringency of this law; and some may even have been disposed to murmur with certain unsuccessful disciples in the days of Jesus. "This is an hard saying, who can bear it?" But the fruits of victory are so sweet that the wisdom of law is more than justified. What could more powerfully tend to the development of pure-mindedness than the deprecation of impure thoughts? and what is nobler and sweeter, and what more fitting as a preparation for exaltation to immortal life, than that "holiness both of body and spirit" which such a law tends to engender? In this respect it is like the command to bear injuries unresentfully: it is a powerful self-circumcision which chastens and subdues the natural man, and leaves room for the growth of that new man "which after (the image of) God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 24).

"THOU SHALT NOT STEAL." This, THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT, is well known to all the world. As a rule of human conduct it seems very much a matter of course, but on reflection, it will appear that this is only the result of familiarity. Apart from law, there is no reason why one man should not take what is in another

man's possession if he can, like the beasts of the field. This is what men are seeing in the wrong sense. Atheism obliterates divine law, and then reason acting on wrong premises, provokes anarchy and socialism. But atheism is folly and falsehood. God is the only sufficient explanation of the universe of wisdom and power in which we live and which exists in Him. His spoken word is the only rational basis of law for man. The eighth commandment is part of His spoken word. It bears the impress of its origin. It was a consummate legislative achievement to invent a name for the wrongful act of taking, and to prohibit the act under that name. To have said "Thou shalt not wrongfully acquire," or "Thou shalt not take what is in the use of another," would not have been nearly so telling. It would have meant the same in effect, but would not have invested the act with the obloquy attaching to a single deprecatory term.

The commandment is a recognition of personal possession as the basis of society. No other basis can be conceived as a practical one. If the sum total belonged to all, as in the schemes of socialism, there would be no scope for individual character and responsibility, and human character would dwarf to a workhouse level. If nothing were allowed to belong to any, each would take and keep by force what he could get, and the conflict of individual graspings would reduce life to a chaos and the world to a desert. The simple but wise and powerful law that each man shall have the right to possess what he can lawfully acquire, modified by those other laws that require him to consider his neighbour and to contribute to the well-being of the whole, is the sure basis of social order and civilised human life. It only requires to be regulated by infallible and just authority to make the earth an abode of joyful life. This will be realised in the Kingdom of God, and not before. How far individual possession will be a feature of immortal life in the perfect age beyond, has not been fully revealed. There appears to be a hint in that direction in the use of the word "inherit," as applied to the Kingdom of God, taken in connection with the intimation that "he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully," and that those who are faithful in the use of the unrighteous mammon shall have "true riches" confided to their keeping. Any way, we know that all will be well when "the tabernacle of God is with men."

"THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOUR;" this command by its own force places truth-speaking on

the basis of moral obligation. To say what is not true seems in itself a cowardly and a mean thing scientifically and artistically considered. It is an offence against the laws of harmony and correct adjustment. But by this command (which occurs in many forms throughout the Scriptures), it becomes wrong and criminal and hateful. Truth-speaking is as noble as lying is contemptible. "All liars shall have their portion in the lake of fire that burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. xxi. 8).

"THOU SHALT NOT COVET . . . anything that is thy neighbour's." This is the finishing excellence of all these beneficent commandments. A man might worship, observe the Sabbath, revere parents, and refrain from murder, adultery, theft, and lying, and yet have an avaricious eye on all that was around him. What a blemish would this be in an otherwise beautiful character. Disinterestedness comes in as a polish on all the precious stones.

Well might Moses extol the law, of which, though described by his name, he disclaimed the authorship. Well might he say: "Keep, therefore, and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. . . . What nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I have set before you this day." This encomium is applicable to the whole law, but especially to the Ten Commandments, which are its kernel.

It will be our duty, in future chapters, if God permit, to pass the general body of the law under review, in the two aspects expressed in our general title—1, as a rule of national life, and 2, the enigmatic enunciation of Divine principles and purposes.





## CHAPTER VIII.—THE LAND.

THE law of Moses was a civil polity as well as a system of spiritual guidance and prophecy, that is, it was a system of rules for regulating the relations of mortals living together as a community, as well as a revelation of individual principles of action and the foreshadowing of the divine purpose with man. It will be profitable to look at it in this character before entering upon the significances concealed in its ceremonies.

It differs in many important respects from the systems upon which modern civilisation is based. In some respects, the differences may appear to be in favour of modern systems, but on consideration it may be found that this feeling is due to the mere bias of habitude, and that the law of Moses was more calculated to evoke the true conditions of social well-being, than the current modern systems.

It certainly cannot be said that modern systems are a success. They have developed two hurtful extremes : they have, on the one hand, created exaggerated individual importance as the adjunct of congested wealth, and on the other, they have debased vast masses of mankind by disconnection from hereditary estate, and subjection to incessant toil for a bare subsistence. Between the two, the true aims of human life have been lost, and abortion of all kinds produced. Mankind, instead of living together as the common and delighted sharers of a mutually ensured benefaction, are insulated from each other by exigencies which compel them to be competitors, and reduce them to the position of a scrambling crowd of dogs, quarrelling over food thrown promiscuously among them. Under such conditions, the evil in human nature gets the hopeless upper hand. The good that many would rejoice to see is choked and extinguished in the war of conflicting interests.

The law of Moses was designed and adapted for a people living on the land in limited individual holdings, and not for masses crowded together in great cities. In this, it showed a feature of wisdom that is now being recognised. Politicians of a philanthropic turn are agitating for the settlement of the people on the

land as one remedy for the threatening social maladies of the state. They find their ideas make slow headway. The land is everywhere in the hands of a caste. The ground wants clearing as it only can be cleared by power. In France, the power took a revolutionary form, and gave only a partial result because it was human.

In the land for which the law of Moses was designed, the ground was cleared by the hand of divine power co-operating with Israel. An effectual clearance was divinely ordered to be made by the extermination of the wicked inhabitants of the land. "Slay utterly old and young : leave nothing behind that breatheth." On the land thus cleared, a new settlement was made on a basis that has never been approached by human legislation for wisdom and beneficence. We see this when we ask—what are the objects to be aimed at in the employment of the land? The land is the source of what man requires, and it ought to be handled so that its benefits should be generally diffused among all the population, and this system of general diffusion of benefit should be protected from the encroachment of individual avarice or the exigencies of individual misfortune. Under the Gentile law, capable greed can add field to field till there is no room for the less gifted, or misfortune can shake a man out of his land and reduce him to permanent beggary. This ought not to be. The land ought to be as unmonopolisable as the air of heaven, because it was intended that all men should be served by the field. It ought not to be in the power of any man to annex vast areas which are for the common weal. It ought not to be in the power of misfortune to remove the population from the land and huddle them into pens. The difficulty is to combine this freedom with secure individual possession and liberty of traffic. The difficulty is effectually solved by the land law that God gave to Israel.

First of all, the land was to be divided among the people, to every family a possession, according to the number. "Ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance amongst your families ; to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer, ye shall give the less inheritance" (Num. xxxiii. 54). The division was not to be by caprice or partiality or favour. "Every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth" (*ib*). This injunction was fully carried out when the conquest of the land had been effected. It is one of the most interesting of the transactions recorded in the division of the land, though at first the driest looking. It would be far from a dry business to those who, after

40 years weary wilderness life, were waiting to know the spot on which they were to settle. The description of the process occupies seven or eight whole chapters in Joshua.

The most interesting quotable passage is perhaps the following: "The whole congregation assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them. And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, how long are ye slack to go to possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you. Give out from among you three men for each tribe, and I will send them and they shall rise and go through the land and describe it according to the inheritance of them, and they shall come again to me . . . and they shall describe the land into seven parts and bring the description hither to me that I may cast lots for you here before the Lord our God . . . and the men went and passed through the land and described it by cities into seven parts in a book and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh before the Lord, and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions" (Josh. xviii. 1-10).

Here was a *pro rata* division of the land to all the people, and not to a class as in other countries—our own vaunted England included. There were no "landed gentry" in Israel, or rather, the whole nation was a nation of landed gentry. The whole people were a territorial aristocracy, as the name Israel signified in a sense—a prince of God. They were rooted in the land.

The next feature of the land law was calculated to protect it from the disturbing effect of changing circumstances. Under ordinary conditions, a single generation suffices to remove the occupiers of land from the land they own. Misfortune overtakes a family. If they have property, the first thing they do to stem the flood is to borrow money on it to meet pressing demands. The tide not turning, they are unable to pay the interest, and the mortgagee then either enters into possession or sells the property to get his mortgage money, and the original owners lose all connection with it, and disappear in the general turgid stream of poverty that roars around.

Under the Israelitish land law, this was impossible. Each holding was an inalienable family possession. If the family got

into difficulties, they could mortgage it, but not for ever ; it could only remain in the hands of a stranger until the year of jubilee (every fiftieth year). The law compelled its restitution in that year without the re-payment of any money whatever (Lev. xxv. 12-13). The result of this was most wholesome : it limited the borrowing powers of the family : the only sum they could get was the value of its occupancy during the number of years that might have to run to the year of jubilee (Lev. xxv. 15-16). And it put it out of their power to permanently beggar themselves : the family lands were bound to come back to them in a certain number of years. This was no injustice to the lender or buyer : the sum advanced by him would be more than recouped by the fruits of the land during the years of his occupancy : "according to the multitude of years, thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price thereof : for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee" (verse 16).

Such a law prevented many evils well known to Gentile life. It stood in the way of the creation of large estates. It kept the land in its original distribution among the mass of the people—preventing the impoverishment of the community on the one hand, and the amassing of immense individual fortunes on the other. It preserved a social equilibrium by nipping in the bud those fearful inequalities that are the bane of modern life. It rendered impossible the splendour and squalor—the "progress and poverty"—the depths of brutalising poverty side by side with Parnassian heights of inflating opulence—which oppress and disgrace the civilisation of this much-vaunted but most afflicted age.

As a matter of dry legal structure, the difference between the Mosaic and the modern land law might be defined as the difference between a self-extinguishing mortgage, on which no interest requires to be paid, and a mortgage which lasts for ever, and adds unpaid interest to principal in an ever-increasing burden which at last sinks it into perdition. The difference might not seem material as a matter of terms : as a matter of working out, the difference is great. Those who have any experience in such matters will know how great the difference is : It is incalculable. The one is full of blessedness, the other is full of woe. The one is the device of beneficent wisdom, the other the outcome of human avarice. The one secures the general diffusion of the goodness of God, the other allows of astute men fleecing their neighbours under the guise of

legitimate legal formalities, and enables them to scramble to eminence over the prostrate bodies of the helpless.

To the general body of people in our day—especially such as have been called to the Kingdom—the subject may not appear to have any interesting or obvious bearing on human welfare. They know nothing of the possession of property beyond the tables and chairs which they use in the consumption of hard-earned daily meals, and the subject of mortgages and land laws is to them a far-off and repulsive legal affair. But the subject comes very near for all that. One of the cures for the world's present social derangements lies in the application of a wise land-law; and no land-law now in force is wise. The only wise land-law is the law that God gave to Israel. The proposed "nationalisation" of the land might be an improvement upon the present utterly bad system; but it would not come near the Mosaic which, while conserving the economic interests of the community, fostered family life in the strongest and most ennobling form. A humble and intelligent and industrious family life is the true foundation of national well-being and efficiency.

It requires the two things supplied by the law of Moses for its best development, the worship of God and the possession and cultivation of the land. Life on the land tends to that degree of humility that is reasonable and beautiful; and with the plenty that comes from a fertile soil for which no rent has to be paid, it tends to enlarge the heart, and ward off that dwarfing and pinching of the character that results from the imperious necessities of limited city life. "Nationalization" would leave land open to traffic and exploitation as now—in a different way, but with the same unhappy results. "Familization" is the true system, with a periodic year of release and general free restitution. This system is unattainable except at the point of the sword. It is interesting, meanwhile, to be able to realise the excellence of the system as a feature of the divine law once in vogue on the earth. It was established by the sword in that case, and it will be established by the sword again.

The objection has been made that the system of inalienable family possession did not sufficiently provide for the increase of population. This objection is sufficiently met by the reflection that any land law is necessarily temporary in view of the purpose of God to limit mortal life on the earth to a definite era, and that being temporary, it would be adapted to the length of time it had

to run. We have no indication of the extent of the allotments that were distributed to Israel when the land was cleared of its inhabitants. We may be quite sure they would be large enough to allow for family increase for a great while to come. It would take a long time for a family to grow too numerous for maintenance on an ample farm to which all would have to contribute their quota of labour.

There were several minor features of excellence in the Mosaic land law. Every seventh year, the land was to be left untilled : "Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard and gather in the fruit thereof. But in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land—a Sabbath for the Lord : thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard" (Lev. xxv. 3-4). It is when we consider the objects of this law that we can see its wisdom. Agricultural science has discovered the virtue of giving the land an occasional rest to prevent the exhaustion of its fertility ; this may have been included in the objects aimed at in the Mosaic law. But the specified object opens out quite another line of consideration : "*that the poor of thy people may eat*, and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat" (Ex. xxiii. 11). The land, left to "rest and lie still" during the seventh year, would bring forth "that which groweth of its own accord" (Lev. xxv. 5). This was to be at the service of all comers, with one condition only—that they were poor. That year, there would be no trespass laws. There would be common thoroughfare over all land, with a free welcome to whatever might be found useful. What a spectacle on earth!—the products of every estate and farm in the whole country, once in seven years, at the free disposal of the poor and needy ! A most wise adjunct to the jubilee law of a family inheritance : for though, in the main, that law would preserve the community from impoverishment, there would necessarily be many ne'er-do-wells who from mismanagement would be out of their family lands : as Moses told them, "The poor will never cease out the land." Here, for such, would be an alleviation on which they could reckon every seven years : the spontaneous products of the whole land placed at their free disposal. Here was a "poor law" eclipsing all Gentile arrangements.

As regards the owners, how were they to fare during that seventh year? Their needs were provided in a manner only possible in a divine system : "If ye shall say, What shall we eat

the seventh year? Behold, we shall not sow nor gather in our increase? Then *I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years*" (Lev. xxv. 20). So that the proprietors would have laid in a stock that would place them above anxiety while all manner of visitors were prowling over their lands in search of food.

One or two other beautiful features of the land law we glance at before concluding. The Levites were not to have any inheritance in the land assigned to Israel. They were to find their maintenance in another way. They were to be supported by a fixed contribution of a tenth from the produce of all the land. Nevertheless, they were to have cities of their own, though no fields or estates in the country (Joshua xxi. 1-3). "All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel were forty and eight cities with their suburbs" (verse 41). These cities were scattered through the territories of all the other tribes. The enumeration of their several localities is minutely set forth in Joshua xxi. The business of the Levites rendered this distribution necessary. Their business was to keep God before the mind of the people and to instruct them in the law: "The priest's lips should keep knowledge and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. ii. 7). They were intended to be a spiritualising element in the population. The tribe of Levi was separated for this very purpose (Num. viii. 14: xvi. 9). The character of the personal Levi and his immediate descendants appears to have been the basis of the selection. "My covenant was with him (Levi) of life and peace: and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and he did turn away many from iniquity" (Mal. ii. 5). How excellent a feature in the national life of Israel was this—the wide scattering through all the land, of these Levitical cities as radiating centres of light and wisdom—protecting the surrounding population from the mentally benumbing effects of a merely agricultural life while not interfering with the invigorating and broadening tendency of an out-of-door and opulent occupation.

The system has been imitated and reproduced somewhat in the parochial system of Christendom: but with the lamentable result of a mere travesty. To an extent, no doubt, it has had an ameliorating effect on the rude populations of Europe. But there is a

great difference between the divinely-appointed Levitical system working under suitable conditions in a country divinely arranged in all its details, and the artificial arrangements of a merely human ecclesiasticism, established with human ends in countries where the population had no divine relation. No better social arrangement could have been contrived than an agricultural community territorially impregnated with the elements of a divine civilisation. That it was a failure we know : but this was not the fault of the law, but of the people, and principally of the teachers : "Ye (priests) are departed out of the way : ye have caused many to stumble at the law : ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of Hosts." It was against them that the denunciations of Jesus were principally directed under the name current for them in his day, Scribes and Pharisees: The reproduction of the system under Christ will be attended with very different results : "I will settle you after your old estates, and do better for you than at your beginnings." "I will give you pastors after mine own heart that will feed you with knowledge and understanding." "The people also shall be all righteous : they shall inherit the land for ever." "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh. And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."

When we extend our view beyond the settlement of the people in families on the land, on the basis of inalienable inheritance (subject to unconditional and compulsory release every fifty years), to the further laws given to bring individual life under reverence, and purity and gratitude, and to rouse up public life into recurring seasons of joyous social activity, appreciation of the law of Moses swells and bursts into enthusiastic admiration. The consideration of these laws will give profitable occupation for future chapters.





## CHAPTER IX.—PRIVATE LIFE AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

THE land-law of the Mosaic system was a perfect contrivance to keep all the land in the possession of all the people, as the true source of sustenance. At the same time, it was designed to prevent the growth of chronic poverty, and to secure the powerful development of family life by striking its roots into the soil by inalienable family inheritance. But it required something more than this to keep life in its true shape. Mere agriculture and family interest might have fostered health and domesticity at the expense of intelligence and high character. A land of peaceful homesteads and prosperous peasants, without appropriate stimulants thrown in, might have become a land of stolid dullards, like many a country side at home and abroad.

This was prevented by other appointments of the law, which interwove the God of Israel with every phase of private life as well as public, and gave a quickening stimulus to all the higher faculties. There was, first of all, the care they were to observe as to what they ate, a regulation affecting every day of the year. They were not to eat everything. Some things were declared unclean, and forbidden to be touched, such as the flesh of the pig, the camel, the hare, &c., among beasts; the flesh of the eagle, the vulture, the raven, the owl, &c., among birds, and every kind of fish that was destitute of fins and scales. The law was peremptory: all these were to be held in abomination (Lev. xi. 4-8: 10-20). They were not only to be avoided at the meal table, but anyone touching the carcasses of any of them was to be considered "unclean" and unfit for intercourse till next day (verses 8 and 27). Even any domestic utensil coming in contact with interdicted flesh was to be immersed in water and reckoned unclean till next day. And any earthen vessel so defiled was to be broken (verses 32, 33). Even an oven or pot range in a similar case was to be esteemed unfit for use and broken down. The law was so stringent that even water in which a defiled article was steeped for purification was to be considered as defiling everything it touched, with certain exceptions (verses 34, 38).

The reason given to them for these scrupulosities was this : " For I am the Lord your God : *ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy* : for I am holy. . . . I am the Lord that bringeth you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. Ye shall, therefore, be holy, for I am holy " (44-45). It would not have been possible to devise an arrangement more calculated to keep Israel in the attitude of continual care and continual recognition of God. It had its spiritual meaning, but we are looking just now at the bearing of the law on the life of the nation.

Next, there was the observance of every seventh day as a sabbath of rest. This was not to be merely a day of inaction and lounge, as Sunday is in multitudes of British homes, but a day of mental exercise in things pertaining to God ; a day on which they were to abstain from private occupations and pleasures, and devote themselves to the contemplation and honour of God. " Not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words " (Isa. lviii. 13). How wholesome and ennobling an institution this was, we in some degree experience in these chaotic times, when we merely suspend business and change the channel of our thoughts once in seven days in accommodation to a public custom of Mosaic origin. How good must it have been when the day of rest was blended with a true and intelligent direction of the mind towards the Highest and Holiest as revealed.

Then there was the rite of circumcision to be performed on every male child when it was eight days old. Here was a direct challenge of family attention to the divine relationship of the nation. There is no evidence that they understood, or were called upon to understand, the spiritual import of this ceremony, marking the appearance of every little brother in the family circle. This much they certainly knew, that it was " the token of the covenant betwixt God and Abraham " under which God had chosen them for His people, and assigned them the land in possession, and a thing to be observed by them in their generations (Gen. xvii. 9-11). Therefore, it was an obtrusion of God on their notice every time it occurred.

Then the mother on every such occasion, as well as on the birth of a daughter (with a variation in the latter case as to time), was to consider herself unclean for seven days, and be ineligible to touch any hallowed thing or come into the sanctuary for 33 days ; at the end of which she was required to bring a lamb for a

burnt-offering, and a young pigeon or turtle dove for a sin-offering, to the priest for offering to the Lord—the offering of which should be accepted as an atonement—after which she should be clean. Here was quite an elaborate ritual which laid hold of family life in every house at all seasons, and was calculated to keep God before the whole population, and themselves in continual memory of the holiness which He required at their hands.

So every first-born son was to be presented before the Lord and redeemed by sacrifice for the purpose of preserving a family memory of the nation's origin in God's interposition, as is evident from this addition to the redemption law : " And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? That thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand *the Lord brought us out from Egypt* from the house of bondage. And it came to pass when Pharaoh would hardly let us go that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man and the first-born of beast ; therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix being males, but all the first-born of my children I redeem " (Ex. xiii. 14-15). Indeed, the memorial aim of almost the whole Mosaic institution is well defined in the words of Psalm lxxviii. 5-7 : " He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel which He commanded our fathers *that they should make them known to their children*, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born—who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, *and not forget the works of God*, but keep his commandments."

The law touched them at almost every point in their daily life—not only at what we might call the epochal incidents already noticed, but in the hourly bearings of things. If a man touched a dead creature,—even though one that was clean and that might be eaten,—he was to be considered unclean for the whole day (Lev. xi. 39). If he had a swelling or breaking in any part of his body, he was to hurry off to the priest for consultation and treatment (xiii. 2). If he ate or slept in a house that was legally unclean, he had to wash his clothes (xiv. 47), so also, if he touched an unclean man or a bed on which the man had lain or clothes on which he had sat, or if the unclean man should spit on him, he was to be unclean for the day and wash his clothes (xv. 4-8). The same result followed from all natural defilements in man or woman (16-27).

The inevitable tendency of enactments affecting so many phases of common life was to bring God continually home to the consciences of faithful men. They were not allowed to forget Him for a single day. And what would be the effects of all these exercises but the one contemplated in the statement with which their enumeration concludes: "Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness that they die not in their uncleanness when they defile my tabernacle that is among them" (Lev. xv. 31). And the fact declared by Moses: "Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God: and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself above all the nations that are upon the earth" (Deut. xiv. 2).

It is customary to think of these appointments as mere ceremonials that have no life in them; but it is evident that they were intended to have, and calculated to have, and did in fact in many cases have, a powerful spiritual effect on the mind. That they failed of this effect in the vast majority was due to the intractable nature of the people which Moses repeatedly bemoaned (Deut. ix. 6; xxix. 4; xxxi. 27). Why God chose a people so intractable we shall probably understand to a nicety if we are permitted to see the glorious climax of the plan. It has been said by some that if He had chosen the Greeks instead of the Hebrews, it would have been more of a success; but this is a shallow-minded criticism. Human nature everywhere is an evil thing, and we may be quite sure that the plan that God has chosen in choosing the seed of Abraham His friend is the very best adapted for the ultimate realisation of His glory upon earth.

The uncleanness involved in the various laws referred to in the foregoing was what is called "ceremonial;" that is, such as is not uncleanness itself, in the physical sense, but such as was merely constituted by the law of the case. Such an uncleanness has otherwise been expressed as fictitious uncleanness as distinguished from physical defilement. We can all understand the reality of a physical defilement requiring to be cleansed away, but this was a *defilement recognised* merely, that is, not subsisting physically in itself, *e.g.*, where a man touched the dead body of a prohibited animal, there was nothing in this to physically defile the man; we have all touched dead hares and been none the worse. There has been some attempt to claim a scientific basis for the uncleannesses of the Mosaic law, that is, to connect them with some physical influence of an inherently defiling or corrupting

character, such as polluted gas, or microbe-infected air, &c. But this is evidently a mistake. All the uncleannesses of the law were what might be called imputative or artificial.

But they were none the less powerful on this account as an actually felt or recognised uncleanness. We all know the power of a current recognition in any matter,—losing caste, for example, which is nothing more nor less than a prevalent view that one is not up to a certain standard of recognition. Or the law of taboo in savage races ; a tabooed person is avoided and even detested by those around him, while the subject of that state is a misery to himself on account of the taboo. The experience is actual, though artificial in its source ; so indeed we may say with all games. A person in a certain unfavourable state by the standard of some rule, feels himself in that state, and others recognise it ; although it is all a matter of mere convention.

If this be so with human distinctions, we may easily understand how powerful the states constituted by the Mosaic law would come to be amongst those in Israel by whom the law was faithfully obeyed. The object in such artificial distinctions would be very pleasant to contemplate in the light of divine explanation. Some of them we can recognise ; nothing could have more powerfully contributed to the conception of the idea of holiness than this constant scrupulosity as to contracting ceremonial defilement : and nothing, as already observed, could have been more calculated to keep God continually before the minds of the people. There were also concealed significances unknown to them which have been hinted at in apostolic exposition, some of which may engage our attention afterwards.

The laws referred to had all to do with the details of private life, but it was not enough that God should be privately regarded, or that the people should be exercised as individuals in matters of wisdom and holiness. Israel was intended as a holy nation. National life is a part of the true life of men. The insulated mummified life of individuals is one of the abortions of the present evil state. It was therefore needful that there should be institutions to give them a collective life of the right development. It was good that privately they should be prosperous and godly, but this did not complete the circle of what was needful for their well-being. There were therefore public institutions which supplied the means of developing the beautiful symmetry of human life that should exist in a perfect nation, a nation of divinely regulated life,

private and public. These institutions come into view in the feasts of the law, one of the most picturesque and charming features of the national life as constituted by the Law of Moses. Three times in the year every male had to appear at an appointed time, to keep a certain feast, according to the law (Lev. xxiii.).

There was first the feast of the Passover ; second, the feast of weeks or first-fruits ; and third, the feast of tabernacles, which divided off the year into convenient sections that redeemed it from monotony, besides rousing the nation periodically into purifying and noble and healthful activity (Deut. xvi. 16). These feasts were something of which the world has no experience in Gentile life, and of which it is very difficult for us to form an adequate idea. The mere fact of coming together at a common centre was a circumstance involving much that was good ; it took the people away from their own houses and neighbourhoods for about a fortnight at least each time, and we all know the good effects a holiday such as this would involve. Then the people of one neighbourhood would journey together, which would be a pleasant stimulus of the social element, and appears to be partly what is referred to in the Psalm, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." There is also a panegyric of Jerusalem, in which one of the features of excellence is thus extolled :—"Whither the tribes of the Lord go up to give thanks unto the name of the Lord." And then it was not a coming together to hold a meeting in the formal sense of modern notions, but a coming together to enjoy a good time. "Thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou and thy son and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger and the fatherless, and the widow that are among you, in the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place His name there" (Deut. xvi. 11). "Thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God from year to year in the place which the Lord shall choose, thou and thy household."

The picture presented to the mind by such directions is that of a whole nation breaking up at a given date, and leaving the homesteads of common life, and swarming joyously together at a common place of assembly to spend a fortnight's thorough enjoyment together. It would be a different form and class of enjoyment from that we are acquainted with in Gentile holidays. There would not be the rude and objectless hilarity of inebriated

crowds jostling together in mere friskiness without any central idea or purpose. Israel came together not only to rejoice but to worship God and to hear the law expounded. There was also provision that if the things were too heavy to carry, they could turn them into money, and spend the money at the place when they got there. This is what we read: "Thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose to place His name there, the tithe of thy corn, and of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of the herd and of the flocks, that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always. And if the way be too far from thee which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place His name there, when the Lord thy God hath blessed thee, that thou shalt turn them into money, and bind the money in thine hand and go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose, and thou shalt bestow thy money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth, and thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thine household" (Deut. xiv. 23-26).

"When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose, thou shalt read the law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, women, and children, and the stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn and fear the Lord your God, and may observe to do all the words of this law, and that their children which have not known anything, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God" (Deut. xxxi. 11).

This formal reading of the whole law was only to be once in seven years, "In the solemnity of the year of release," but in some form or other, every feast of the year brought God before the nation. Take the feast of the Passover. This was in express commemoration of their deliverance from Egypt. Each family, or cluster of families, was to roast a lamb taken from the sheep or a kid from the goats, they were to eat it in the evening with unleavened bread. No leaven was to be found in their houses from the first day of the feast till its close. In the first day there was to be a solemn assembly and cessation from work and also the seventh day. This was to be observed the first month of every year, and was in fact to be a beginning of the year to them because of the importance of the event it signalled. "For in this self same day have I brought your armies out of Egypt, therefore

shall ye observe it in your generations for an ordinance for ever. . . . And it shall come to pass when your children shall say to you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, and smote the Egyptians, and delivered our armies." Thus the deliverance of Israel from Egypt was kept perpetually before the mind of the nation, and indeed it is so to this day. The Jews keep the feast of the Passover, although it has shrunken as much from its significance in their eyes as the lamb which is reduced to a bare bone on the plates.

We reserve for another occasion, if God permit, the spiritual significance of the Passover. We are considering at present the character of all these institutions as modes of national life, when they were in force in the land, and the effect of their contemplation is to generate those rapturous sentiments of admiration with which the Psalms of David abound. What a joyous, subdued, ennobling occasion it would be for all Israel to come together, released from their daily toils for a season, and in full enjoyment of each other's society, opening their minds in gratitude in the historic contemplations involved in the feast. We must also remember that all these public occasions would be tintured with the spirit of those private commandments which enjoined kindness to the unfortunate and justice to all. A feast sweetened with mercy and truth, and enjoyed with the opulent plenty of every barn-floor and vineyard, and adorned with all the picturesque accessories of a beautiful land and a beautiful situation, intermingled with song and feasting and prayer, exhibits even at this distant date a definite idea of what human life ought to be, and cheers the heart with some prospect of a day to come when that idea will be realised over the wide world, when the kingdom is restored to Israel and all nations made subject to the sway of their king. Oh, happy day, when many people shall go and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, for He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths." The second feast was only seven weeks after the beginning of harvest, which was early in the Holy Land. They were to begin to count seven weeks from the time the first sickle was put to the corn, and they were then to come together and hold a feast. The connection of the feast was not so distinctly historical as the Passover; it was as truly national, but had more to do with the manifested goodness of God in the abundant supplies of the

pastures and the cornfields. It was called the "feast of weeks," and was characterised by a tribute of a free will offering at the hand of every family brought to God according to the measure with which they had been blessed in the harvest. It was distinctly spiritual in its object and character. The Israelite presenting his offering was to say to the priest, "I profess this day unto the Lord thy God that I am come into the country which the Lord sware unto our fathers to give us. . . . A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation great and mighty and populous. And the Egyptians evil entreated us and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage, and when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice and looked on our affliction and our labour and our oppression, and the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt by a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, and with great terrible-ness and signs and wonders, and he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey. And now behold I have brought the first fruits of the land which thou, O Lord, hast given me" (Deut. xxvi. 3).

This presentation of the first fruits through the priests was not like the presentations that take place in Roman Catholic countries where the priests take and use the good things offered; the offerer making these acknowledgments was himself with his family to use the things brought to the feast, as it is immediately added: "Thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord hath given unto thee and unto thine house; thou and the Levite and the stranger that is among you." The offerer was to close the presentation by saying, "I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, and have done according to all that Thou hast commanded me. Look down from Thine holy habitation from heaven, and bless Thy people Israel and the land which Thou hast given us, as Thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey."

The third feast, called the feast of tabernacles or booths, because of the peculiar feature that the Israelites were to live in booths during its progress, would be two or three months after the feast of weeks. It was fixed by the completion of the harvest, namely, "After that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine." It was to commence on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when they had gathered in the fruit of the land (Lev. xxiii. 39). This would be six months after the Passover. All the feasts were

joyous occasions, but it would seem as if the feast of tabernacles would exceed the others in some respects. It was a direction to every family that on the first day of the feast they were to take "the boughs of the goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook," and construct temporary dwellings for their habitations during the feast. We all know the delightful aroma of fresh-plucked branches of resinous trees: we can therefore imagine the charming stimulus that this odour would impart to the whole performance, and how delightful to the children to get into a light, new, airy house of that sort. It would not be cold, because it would be at the top of the summer season, when it would be a luxury to camp out in the open air. And then the well-filled hampers of all sorts to be stored in the sweet-smelling booths would give a zest of peculiar delightsomeness to the most joyous of all the feasts. They were to dwell in these booths seven days.

There was an historic meaning connected with this. "All that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths, that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt" (Lev. xxiii. 42). They were to "keep a solemn feast to the Lord, because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands." They were also enjoined to appear full-handed, that is, with plenty of provisions. "Thou shalt not appear before the Lord empty: every man shall give as he is able according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee" (Deut. xvi. 16).

It is not possible to over-estimate the beneficence of these institutions. It was not only that the whole nation was thus kept in continual sympathy with divine views of their existence as a nation, but these feasts provided these occasions of purposeful and enlightened activity that were calculated to redeem life from the stagnation and monotony of a life unregulated by law. Consider also the recuperation with which it would bless the whole community; they would all go back from these feasts refreshed and renewed in health, and ready to address themselves with renewed pleasure to the daily avocations of their farm lives. The feasts were sufficiently frequent to prevent the intervals having that depressing and vulgarising effect which comes from long continuance in one rut of labour. Such variety of activity as the law provided kept every human exercise efficient; even the hearing of

the law at the feasts would be attended with a delight that is unknown to the jaded faculties of poor modern times, when every man is a mere unit, and has to shift for himself in the diversification of his private life as best he may.

The whole tendency of the Mosaic institution is well expressed in the 144th Psalm, "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, that our daughters may be as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace. That our garners may be full, affording all manner of store. That our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets; that our oxen may be strong to labour, that there may be no breaking in nor going out; and that there may be no complaining in our streets." "He showeth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation. Happy is that people that is in such a case, yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."





## CHAPTER X.—DEALINGS OF MAN WITH MAN.

IN the last chapter, attention was called to the close interweaving of God with Israel's daily life in all its details and functions. The climax was inadvertently omitted, namely, the insertion in their ordinary apparel of a ribband, or border, or fringe, with no other use or purpose than to recall to their recollection the obligation under which they lay to obey all the commandments of the Lord. Thus, we read: "Bid them that they make fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue . . . that ye may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord, to do them, that ye seek not out of your own heart out of your own eyes, after which ye used to go a whoring, that ye may remember and do them, and be holy to the Lord your God" (Num. xv. 38).

What nation under heaven can show a feature of civilisation like this? Talk of the fashions for the month. Here is a fashion for ever! whose sole object was to keep before the mind the one thing most odious of all others to the taste of the followers of Parisian models. It shows more eloquently than anything else the place which God should have in human life, according to God's view of the matter, and His view alone is the one which will prevail with the children of wisdom. All other views are bound to become as extinct as the vegetation of the carboniferous era.

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The law of Moses had not only to do with individual and national life, and with the foreshadowing of divine principles and purposes, but it had to do with the relations of man to fellow man. It laid down rules for the regulation and adjustment of temporal dealings. It defined a policy of what is called civil law. And in this department it as much excelled the jurisprudence of Gentile nations as we should expect the divine would exceed the human. The contrast at the present moment is not so great as it would have been if Gentile law had not imitated some of the features of

the Mosaic original. It is not at first obvious that this imitation has taken place. A study of historic development and the characteristics of human nature brings the fact to the luminosity of a self-evident truth.

The Mosaic is particularly distinguished from all Gentile systems in the responsibility it scrupulously fosters with regard to the bearing of individual action upon one's neighbour and one's self—a feature largely incorporate in British law, though not so universally and consistently carried out as in the Mosaic original. Individual action was so strictly guarded by the principle of responsibility as to make Israelites particular at every turn as to how their actions bore upon others. A man was liable for any suffering or loss caused either by what he did or what he failed to do (Exodus xxi.).

If he injured a man, so as to cause him to keep his bed, he had to pay for the loss of time, and cause him to be thoroughly healed. If he caused death he was himself to die, unless in the case of an accident, and even then he could only escape by getting into one of six cities of refuge appointed in all the land.

The only exception was the death of a bond servant under chastisement. If the servant continued to live a day or two after the injury, it showed it was not a murderous onslaught, and the loss of the servant in that case was considered a sufficient punishment. In the case of a limited injury, the servant was to go free for the loss of tooth or eye or other member. In the case of death outright, blood was to be shed for the servant, as well as for any member of the community.

The principle of responsibility for action was further shown in the enactment: If a man, in building a house, omitted to add a battlement or parapet to the roof (which was flat), he was to make good any injury that might result from people falling off.

If he allowed an ox to go at large that was known to have a habit of "butting" or goring, he was to lose the ox if it gored an ox, or suffer death if it slew a man, unless allowed to ransom his life by a heavy payment.

A man opening a pit and leaving it uncovered, was to make good any loss caused by anybody's beast stumbling into it.

A man causing his beast to feed in another man's field was afterwards to make restitution from the best of his own field or vineyard. Fire breaking out in standing corn through someone

having set fire to thorns, the damage was to be compensated by the person kindling the fire. In brief, all manner of loss, whether of ass, ox, sheep, raiment, or lost thing, the cause of the parties was to come before the judges, and the responsible party was to pay double (we don't read of "costs." The judges were to investigate as a matter of duty, and the parties to plead their own cause). Justice was quick and cheap, and anyone refusing to submit to the award was to be put to death.

A man borrowing anything of his neighbour and injuring it in the use, was to make it good, whether beast or implement; but if the injury took place when the owner of the article came with the article on hire—such as a man coming to reap with a reaping-hook—the owner of the article was to bear the loss, as the article came for its hire and all the chances of use.

If one man injured another man's wife, he was to be punished according as the woman's husband should lay upon him, and according as the judges should determine—life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. Even if a man were found slain in the open country, the inhabitants of the nearest place had to give a solemn pledge of their innocency through their leading men, and sacrifice had then to be offered.

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#### THEFT AND THIEVES.

In the treatment of theft, how much more excellent was the Mosaic than the British law. In Britain, thieves are maintained at the expense of the State for a certain number of years, while the persons they have robbed are perhaps reduced to beggary by the robbery and the costs of prosecution. True, the thief's maintenance is not of a liberal character, and personal liberty is abridged; but still, as a fact, the thief is maintained and waited on by guardians, while the victim of the theft may suffer loss and heart-break, for which there is no compensation. The criminal law of England benefits the thief more than anyone else. The community benefits by the thief's restraint for a time, for which, however, the community has to pay. The only sufferer is the hapless victim of the crime. Carlyle bewailed the tendency of such a system to breed a class of professional law breakers, whose business it is to prey upon other people, either in prison or out of it.

Under the law of Moses, the thief had to make good his theft to the person from whom he had stolen. If he stole an ox, he had to pay to him five oxen ; if a sheep, four sheep (the difference between four sheep and five oxen probably representing the different degrees of injury inflicted upon the community—the ox being used in the cultivation of the fields, while a sheep was only so much wool and mutton). “Very good,” says the modern legislator, “very good,” with a smile of superiority ; “but suppose the thief has neither ox, nor sheep, nor money, how is such a law to be carried out ?” The law says in that case, “he shall be sold for his theft,” and the loser of the stolen ox or sheep would be compensated out of the proceeds of the sale. Think what a punishment this would be. The thief would be taken away by the person buying him, and used as a bond-servant for the most menial work. He would be known on the farm as a sold thief, which would ensure a quite sufficient stigma on the criminal, while at the same time being made to pay for his own keep by labour, and turning his wretched existence to better advantage than by cooping him up in a jail.

It will be seen at a glance that more than one good purpose would be served by such a mode of dealing with him. His sale would compensate the parties injured by his theft ; the community would not be burdened by his maintenance ; the development of professional thieves would be prevented ; while as regards the thief himself, judgment with mercy would temper his lot, for as the member of another man’s establishment he would find his punishment in his want of liberty, and the hard service belonging to his position as a bond-servant, and at the same time the fullest opportunity of retrieving his character by faithful service among those by whom he was surrounded. There would be none of the hopeless ruin, while all the punishment of prison life.

“Ah, very good, very good,” again remarks our modern philosopher ; “but suppose the fellow should refuse to work ; suppose he should prove an incorrigible thief and vagabond ?” Well, the law had a remedy for that—simple, but effectual. Though shocking to mere modern scruples, incorrigibles were to be brought before the judges and stoned.

Carlyle was in raptures over this method of dealing with the criminal classes ! The more it is thought over, the more it will be found a perfect solution — delivering the community from the plague of professional spoilers, and the burden of their costly maintenance, the individual sufferers from loss, and the thief

from the incurable taint of criminality attaching to him under the British Institutions.

But, then, "how dreadful to sell a man!" It depends. Anti-slavery sentiment has clouded judgment here. It is no more dreadful to sell a thief than to sell a man to military bondage for a shilling a day. The difference is in form and sentiment merely. It may be said the soldier chooses his avocation, while the thief under Moses was sold against his will. True, but is an offender against the law entitled to choice? If a man who has done no wrong may voluntarily sell himself to the Crown, there is nothing very monstrous in an evil-doer being sold against his will. A murderer is hanged without compunction or consultation. Why should it be more dreadful for an evil-doer to make some reparation for his crimes by a profitable sale to some cultivator of the land?—especially bearing in mind that all forms of service were governed by the septennial year of release, and no decent human being doomed to hopeless slavery.

There is a wide discrepancy between modern sentiments and the spirit of the Mosaic Law, due doubtless, in a measure, to the difference between the immortal soul theory of modern philosophy, and the view promulgated in the writings of Moses, concerning the constitution of man as a mortal creature of the dust. There is no place in the Mosaic system for the brutal traffic in flesh and blood, characteristic of modern slavery. Man-stealing was a crime under Moses, punishable with death (Ex. xxi. 16); at the same time, subject to prescriptions of justice and humanity, it was lawful under Moses to possess and control human service (Ex. xxi. 2). Man might possess anything, provided he used it, in mercy and truth, as other parts of the law required.

Those other requirements of the law were of an exquisite beauty which this age is slow to recognise on account of the prevalence in Gentile moralities of much that has been insensibly copied from the law of Moses. Their beauty and superiority are seen when contrasted with the practices and principles of the Egyptians, Assyrians, and other races that flourished in the same age of the world's history. The law of Moses was an entirely new departure from the customs of the heathen. It was careful to deprecate conformity with these:—"After the doings of the land of Egypt wherein ye dwell, and after the doings of the land of Canaan whither I bring you, *shall ye not do*. Neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. Ye shall do My judgments and keep Mine ordinances

to walk therein ; I am the Lord your God" (Lev. xviii. 3-4). It will be advantageous to briefly glance at the excellent features of the new ordinances delivered to Israel.

They were not to oppress or take advantage of any man. While this applied peculiarly to their Hebrew brethren, they were expressly enjoined to treat the stranger kindly in all their transactions. Even an enemy's interests they were to consider. If they saw an enemy's ox or ass going astray, they were to take it back to its owner. If they saw their enemy's beast lying helplessly under a burden, they were not to refrain from helping him. (There is nothing of this sort in British law. Feelings of kindness are excluded from law as a sentimental weakness). They were to take no gift in judgment. They were not to administer justice with any bias. They were not to be carried away by a majority in a wrong matter, nor were they to take up a poor man's cause in any partisan spirit. They were not to befriend him because he was poor, but because he was in the right, if it was so.

They were to do no unrighteousness of any kind. They were to be slow to mention an evil matter. Tale-bearing was to be frowned down. They were to nurse no hatred and practice no revenge. They were not to take advantage of weakness, or indulge in cruel sport. They were not to curse the deaf, or lay stumbling-blocks before the blind. They were to be prompt in the payment of wages, and they were to be liberal in the relief of poverty, and ready to lend to their brothers in distress, not taking usury, or even acting up to their legal rights in the matter of security. A man, for example, giving his garment in pledge for a loan, was to have it restored to him at sundown to sleep in (according to the custom of the East). It might be fetched again in the morning, but it was to be done in a considerate and gentlemanly manner. The lender was not go rudely into a man's house and fetch the article, but was to "stand abroad" and let the borrower bring it.

In reaping the fields or vineyards, no parsimonious spirit was to be shown. There was to be no going over them a second time to pick up or gather what had been overlooked. Field and vineyard were to be left ungleaned to give the poor a chance. Moderns would think this wasteful, improvident, and unbusinesslike ; but there is a better business spirit than the modern one, though we cannot see it practised till the establishment of new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

They were to honour grey hairs, and rise up before the aged. Reverence to seniors was to be carried to a high degree. Not only were father and mother to be honoured, but any man lifting his hand against, or even cursing them, was to be held guilty of a capital offence and put to death.

Sexual licence was shown no mercy. It is common to think that woman was unprotected under the law of Moses. In point of fact, it is under Gentile law that she is defenceless. It is one of the foulest blots on European civilisation that man may make sport of female honour—not only with impunity, but acquire a certain prestige by his exploits. Woman had a lower position in some points under Moses than ladies occupy in modern educated circles ; but she was thoroughly protected. If a man robbed her of her chastity, he was to be put to death without remorse, or compelled to make the woman his wife. As for the adultery of married people, no satisfaction was accepted ; the penalty was death.

A system of national life based upon such principles of individual action was certain to be pure and noble and holy. But, alas ! the basis proved only theoretical. The law was all that could be desired—holy, just, and good. But Israel were forgetful and also disobedient. The law fell into disuse, and Israel became worse than the surrounding nations. God expostulated with them for a long time by the prophets : “ Oh, that my people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked in My ways. I should soon have subdued their enemies and turned My hand against their enemies. . . . But My people would not hearken to My voice. Israel would have none of Me.” “ Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against His people, insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance, and He gave them into the hand of the heathen, and they that hated them ruled over them.” We are permitted to look forward to the time spoken of by Moses (Deut. xxx. 2), when “ Thou (Israel) shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey His voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.”



## CHAPTER XI.—THE COVENANT AT SINAI.

IT will be realised by the intelligent reader, that the various laws we have had under review were most of them communicated to Moses, on the occasion of his first visit to the summit of Mount Sinai when the ten commandments were so impressively promulgated. On coming down from the mountain, Moses rehearsed all the words of the Lord and all the judgments, “in the hearing of the people, and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said we will do” (Ex. xxiv. 3). They had said this in response to the first general proposal submitted to them on their arrival from Egypt before the ten commandments were delivered, but they were called upon, now, to make a more deliberate and formal declaration of their submission. The first was before the Lord had made known His mind; the second was after He had declared to Moses the laws by which He desired them to be guided as a nation. The second response was a full and hearty and unanimous consent on their part to do as God willed.

It was no doubt perfectly sincere for the time being. They were not only under the gratifying influence of the deliverances they had experienced, both at the Red Sea, and on the journey from thence; but they were under the powerful impression produced by the visible demonstration from the summit of Sinai of God’s existence and purpose toward them, an exhibition so impressive, that all the people trembled and withdrew to a distance from the sight.

Moses having received the consent of the people, wrote all the laws which he had rehearsed to them, and later on, read what he had written. He then went through a ceremony of ratification, which is the subject of comment in the apostolic writing (Heb. ix. 19-21), as possessing a meaning which could not be obvious at the time.

Paul, remarking on the apparently accidental circumstance of Moses putting a veil upon his face at a certain stage in the transactions, tells us “that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that” which the time had come to abolish in

Paul's day (2 Cor. iii. 13). It is doubtful if Moses himself understood the import of that which was enjoined. Nothing indeed is more remarkable in the Mosaic narrative than its entire silence with regard to the meaning of all that was commanded to be done. There is no attempt to convey even a hint of concealed significance. Moses receives instruction as to what was to be done in the time then present, and he faithfully carries out those instructions without presuming to be "wise above that which is written." He made the Tabernacle according to pattern; and inducted the priests into their various services without knowing that the whole was a figure for "the time then present"—"the Holy Spirit, this signifying that the holiest (state) of all was not yet made manifest" (Heb. ix. 8).

He built an altar under the hill surrounded by twelve pillars, to represent the twelve tribes of Israel. On this altar he poured half of the blood of young oxen which had been killed by the young men (probably Levites) whom he had selected for the service. The rest of the blood he put in basins, and having read what he had written in the book, he dipped in the blood scarlet wool and hyssop, and with this sprinkled the book out of which he had read to as many of the people as were within convenient range, saying with a loud voice, "This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you."

Paul, commenting on these things, says that "almost all things are by the law purged with blood." The reason he gives is that no covenant is of force while the testator liveth. Blood poured out is the symbol of death, and the sprinkling with this blood on altar, book, and people, was an intimation that no covenant of everlasting force, could be made without the death of the men to whom it was offered. If it be asked why, the answer is, that death was due. Death had passed upon all men through Adam, and it reigned over them, although they "had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," on account of "the many offences" from which no man is exempt. The multitude to whom God offered the covenant of His favour by Moses was a multitude in this position. Consequently it was not compatible with the greatness of God that any advance could be made to them without the ritual illustration and enforcement of their true position.

This is the explanation of the fact that the first covenant was "not dedicated without blood." The Mosaic patterns were all

purified thus. Blood proclaimed the infliction of death. It was an infliction of death on animals, and therefore not efficacious for final results, yet, as a shadow, it commanded assent to the principle. Blood, as the symbol of death, typically purged the death defilement. Death is always treated in the Mosaic system as a defiling thing. To touch a dead body, or a grave, or a bone, was to contract defilement. The whole congregation, as they stood there before Moses, were in the antitypically defiled state. They had not only touched death through descent from the condemned of Eden; but they were in contact with its defiling power in their own bodies. There was therefore nothing but that which was just and seemly in the shedding of blood being made accessory to the establishment of a covenant of peace between God and them.

Paul notes that without the shedding of blood there is no remission—that is, there is no putting aside of sin with a view to friendship, without the fullest recognition of its nature and its unreserved repudiation. This is the reasonable requirement of the wisdom of God in type and antitype.

The type is before us; the antitype is in Christ. He is the altar, the book of the law, and the other things that come after. The sprinkling of the typical blood on both by Moses prefigured the operation of divine love and wisdom in Christ's own sacrifice. It was a sacrifice operative on himself first of all: for he is the beginning of the new creation, the first-fruits of the new harvest, the foundation of the new temple. He was the nucleus of a new and healthy life developed among men, for the healing of all who should become incorporate with it. As such, it was needful that he should himself be the subject of the process and the reaper of the results. Hence the testimony that "the God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*" (Heb. xiii. 20), and that by his own blood, entering into the holy place, he obtained (*middle, or self-subjective, state of the verb*) eternal redemption ("for us" is interpolated) (ix. 12). The Father saved him from death for his obedience unto death (Heb. v. 7-9; Phil. ii. 8-9; Rom. v. 19).

The common view which disconnects Christ from the operation of his own sacrifice would have required that Moses should have left the altar and the book of the law unsprinkled. These were parts of what Paul terms "the patterns of things in the heavens," concerning which he remarks that it was necessary they should be

purified with the sacrifices ordained. The application of this to Christ as the anti-type he makes instantly ; “but (it was necessary that) *the heavenly things themselves* (should be purified) with better sacrifices than these ” (Heb. ix. 23). The phrase “the heavenly things ” is an expression covering all the high, holy and exalted things of which the Mosaic pattern was but a foreshadowing. They are all comprehended in Christ, who is the nucleus from which all will be developed, the foundation on which all will be built. The statement is therefore a declaration that it was necessary that Christ should first of all be purified with better sacrifices than the Mosaic : “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place ” ; “not into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us ” (Heb. ix. 12, 23-24).

Among the many shadows of the Mosaic transaction, none is more significant than this, that the people were required to express their consent to the Divine law before God condescended to enter into covenant with them even on the basis of sacrifice. Popular religion makes the Divine advances to man a merely philanthropic affair—a question of saving people in the sense of conferring a benefit on them. That God is love and purposes to confer a benefit on man, is indeed an undoubted and joyful truth ; but there is a prior principle and a prior aim which the covenant made with Israel at Sinai illustrates in a way not to be mistaken, just as there was a prior principle in the case of infliction of death. The breach of God’s supremacy was the cause of death : its restoration is the condition-precedent of favour. The lesson of sacrifice is not so much the idea of man’s punishment as God’s vindication. Heathen religions have seized and magnified the former idea, with its concomitant notion of justice finding satisfaction in the blood of a substitutionary sufferer. Revelation through Moses and Christ exhibits it as the enforcement of the will of God as the law of human action. With this every element of divine truth vibrates in harmony. Even the kingdom and the cross unite here : “*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*”

The covenant with the people having been ratified by sacrifice, on the basis of previously expressed willingness to obey, Moses was invited, along with Aaron and his two sons, Nadab and Abihu, and 70 of the elders of Israel, to come to the Mount and worship, and to see the glory of God. In this we perceive a preliminary

analogy to the order of events belonging to the fulfilment of the final purpose of God upon the earth: *worship after submission and obedience, and the open vision of eternal glory.*

“Moses alone was to draw near” (Ex. xxiv. 2), the others were to accompany him so far and to “worship afar off,” but all were to see the God of Israel, under whose feet there appeared, “as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness.” We know from much other testimony that this was the angelic manifestation of the Father—not the Father himself. The shadow character of the events required this. But how deeply interesting even as a literal event, and how richly suggestive in its hidden adumbrations.

In Moses we see Christ, who alone has been admitted to the Father's presence. Who are the others, who stand afar off? In the absence of precise information we can but surmise. Elijah did not see death, and Moses was with him on the Mount of Transfiguration, speaking with Christ of “the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.” Enoch also was translated; and at the resurrection of Christ “many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose” (Matt. xxvii. 52). It is possible that all these may have accompanied Christ in his ascension, but stopped short at an ordained point, while he alone penetrated to the “Secret place”—the throne of the Eternal—embosomed in Light unapproachable in the star-gemmed recesses of the Universe.

Some find in the stupendous distances that divide even the nearest fixed stars from the earth an insuperable difficulty in the way of such a conception. Their difficulty arises from the mistake of applying the ascertained velocities of finite elements to the movements of the eternal substance—SPIRIT. The Spirit is a unity in immensity. It is a unity embracing everything else, and therefore capable of compassing the ends of Eternal wisdom, without those mechanical movements in space that are inseparable from created phenomena. The divine presence might be vouchsafed to Christ, and the divine glory unveiled to his further-off companions without either of them coming into mechanical proximity to the seat of Eternal power. It is, in fact, not possible that mortal man should conceive the divine method in these loftiest relations. Certainly, we cannot put limits to it, or apply the law of any of the elements to it. The elements—even the subtlest of them—such as light or heat—are but accommoda-

tions of God's own energy and wisdom to specific objects. The more we know of such things, the more we see that it is man's part to simply learn facts and receive them, and not to stand in judgment on them when they are established. We know that Christ ascended to the Right Hand of power—to the Father of all: and the Mosaic type would seem to hint that he was accompanied so far by select companions. There is something pleasing to our social nature in such an idea.

While Moses and his company were absent in the Mount, "the glory of the Lord abode on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud." Six days cloud and silence, and on the seventh divine speech. This is striking. We are not told it means anything; but it is impossible not to think of the long six days of a thousand years each day in which God hides His face and the seventh, on which "the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and His servants shall serve Him and they shall see His face." The analogy of this is usually found in the creation week of six days, and the seventh, or sabbath of rest. This is also applicable, though in another way—six days' work, followed by one day of rest. The six thousand years of cloud is also six thousand years of labour towards the kingdom. The seventh is both the day of open vision and the day of rest. Here both analogies converge.

During this time, "the sight of the glory of the Lord was like *devouring fire* on the top of the Mount in the eyes of the children of Israel." This was the literal: the spiritual significance has corresponded. The aspect of divine wisdom towards Israel during the long days of cloud and silence has been the stern aspect of judgment against their sins. The divine glory has been concealed in cloud; the divine kindness veiled in silence; the divine majesty visible only in *devouring fire*. "God has been known in the judgment He executeth," rather than in the merciful kindness which He is ready to bestow. But the finish will end the terror, and Israel who drew off in fear will draw near in gratitude: "He will turn again: He will have compassion upon us: He will subdue our iniquities. Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old" (Micah vii. 19-20).

## THE TABERNACLE.

While Moses was in the Mount with God, he received the commission for the construction of the Tabernacle, which was to be the centre of the nation's life. This Tabernacle was remarkable in a variety of respects, which it will be profitable to consider.

First of all, the plan or pattern of it was shown to him (doubtless in vision). Its correct construction was not to be dependent on a description which Moses might misunderstand, or upon the memory of Moses, which might prove defective. As a divine structure, having divine significances in many details, it was needful that Moses should see with his own eyes the actual representation of what was required; having seen which, he was warned to be careful to faithfully follow it. More than once it was said to him, "See that thou make the Tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shown thee in the Mount" (Ex. xxvi. 30; xxv. 40; Heb. viii. 5). Not only so; but the correct fabrication of the structure was safe-guarded by the impartation of special capacity to the leading directors of the work. "See," said Moses, "the Lord hath called Bezaleel, the son of Uri, and hath filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom and knowledge and in all manner of workmanship . . . and He hath put in his heart that he may teach, both he and Aboliab, the son of Ashisamach . . . to know how to work all manner of work of the service of the Sanctuary, according to all that God hath commanded" (Ex. xxxv. 30; xxxvi. 1).

From all this, we do not deduce a doubtful lesson, when we say that our approaches to God must be in harmony with His own requirements. Men who hope to be accepted in their own way, will find, like Nadab and Abihu, that strange fire in the censer evokes wrath and not favour. There is much self-invented service in our day, as there was in after times in Israel, and usually the invented service displaces that which has been required. God's question to Israel, will rudely awaken many a Gentile expectant: "Who hath required this at your hands?" Christ represents this class as saying to him, in the day of his return, "Have we not preached in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works?" to which his response is, "I know you not; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." The form of our service must be according to what has been shown. The pattern is in the Scriptures. We must look there for what is pleasing to God. The

pattern has been lost in our day in the multitude of human opinions, glosses and traditions.

Next, Moses was directed to invite the people to supply the materials out of which the Tabernacle was to be made. "Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring me an offering . . . gold and silver, and brass, and blue and purple and scarlet, and fine linen, goat's hair and ram's skins dyed red, and badger's skins and shittim wood. Oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil, and for sweet incense. Onyx stones and stones to be set in the ephod of the breastplate, and *let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them*" (Ex. xxv. 1-7).

It is scarcely possible to miss the significance of this. God's final encampment upon the earth is to be in a Tabernacle made of materials supplied by the human race—living materials answerable to the precious things offered by Israel, gold, silver, precious stones, representing the good and honest-hearted among enlightened men. The Tabernacle was not let down from heaven ready made, though the pattern after which it was made was from that source: so the divine system of things to occupy the earth for ever, does not come down from heaven as a complete literal development, after the manner of some people's ideas of the New Jerusalem. The pattern comes from there. Christ, even in the days of his flesh, could say, "I came down from heaven," because the Spirit which caused his appearance emanated from thence. In how much fuller a sense, at his second appearing, will he be able to say the same thing. But the elements of the Tabernacle to be reared up upon earth, for the glory of God, will be supplied from the ranks of Adam's descendants in conformity with the divine specifications.

Another feature of the work was, its perfectly voluntary character, so far as Israel's participation was concerned: "of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering" (verse 2). Freewill has been the basis of all God's requirements of the human race, from the interdict of the forbidden tree in Eden to the summons of the Gentiles by the hands of Paul to repent: not that man has ever been at liberty to disobey in the sense of being able to do so with impunity, but that the command has always been taken to pre-suppose the exercise of voluntary will, and the possibility of non-compliance as the result of that exercise. The doctrine of "necessity" is an artificial interpretation of the ways of God.

God has caused a proclamation to be sounded through the world (though its force is now almost spent): "Speak unto the children of Adam that they bring me an offering. Of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering . . . and let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." The rearing of the sanctuary will not be accomplished till the age to come, but the materials are meanwhile being brought in: "gold, silver, and precious stones: wood, hay, and stubble." They will all be inspected at the judgment seat, and assorted. When matters have reached this pass—when Christ is actually in the earth, and it is patent to all men that the work of God by him is a reality and not a delusion, there will be sure to be a rush of participants. "Lord, Lord, open unto us." But by that time, the number has been made up that is needful for the organization of the Kingdom of God: and we may then see the anti-type of what happened in Israel's camp after the issue of the invitation to bring in materials. "The people brought much more than enough for the service of the work which the Lord commanded to make, and Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much" (Ex. xxxvi. 5-7).

The materials having been brought to Moses, "Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab and every wise-hearted man in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom (even every one whose heart stirred him up to come into the work to do it), and they received of Moses all the offering which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary to make it withal." And so the work of construction proceeded. "According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work, and Moses did look upon all the work, and behold they had done it as the Lord commanded, even so had they done it. And Moses blessed them" (Ex. xxxix. 42).

On the first day of the first month of the second year after Israel's departure out of Egypt was the tabernacle set up and furnished with all its appurtenances. It will be our duty, in ensuing chapters, to consider the peculiarities of the structure, its furniture, and the nature of the service conducted in it; with respect to the concealed meanings to which we are admitted in the writings of the

apostles. They form in their totality what Paul styles "the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law." Their indications are plain. They show the terrible majesty and holiness of God, and the impossibility of man saying himself except by strict and reverential and loving conformity to His appointments. These things are revealed in the Gospel ; but they become more striking when contemplated over again in the pictures and symbols of the Mosaic example and shadow of heavenly things.

Nothing enables us more powerfully to feel that the professing Christian world around is as far astray from the righteousness of God as ever were Israel, His own people. Be it ours, to try to fulfil the part shadowed for the sons of God in the Mosaic ritual.

Every true son and daughter of the Lord God Almighty is a miniature tabernacle or temple, as saith Paul, "Ye are the temple of the living God. If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy." Our minds should be a holy place lined with the gold of a tried faith, in which the one Christ-sacrifice for sins is continually offered, and the smoke of grateful incense, kindled by the fire of the altar, continually ascending, while deeply secreted in the innermost ark of the heart is the law of God in its remembrance, the scriptures in their affectionate study, the institutions of divine appointment in continual reverence, and the bread of God in its continual eating. Thus shall we be the sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, misunderstood by all, hated by many, despised and rejected of men, persevering in a bitter probation that will end at last in life and light and joy everlasting, when "the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people . . . and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."





## CHAPTER XII.—ALLEGORICAL TRANSACTIONS AT SINAI.

IN the establishment of the Mosaic economy, there are one or two other general features of the work deserving of notice before proceeding to the consideration of the tabernacle in detail. The first is the fact that beside being shown the pattern on the Mount, Moses received very full specifications, which are twice set forth, first in a "thou shalt make" series, and then in an "and he made" series. He was fully informed by word of mouth of what was to be done in the construction, erection, and dedication of the tabernacle. And these detailed specifications occupy seven long chapters (Ex. xxv.-xxxi.). They are so full and complete, in the first instance, that one would naturally have supposed that it would have been unnecessary afterwards to do more in the way of record than the addition of a brief statement to the effect that the work was performed according to all these directions. Instead of this, a very particular account is given in chapters xxxvi.-xxxix. of every step in the execution of the work—almost corresponding item by item with the specifications. The two accounts are in many particulars nearly identical. The difference is chiefly in the tense of the verb. The one reads, "thou shalt make" this, that, and the other; and the other, "and he made" this, that, and the other.

Pondering whether there can be anything in this apparently needless duplication of details, we may note the Divine interpretation of doubling a matter in the case of Pharaoh's dreams: "For that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice, it is *because the thing is established by God*, and God will shortly bring it to pass" (Gen. xli. 32). We have already seen that the tabernacle was "a figure for the time then present," "a shadow of *good things to come*"—therefore a prophecy in enigmatical form. It had reference to something that "God will shortly bring to pass." Therefore the thing, as a matter of record, was "established" in being doubled. It is the principle observed in the enactment that matters of judgment should not be decided except at the mouth of *two witnesses*.

There is also an observable analogy in the two sets of specifications to the two phases in which all Divine procedure towards man appears: first plan, then fulfilment; first command, then obedience; first prophecy, then history; first the Divine purpose unfolded in the Gospel, and illustrated in the prophetic Scriptures; and then its realisation in the setting up of the kingdom in due time, when there will probably be as deliberate an execution of the programme and as complete a rehearsal of the facts achieved as there was in the building of the tabernacle in harmony with the fully-recorded preliminary specifications.

In agreement with this idea, we have to note the character of the incidents that occurred between the promulgation of the original specifications, and their full carrying out by Bezaleel, Aholiab, and their fellow workmen: these are quite striking, and seem to correspond in the main with the circumstances that have marked the development of the antitypical work.

“When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount,” that is, during what we may call the “thou-shalt-make” stage, they assembled in a mutinous mind before Aaron, and called upon him to make gods whom they might see and serve in place of the invisible God pressed upon their attention by their vanished leader. Aaron, the high priest, intimidated by their clamour, complied with their request; and they gave themselves over to idolatry, and were found in the act at the return of Moses. The cause of the apostasy was the temporary absence of their divinely-appointed head, and the development of apostasy took place under the divinely-appointed priesthood. We may see in this the germinal foreshadowing of the course of events among both Jews and Gentiles. As regards Israel, it was after the death of Moses, and under the leadership of the priests, that Israel abandoned the law: as regards the Gentiles, it has been during the absence of the Christ, and under the leadership of the religious heads of the people, that the community has turned away from the truth and given themselves over to the worship of the beast and his image.

When Moses came down from the mount, at the end of the forty days, he found the people in the full tide of their apostate worship, and was so fired with anger at their folly that he flung out of his hands the divinely-written stone-tables which he had received from the hand of God on the mount, and unsheathed the avenging sword by the hand of the Levites, to the destruction of a multitude

of the apostates. Whether we apply this to the first or second manifestation of the prophet like unto Moses, we see a parallel. At his first coming, he found Israel in a state of complete departure from the law of the Lord, and fulminated in terrible wrath against them, both by word of mouth and deeds of judgment, expelling a sacrilegious crowd from the temple courts with a whip, and afterwards chastising the nation sorely by the sword of the Romans. Concurrently with this outburst of indignation, he flung the law of Moses out of his hands in nailing it to his cross, and taking it out of the way as a ground of acceptance with God. At his second manifestation, he finds the professing Gentiles in a similar state of apostacy and idolatry, and flames with a similar vengeance against "them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." At the same time, he flings the gospel invitation to the ground in withdrawing it from further operative force among mankind, and "shutting the door" against all further admission to the kingdom and glory of God.

After Moses had chastised the people, he said, "Ye have sinned a great sin, and now I will up unto the Lord: peradventure, I will make an atonement for your sin." And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet, now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin" (Ex. xxxii. 30-31). Here appears to be the foreshadowing of the ascension of Christ to make intercession for the transgressors (Isa. liii. 12). The parallel at his second coming would be found on his acting as a priest on his throne when the kingdom has been established after the world has been taught righteousness by judgment (Zech. vi. 13; Ezek. xlv. 17; Isa. xxvi. 9; Rev. xv. 4).

Between the "thou-shalt-make" and the "and-he-made" records of the Mosaic work, Moses was permitted to have a special vision of the glory of the Lord. The Lord had said to him, "Thou hast found grace in my sight." Moses responded, "I beseech thee show me thy glory" (Ex. xxxiii. 17-18). And the Lord granted him his request, saying, "There is a place by me and thou shalt stand upon a rock and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by; and I will take away mine hand and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen. . . . Be ready in the morning and come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me on the

top of the Mount. And no man shall come up with thee." After the impressive manifestation, in whose presence Moses made haste and bowed his head towards the earth and worshipped, Moses remained on the mount forty days and forty nights, at the end of which, on descending, Israel were afraid of the brightness of his face—of which Moses was unaware—and retired from him. Even Aaron and the elders stood at a distance. Moses beckoned them to come near that he might communicate to them what had passed on the top of the mount. They represented to him that they could not come near unless he put something on to dim the brightness of his face. So Moses put a veil on his face. Then Aaron and the chief men drew near, and afterwards the congregation returned, and he rehearsed to them all that the Lord had spoken to him, keeping the veil on his face all the time. When he had done speaking, the people dispersed, and "When he went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he took the veil off." When he came out he put it on again, every time he had occasion to communicate with the people (Ex. xxxiv. 34).

In these interesting and singular circumstances, we probably have both history and prophecy from the modern point of view—that is, history which was (concealed) prophecy at the time of the transactions, but has since become plain accomplished history; and prophecy which remains prophecy of events yet to come.

The historical counterpart may be seen in the day of Jesus—(dropped in between the dispensation of promise in the hands of the prophets, and the dispensation of performance in the hands of the glorified saints). To Jesus, the Father bore testimony of his good pleasure, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus prayed, "Glorify thou me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." It had been, in anticipation, written long before: "Sit thou on My right hand." So after his resurrection, "he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mark xvi. 19), shortly after which, Stephen "saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 55). And there, ever since that time, Jesus has remained bathed and steeped and transfused with the glory of God. The prophetic part would be connected with the return of Moses with face aglow to the children of Israel. If the face of mortal Moses was so affected by contact with the divine glory on the top of Mount Sinai that it shone with a lustre too

strong for the comfort of those to whom he had afterwards to speak, how must it be with the immortal Christ on his return from heaven? When Saul, of Tarsus, saw him on the way to Damascus, the light of his person was "above the brightness of the sun." It is probable that as Moses was unaware of the dazzle on his face, but conscious only of calm, piercing power of eye, so Christ, in the effulgent splendour of the new nature, may feel chiefly the glad, strong comfort of the garment of praise that comes with the mantling of the Eternal Spirit, and may not at first realise so fully the over-powering effect of his glory on the poor, blinking mortals to whom he will address himself at his coming. It may be necessary, as in the case of the typical Moses, that he impose some restraint on the out-shining of Spirit power during his intercourse with mortal men. This would be in harmony with the type and with Dr. Thomas's rendering of Zech. xiv. 6-7: "The splendid ones drawing in." If this suggestion should be correct, there would be no difficulty in seeing the anti-type of the fact that "when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he took the veil off": when he came out, he put it on. It would be found in the fact that the glory of Christ would be unrestrained in all direct dealings with the Father of the glorified household, but would be drawn in whenever intercourse with mortals was required. In this, he would only exercise the accommodation yielded by the angels, who, though shining out with resplendent brightness on official occasions (*e.g.*, at the resurrection of Christ—Matt. xxviii. 3), appeared as ordinary men in all their ordinary dealings.

This involves no forgetfulness of the interpretation Paul has given us of the putting on of the veil—*viz.*, that Israel could not see through the meaning of the Divine procedure. It is a common thing in the Scriptures for there to be two or more cognate meanings blended in the same figure. The case before us is a case in point. There was the literal and the figurative with Moses himself; he had to veil his personal glory that Israel might hold converse with him; and he thereby signified that Israel could not discern the divine intent in his performances. So with the "prophet like unto Moses," he will necessarily have to restrain his bodily splendour in dealing with the mortal element of his kingdom; and there may be associated with this an intimation that even in the age to come, it will not be possible for the subjects of Christ to know the full mystery of the man "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily."

Then there is the breaking and replacing of the tables of the law originally handed to Moses direct from angelic hands—in which it is not impossible to see some miniature analogy to great dispensational events. The original stones were divinely provided, as well as divinely inscribed. They were broken in anger at the end of the “thou-shalt-make” stage. They were replaced, not by a newly-created set of stones, angelically provided like the first, but by stones that Moses was directed to “hew” for himself and bring up for the writing. The substituted stones were provided at the middle or ascension stage, when Moses went up to intercede for Israel; and they were brought down from the Mount in a finished state, on the occasion when the face of Moses shone, just before the “and-he-made” stage.

There is a parallel to these things discernible in the course events have taken in connection with the operations of the Lord's law among men, whether we take it racially or as regards His dealings with Israel. Racially, God “made man upright,” as Solomon testifies (Eccles. vii. 29), “very good,” as Moses declares (Gen. i. 31). This involves the conclusion that He imparted to him the knowledge of His law: for, otherwise, he could not have been very good. Whether the knowledge was imparted by inspiration or by oral instruction, the result was to write the law “not on tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart” (2 Cor. iii. 3). These tables of the heart were divinely provided in the creation of man, and divinely inscribed in the process of his enlightenment. When apostasy occurred, they were thrown down and broken in the judgment that passed upon all men. Then by the prophet like unto Moses new tables are hewn from the old material, to be presented to the Father for the writing of the new name: that is, men and women from the condemned race are hewn into shape by the work of Christ though the apostles, and presented by them for the embroidering work of the spirit, which will so write itself into their nature as to be both a principle of physical incorruption and a power of mental conformity to the divine archetype in all things, and, therefore, a “law written in their hearts.” The Adamic tables thus re-written will be handed down for law from God to the human race at the coming of Christ, whose countenance will be “as the sun shining in his strength” (Rev. i. 16).

As regards God's dealing with Israel, we may see parallel in the breaking or “taking away” of the first covenant (in the anger

consequent on Israel's departure from God), and the establishing of a second covenant through the mediatorship of the second Moses who ascended the heavenly mount for the purpose, and will descend again in glory with the finished covenant in his hand, when the time has arrived to pitch the true tabernacle according to all the specifications that have gone before.

At first sight, it may seem strange that simple personal occurrences at the beginning of things should have been made to fit in with coming events on a large scale with which they had no direct connection. It may seem as if it would have been more befitting the dignity of sense and truth that the two sets of circumstances should have stood apart, each on its own foundation. Any feeling of this sort is probably due to our mental meagreness, which is satisfied and exhausted with the proximate bearing of things. With God, there is a depth and wealth of creative mind which is probably gratified by the adjustments and analogies of related parts in the evolution of His plans. We see some suggestion of this in the difference between the gifted mind of an artist and the poor mind of a day labourer. An artist, in drawing a pattern for some fabric or utensil, will supply a style of ornamentation that is harmonious throughout, whether simple or elaborate; and so an architect, working out a plan for a building, will observe the same style of architecture down to the minutest details, where an uncultured mind would either omit all correspondence or introduce incongruous features. It is certainly an added beauty to the work of God among men that its opening personal incidents should bear a general resemblance to its final developments on a larger scale—and so be a sort of prophecy—which enabled Paul to say "which things are an allegory." Whatever we may think of it, there the fact undoubtedly is; and it would be a pity to make the mistake of those who stoutly shut their eyes and maintain there are no types and shadows connected either with the history or the institutions of Israel under Moses.

From this point we may retrace our steps and consider the construction of the tabernacle itself; for which not only the pattern was fixed beforehand, but the exact quantity of the precious metals used in its fabrication recorded—from which we may know that the exact number and character of the human beings to be used in the setting up of the antitypical tabernacle is settled beforehand, and that all the experiences, rough or smooth, through

which such human beings are put, are essential for their preparation to that end.

The quantities are stated in Ex. xxxviii. :—*Gold*, 29 talents, 730 shekels (or in English weight, 1 ton, 9 cwt. 60 lbs.) ; *silver*, 100 talents, 1,775 shekels (or, in English weight, 5 tons, 1 cwt. 88 lbs.).

In considering the structure, we must remember that it was much more than a portable worshipping convenience. It was truly constructed so as to be easy of transfer from place to place ; but it is chiefly to be understood in the light of God's own description of it at the time : " a tabernacle where I will meet with the children of Israel that I may dwell among them . . . and that the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory." It is also to be estimated in the light of the further revelation afterwards vouchsafed through the apostles, that it parabolically illustrated the relations subsisting between God and man. If we do not have this in view in studying the details, we shall find ourselves dealing with mechanical particulars of no interest.

Probably the best method of studying the details is to take them in the order in which they were described to Moses. In this order we may discover some natural sequence of truth. It is noticeable that this order is different from the order in which the making of the things is narrated. This circumstance may not be without significance in a system in which everything was so exact, and from which Jesus said, " Not one jot or tittle shall pass till all be fulfilled." There is a natural difference between the order in which divine purposes are revealed, and the order in which they are executed. The glorious upshot of the whole work was first revealed to Abraham : " In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." But before these came a long history of curse and woe. The kernel of the matter first : afterwards, the outer fringe of related matters. This appears to be the order of the " thou-shalt-make " series of specifications, while the " and-he-made " series reverses this order, giving the related matters first, and the kernel last, as the order observed in the fulfilment of the purpose requires.

The " shalt-make " series begins with the ark, mercy seat and cherubim, while the " did-make " series begins with the curtains, boards and bars ; in brief, one begins with the inside, and the other with the outside—which is in harmony with the fact that in historic evolution, the inside of matters comes last in realisation, though first in promise.

The ark, mercy seat, and cherubim constituted the very core of the Mosaic economy. Conjointly, they were the apparatus through which the glory of God was visibly revealed, and the meeting point between God and the nation established. They were secreted in the innermost recess of the tabernacle, concealed behind the veil, and imparting to that recess its character as the Holy of Holies. Whatever, therefore, they may conjointly or separately represent, is of the very first essence of Divine truth—of which the tabernacle was the enigmatical form. What the significance was there can be no difficulty in identifying. But first let us have the literal objects distinctly before us.

The ark was a box of hard wood, about 3 ft. 9 in. long ; 2 ft. 3 in. deep ; and 2 ft. 3 in. wide (Ex. xxv. 10). The thickness of the wood is not stated ; it would probably be about an inch. The wood was overlaid both outside and inside with pure gold. The box was finished on the top with an ornamental band or crown of gold all round. It was intended to contain the stone slabs on which were written the ten commandments that formed the basis of the covenant between God and Israel—from which the ark was called *the ark of the covenant*. These slabs were also called the testimony, because they testified or declared the will of God. From this the ark was also called *the ark of the testimony*. Afterwards, there were also deposited in it the rod of Aaron that budded in proof of his divine election to the priesthood ; and a golden pot containing a sample of the manna on which Israel subsisted for forty years. The lid was a plate of pure gold, called the mercy seat, from the function associated with its use. From each end of the lid rose a winged cherubic figure, facing inwards, with wings extended, so as to meet the wings of the other in the middle over the mercy seat. The two figures were formed out of one piece. Four rings were fixed on the sides of the ark to receive two long poles or staves of shittim wood, covered with gold, by which the ark might be easily carried.

Such was the simple structure which formed the throne of God in the midst of Israel when the tabernacle was finished. The divine glory rested on the mercy seat between the cherubim, and communicated with Moses on due occasion. When Moses, having any matter to submit for the Lord's decision, entered the tabernacle, "then he heard the voice of one speaking to him from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of the testimony from between the two cherubim" (Num. vii. 89).

This was the literal operation of these ordinances for the time then present. Paul declares them to have been "the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. viii. 5). It is their significance in this character that is important for us to know: for their literal use has long since passed away. There are not many particulars given to us in the apostolic writings as to the antitypical meaning in detail. Several general clues are supplied which we are left to work out. The working out of these general clues is interesting and profitable, provided analogies are not carried too far, and meanings evolved that were probably never intended. We must not forget that the law, though "a shadow of good things to come," is "not the very image thereof" (Heb. x. 1). Some people work it out as if it were "the very image" of the things signified, which is a mistake tending in the direction of those "strivings about the law" which Paul in another place declares to be unprofitable and vain (Tit. iii. 9).

The broad, general, and really important meanings are easy to gather. In the divine glory resting in the holiest we see *God in manifestation*, telling us that God is not to be found except in His own revelation of Himself. We cannot "by searching" discover Him or know Him. Philosophy is a bootless quest: science useful only in the ascertaining of natural things: natural religion a delusion. The truth concerning God is only to be known through "the word that God sent to Israel." What other nations think, is mere human folly. It is one of the vagaries of so-called learning, that recognises truth in all "religions" and in all "sacred literature." The real fact is there is no religious truth apart from what God has spoken by the prophets to the Jews. "Salvation (itself) is of the Jews," as Jesus said.

Then the position occupied by the glory is eloquent in another way. It sat enthroned in the very heart of the tabernacle, which stood in the very middle of the holy court which was reared in the very midst of the chosen families of Levi, whose tents were pitched in the very centre of the whole congregation—an immense encampment of over two millions of people. God, the centre of Israel's national life—the pivot upon which all their operations, public and private, turned. What does this tell us but that God should be the centre and root of our lives. Without God, life is barbarous and ephemeral. We see it in nations and individuals around us. They are moved and controlled by their wants, their fancies, their desires—"God is not in all their thoughts." They

live without nobleness, and they die without hope. God proclaims to us by the Mosaic parable that He should be first in our knowledge, in our love, in our service, in prayer and hope and continual confidence.

Then the glory rested on a structure manufactured to divine pattern and sanctified by blood. God would only be approached with offered blood. Why? "I will be sanctified in them that approach unto Me." In what way does the offering of shed blood honour God and humble man? The blood is the life. As sinners we are under the condemnation of death. The offering of blood is the acknowledgment of our position, and the vindication of God's righteousness in our humiliation. This demand for sacrifice is one of the most emphatic assertions of God's holiness and supremacy in connection with the Mosaic ritual, and one of the most graphic and telling humiliations of man that it would be possible to devise.

This is one of the secrets of the distaste which most people feel towards the whole system; and at the same time one of the most powerful sweetnesses it has for those who believe. Those who believe see in it the beauty of mercy on the foundation of God's exaltation, in both of which they find pure pleasure. The other class see in it only fault-finding and gloominess. Christ is the fulfilment of the whole significance.

But there are more specific and detailed significances which must be reserved for the next chapter.





### CHAPTER XIII.—THE ARK AND ITS CONTENTS.

THE general significance of the tabernacle and its ordinances, of which the ark was the kernel, was a negative one, as is declared : “ The Holy Spirit signifying this, that the way into the holiest of all was NOT YET MADE MANIFEST, *while the first tabernacle was yet standing* ” (Heb. ix. 8). Such an enunciation was necessary. God had taken the seed of Abraham according to the flesh to Himself as a nation ; and it was natural for them to assume that He had taken them into complete communion. Any assumption to this effect was constantly barred by the tabernacle and its ordinances, whose effect was to hold the nation at a distance and make them feel that their union with God was far from perfect. A way of reconciliation, peace, and union was in purpose, but it was “ not yet made manifest ” while the tabernacle was in use.

But the tabernacle was more than a proclamation of this fact. It was a prophecy of the way that should be manifest in due time, as is evident from its various apostolic descriptions as “ a shadow of good things to come,” “ the shadow of heavenly things,” “ the form of knowledge and of the truth,” “ the shadow of things to come,” “ having their substance in Christ ” (Heb. x. 1 : viii. 5 ; Rom. ii. 20 ; Col. ii. 17) ; and also from the statement of Christ that he had come to fulfil the law as “ the way.” We know what is testified of Christ in simplicity and fulness and truth. We need not to grope for the light in the midst of shadows. Nevertheless, the shadow being the rude prophecy of the substance, it is interesting to trace the correspondence between the one and the other—not for information but for edification. Knowing the exact shape of the body casting the shadow backward from the future light of eternal glory, we need not to study the shadow to ascertain the shape of the substance. We rather go back to the shadow with our knowledge of the substance to note the form of the outline which the substance has thrown. In doing this we must not limit the substance to the individual Christ. Though applicable to him in the first instance, it comprehends

every accepted constituent of the multitudinous Christ. We must remember that the individual Christ is but the head of a body, and that the body and the head are one; and that the full purpose and manifestation of Christ is not realised till this whole community with head and body—Bridegroom and Bride—are in the immortal occupation of the earth to the glory of God the Father.

With this broad view, we can profitably consider the ark, which has been described literally already. Its first and most characteristic feature is its capacity as a *container*. It was constructed to receive the tables of the law, inscribed by the finger of God: and afterwards were placed in it, Aaron's rod that budded, and a golden pot containing a sample of the manna with which God fed Israel in the wilderness for forty years. On the basis of which things concealed in the ark, rested the blood-sprinkled coverlid or mercy-seat, overshadowed by the cherubic figures bearing the glory of God.

Taking these items separately, we shall see the most perfect correspondence between shadow and substance. The Christ-body in the largest sense is a container and not a mere utensil of beauty. It is not a mere society of beautiful men and women ignorant of God and interested only in themselves. It is a society with internal contents to make it precious to God and advantageous to man.

First of all, the law of God, as represented by the tables of stone, is enshrined in every heart. It is this that distinguishes them from the ordinary run of human beings. The ordinary run of human beings are fitly described in the words of Paul: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. They are foolishness unto him." Also, "The carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." What a dreadful picture. It is ugly and true. A man that is not subject to the law of God is an abortion even now: how much more if such an one were immortal. Such an one cannot become immortal. The ark with its tables of stone inside is a prophecy that excludes it. It is obedience to divine law that makes a man beautiful to man and well-pleasing to God, and fit for divine use in the age to come. The purpose is to give the earth into the hands of an order of men who have learnt obedience as the first law. Paul testifies that even Christ "learnt obedience by the things that he suffered" (Heb. v. 8), and Peter describes

the accepted members of his body as “*obedient children*, not fashioning themselves according to the former lusts in their ignorance.” The Psalms are full of the enunciation of this principle : indeed we may say it shines everywhere in the Scriptures : “The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. *The law of his God is in his heart*: none of his steps shall slide” (Psa. xxxvii. 30). Christ affirmed of himself that it was his meat and his drink to do the will of Him that sent him.

How happy will the earth be when it is in the hands of men like Joseph who “fear God,” and whose controlling feeling towards all forbidden things is, “How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?” How different will such an order of men be from the arrogant and merciless possessors of power in the present evil world. When Joseph’s brethren rule the world, God, in them, will be seated on the anti-typical throne of His holiness, resting on the anti-typical table-furnished ark, consisting of His manifested sons, on whose hearts the law is written. This will be the blessedness promised from the beginning for “all families of the earth.” The blessing of Moses, the man of God, pronounced upon Israel, will then be applicable to universal man : “Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, who is the sword of thy excellency?” Then may it truly be proclaimed to the ends of the earth : “The Lord reigneth : let the people tremble : he sitteth between the cherubim : let the earth be moved. The Lord is great in Zion : and he is high above all the people. . . . Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth make a loud noise and rejoice and sing praise. Let the sea roar and the fulness thereof : the world and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands and the hills be joyful together.”

“Aaron’s rod that budded” was the next article contained in the ark. This represented a similar but not an identical principle to the one symbolised by the tables of the law. It was similar in so far as it stood for the ascendancy of the will of God, but dissimilar as to the direction of its application. The tables of the law represented the will of God as the rule of life in everything. The budded rod stood for the principle of divine choice and appointment as the basis of acceptable service. We see this when we consider the history of the rod. It originated in the rebellion of Korah and his company against Moses and Aaron (Num. xvi. 1).

These were envious against Moses and Aaron, and accused them of taking too prominent a place and making themselves over-important in the congregation. Turning their thoughts on themselves, they argued that they were equally entitled to the authority of the priesthood, seeing they had equally been the subjects of deliverance from Egypt, and of sanctification by divine choice. "Ye take too much upon you," said they to Moses and Aaron. Moses answered that Moses and Aaron were nothing in the case : that Korah and his company were setting themselves against the Lord's appointment. But Korah and his company were inaccessible to reason, as envious men usually are, and the dispute had to be brought to a divine settlement—which was very effectual. Korah and his company were swallowed up in an earth fissure which opened under their feet, and closed upon them again. But this settlement, though effectual so far as they were concerned, did not stop the murmurs of their sympathisers in the congregation, who were numerous. These attributed the overthrow to the power of Moses : "Ye have slain the people of the Lord." It was here that the rod came in : "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, twelve rods : write thou every man's name upon his rod. And thou shalt write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi. And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony where I will meet with you. And it shall come to pass that the man's rod whom I shall choose shall blossom. . . . And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness. And it came to pass that on the morrow, Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded and brought forth buds and bloomed blossoms and yielded almonds. And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel : and they looked and took every man his rod. And the Lord said unto Moses : Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels, and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me that they die not" (Num. xvii.).

Thus the budded rod (secreted in the ark of the testimony) stood for the principle of *divine appointment* as against *the voice of the people* in the matter of divine service. It was fitting that this principle should receive expression in the allegorical ark : for it not only lay at the bottom of the whole Mosaic institution as a system

in literal use in Israel, but is at the root of the anti-typical Christ institution, and is, we might say, the natural basis of that institution and of all corporate arrangements among men capable of yielding them blessedness. As divine appointment preceded and caused creation physical, it is the natural precursor and foundation of heaven and earth, political, religious, and social. Divorced from this foundation, both government and religion must work confusion, as we see in the present unhappy state of the world. Let God give rulers, and He will give peace. This is His purpose, and He will work it out. The rod in the ark is the allegorical pledge of this.

There is something in the budding of the rod peculiarly appropriate to the anti-typical bearings of the case. The budding was the resuscitation of life in a dead rod by divine power as proof of a divine selection. Who can fail to see in this the foreshadowing of the kind of "assurance unto all men," which Paul declared at Athens God had already given of His purpose in Christ in raising him from the dead, and which He will again give in the resurrection of His people? Christ was not only the chosen of God, to draw near to him as the anti-typical Aaron, but he was proved to be such in being brought to life again after being put to death by the murmuring people. The budded rod deposited inside the ark of the covenant seems a prophecy of this. That an ark representing Him should contain the foreshadowing of such a detail is beautiful.

The only other thing inside the ark was the pot containing a sample of the manna with which God fed Israel during their sojourn in the wilderness. The significance of this in its application to Christ becomes perfectly plain when we consider the facts of the type and the hints of interpretation that fell from his lips. The two main facts in the type were that the manna came from heaven, and that the children of Israel were so situated that if they had not received it, they must have perished. Almost of their own force, they speak of eternal life through Christ. This meaning becomes absolutely certain in the presence of Christ's promise "to him that overcometh" of permission to "eat of the hidden manna" (Rev. ii. 17), and of his declaration during a conversation on the Mosaic manna that he is the living bread that came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat, he shall not die (Jno. vi. 51). This interpretation involves the doctrine that man is mortal, and will die apart from Christ; and also the truth

that Christ is not of human origin, as the Josephite school alleges, but of Divine origin by the Holy Spirit in the way narrated in Luke i. 35.

That all these truths should have received representation in so simple a manner in the contents of a simple object like the ark of the testimony is something more than beautiful : it is sublime : it is divine.

The material of which the ark was formed carries on the harmony in other directions : wood covered with gold ; two substances differing much from one another ; the wood of a valuable sort, but still wood, and very inferior to the imperishable and beautiful metal with which it was clothed. We have not to look far to find the analogy to this combination. Paul said, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared." The ark was the symbol of this manifestation—represented by the glory between the cherubic figures resting on the mercy-seat, surmounting an interior occupied by the tables, the budded rod, and the pot of manna. The object of the whole manifestation was the salvation of man for the glory of God. The symbol combines the two features prominently—"glory to God in the highest" in the cherubim on the top ; "good will to man" in the law-holding cavity below, on which the whole rests. Obedient man is represented by this cavity—therefore wood covered with gold ; an inferior clothed with a higher nature—first morally, then physically. Gold stands for both phases. We know how constantly it is used as a figure for tried faith : it also stands for the recompense of that faith in the golden city and the golden reed by which it was measured by the angel in John's presence (Rev. xxi. 15). It was therefore a perfect symbol for the sons of God in both stages : the present, when the inferiority of the natural mind is covered over by the golden armour of a Spirit-provided faith, and the future, when the earthly house of this Tabernacle is clothed upon with the golden house which is from heaven, in being changed by the Spirit from the mortal to the immortal.

The cover-lid or mercy-seat was all of gold. This is an intimation that the Mediator (who is the anti-typical propitiatory or mercy-seat) should be without fault, and would exercise his function as intercessor in the immortal state. The over-arching cherubic glory-bearers were also all of gold and of one piece with the mercy-seat. This takes us forward to the kingdom when the perfect mediator will also be the perfect ruler of all the earth ; for

the cherubic figures relate to the day of power. Yet since the glory to be revealed springs out of the sufferings of Christ, therefore the cherubic figures stand upon and form part of the *blood-sprinkled cover-lid* or mercy-seat. The glory shining out between the outspread cherubic wings and resting on the mercy-seat represents the active participation of the Eternal Father, without whom the whole apparatus would be meaningless, and its whole prophecy impossible of fulfilment. The ark and its appurtenances were the allegorical form of God's purposed manifestation among men for their salvation and the honour of His name; but without God himself, it would have had no power or truth. The kernel lay there. Therefore, the apparatus was incomplete as a symbol until the glory of God had taken possession. It is God we see at every stage. God in creation, God in the promises, God in the Egyptian deliverance: God in the prophets, and when Christ appeared—Emmanuel—God in a more direct and especial form—the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ—whose return and enthronement upon the earth will be the pitching of the tabernacle of God with men—One Eternal Father in glorious manifestation of kindness, wisdom, justice and power.

The crown (or ornamental border), all round the top of the ark, is an intimation of the royal character of the whole organisation. It is a kingly institution that is contemplated in the finished work of God on the earth. Christ and his brethren, manifesting the glory of God, will be a community of kings and priests, exercising power, receiving honour, and conferring blessedness—on the basis of God exalted in sacrificial vindication, and honoured by a tried faith (gold) in previous times of evil (wood).

The rings on the four corners of the ark, to receive the gold-covered wood staves by which the ark might be carried, speak to us of the pilgrim stage of mortal life—during which the ark is carried from place to place as a matter of faith. The rings are gold, because they are part of the complete symbol of the perfect future carried by the poles. The poles are wood, covered with gold, because they represent mortal minds qualified by the knowledge and belief of the truth—a qualification that constitutes them priests, by whom only was the ark to be carried during its wanderings.

The staves were to be left in the rings and never withdrawn (Ex. xxv. 15), which was an intimation both that the hand of faith would never be taken by faithful men from the divine work as

contained in the gospel (for the ark was the gospel in symbol), and that they were to be ready to follow that work in all its movements. The priests never knew where next the ark would have to be carried. The staves left in the rings were a hint to be ready at a moment's notice for the next movement, wherever it might be. The meaning of the parable in our own times can only be that faithful men are expected to follow the fortunes of the truth wherever they may lead.

The only other object in the "Holiest of all" was the golden censer (Heb. ix. 4), which Aaron used on the day of atonement in the manner prescribed as follows:—"He shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire *from off the altar before the Lord*, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil. And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not" (Lev. xvi. 12). Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's two sons, diverged so far from these directions, as to get the "burning coals of fire" somewhere else than from the altar of burnt-offering: and they were struck dead on the spot—a sharp lesson of obedience that was not soon forgotten. The spiritual significance of the incense we ascertain from Rev. viii., where John records having seen an angel with a golden censer, who took the censer, and filled it with fire from the altar: "And there was given unto him much incense that he should offer it, with *the prayers of all saints*, upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with *the prayers of the saints* ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." Prayer, then, is indicated by the presence of the golden censer in the Holiest of all. It is on this basis that mercy is dispensed: "the cloud of the incense" was to "cover the mercy-seat"—"that he (Aaron) die not." For a prayerless man there is no mercy.

But the incense had to be of the sort prescribed: prayer in harmony with the truth alone is acceptable. Prayer bawled out presumptuously in the utterance of things that are not true, and in the making of requests that are inconsistent with the revealed purposes of God—(as illustrated in the popular devotions, whether in the gross and vulgar exertions of Salvation Army knee-drill, or the refined whisperings of an educated and paganised State or Nonconformist theology)—is not the sweet incense of the sanctuary, but the rank compound of heathenish art.

And the right incense had to be "beaten small"—not offered in lumps. Some people neglect God in daily habit, and seem to think they can make up for lost time by being specially religious at certain times. This must be as odious to God as intermittent friendship would be unsatisfactory to men. The will of God is that we "pray always" (Luke xviii.): "in everything give thanks" (1 Thess. v. 18), be exercised in His fear all the day long (Prov. xxiii. 17).

The incense had to be vaporised by fire taken off the altar. The use of other fire brought death, as we have seen. There is a deep import in this. The altar is Christ (Heb. xiii. 10)—the fire, his sufferings. The prayer of a sinner offered in his own name, or in the name of Mahomet, or in neglect or slight of the Christ-name, is a prayer that will not be as the sweet-smelling incense, but as the pungent and offensive smoke in the nostrils, with which God compares certain people (Is. lxxv. 5).

The employment of incense to symbolise prayer is a proof that prayer is a source of pleasure to God—provided the conditions are right. That the prayer of the wicked should be abomination (Pro. xxviii. 9) seems easy to understand; but that "the great and the terrible God who made heaven and earth" should find pleasure in the feeble recognitions of mortal man, however sincere, is a revelation which we require. It is a revelation which we have received, "The prayer of the upright is His delight" (Prov. xv. 8). We could not have imagined it possible that so small a circumstance in the universe could have yielded satisfaction to the stupendous Being upholding all by the word of His power. Jesus took pains to put us on our guard against making too little of the small because of the largeness of the great. A sparrow falls not without Him. Ye are of more value than the sparrows; the hairs of your head are numbered. He that seeth in secret shall openly reward the man who prays in secret. Such are some of his sayings. It remains that the fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much by reason of the pleasure it affords the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth.

The presence of the censer in the Holiest of all, as one of its permanent furnishings, is a proof that prayer is not confined to the present dark and evil state, but has a place in the immortal state. We assume in our first impressions of these subjects that "when that which is perfect is come" the necessity for prayer will have passed away. This idea is based on the erroneous

supposition that prayer consists exclusively of request to be delivered from evil. The largest part of prayer is thanksgiving and praise ; and it is manifest that there can never come a time when these will be out of place. Indeed, we may say that the true time for them does not arrive till we are clothed with that immortal strength that will enable us to indulge in them with true effectiveness, both as regards our own enjoyment of them and God's pleasure in them. "Burdened," is the apostolic and true description of our present state. "The spirit of heaviness" is the prophetic counterpart of this description. When the change to the immortal comes, we are said to exchange "the garment of *praise* for the spirit of heaviness" (Is. lxi. 3). Praise, therefore, is the natural adjunct of the emancipated state, and always appears in this light in the apocalyptic exhibitions of the saints in glory, *e.g.*, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and honour and power (be ascribed) unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are His judgments," &c. If the prayers of feeble mortals, whose words often die on their lips from very weakness, are a source of pleasure to Almighty God, it stands to reason that He must find great delight in the suspirations of a host of strong and glad and fully enlightened immortals. The presence of the golden censer in the Holiest of all tells us as much.

One other point remains to be noticed before leaving the Holiest of all. It is evident that as a whole, it stands for the perfect state in which "the tabernacle of God shall be with men," the way unto which Paul says had not been made manifest while the first tabernacle was yet standing. This being so, it may strike the mind as an incongruous element in the case, that blood should have been sprinkled once a year upon the mercy-seat of pure gold. We easily assign a place for the incense of prayer in the perfect state, but what parallel can there be to the blood of sacrifice? In finding the answer, we must remember the qualified description of the Mosaic type as a shadow—"not the very image" of the things represented. There must be some correspondent feature in the perfect state to the sprinkling of the sacrificial blood on the day of atonement. But it cannot be that there is actual sacrifice, which would involve death, of which it is expressly testified there will be none—that is, among those symbolised by the typical ark-throne of Yahweh in the midst of Israel. There will be death and sacrifice among the subject populations during the thousand years' preliminary reign of reconciliation ; but it is not

the subject populations that are the subject of representation by any of the elements of the Holiest of all. Where, then, is the counterpart? In the history of the matter undoubtedly—preserved in vivid memory never to be forgotten. The saints who constitute the antitypical Holiest of all, in the age to come, will have attained to their position through the shed blood of Christ. This is prominent in their song in glory as heard by John in vision: “Thou *wast slain* and hast redeemed us to God *by thy blood*, and hast made us unto our God Kings and priests” (Rev. v. 9-10). The bloodstains on the pure gold coverlid of the ark find their antitype in the memory of the shed blood of Christ in the immortal hearts and minds of those who shall have attained to the golden state through “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” That this is no strained or unnatural interpretation will be apparent to all who can realise how essential an element in the joy of the perfect state—as regards both the Father, and Christ, and the Saints—must be the constant recollection and recognition of the means by which salvation has been accomplished. If the angels veil their faces in the presence of Eternal Glory, how much more an assembly of men and women, who, though their equals, have to remember with sense of humiliation, that they were originally sinners under condemnation, and that they owe it entirely to the arrangement of God’s mercy in Christ that they stand there in the strength and honour and gladness of immortal life. If the object of the Father’s methods now is that no flesh may glory in the Father’s presence, we may be sure that that object will be attained to its fullest then, and that consequently thanksgiving only, in the memory of a humiliating past, will be the sentiment inspiring the bosoms of those who ascribe “Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving to Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.”





#### CHAPTER XIV.—OUTSIDE THE VEIL IN THE HOLY PLACE.

NOT only a proclamation that “the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest,” and a prophecy of the method by which that way was to be opened,—the secret chamber of the sanctuary and its furniture were also an actual meeting-point between God and Israel for the time being: “*There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony*” (Ex. xxv. 22). This is a highly suggestive fact, whether in type or antitype. It brings with it a truth which is lost sight of by natural thinkers and yet which is the true explanation of the weariness and futility which characterise all their efforts to search after God. They propose to discover God as a man discovers a new element, such as argon; or to manipulate Him as a man manipulates electricity by adjusting apparatus to its physical laws; or to commune with Him as a man communes with light and air by going out into them and opening himself to their full action.

It is a common thing with sentimental writers of this sort to speak of communing thus with God in nature, or to hear His voice in the rush of the breeze, the song of the birds, the rustle of the swaying trees, the murmur of the ocean, &c. All this is beautiful, but mistaken. God and his works are separate, though all His works are in Him. You may see the marks of His wisdom or the evidence of His power in the constitution of nature; but He himself is out of reach. He hides himself from sinful man. He is the highest object of search, and will be found at last by all the inhabitants of the earth, but not by any method of investigation which they can adopt. There is no communion with Him at present, in the true sense of the term. Communion is a mutual and reciprocal act as between two friends. It is not communion if all the talk or all the letter-writing is on one side. What men call communing with God in nature is only the contemplation of the greatness and the wisdom of His works—which is far from being a profitless exercise, but still it is not of the nature of com-

munion, and is apt to be a vacuous and wearisome effort for mortal mind. What is wanted is response from God to what we say or think, like a father's answers to his children's prattle as they walk through the woods. This could be, for God is everywhere present in the fulness of His universe-filling spirit. It will be yet, for God has promised it. But it is not now, for reasons which man is slow to appreciate.

"THERE will I meet with thee" is a revelation, and a prophecy—not anywhere: not with wilful unhumiliated man as he roams in his pride through the earth with a sense of misconceived rights—but *there*; over a blood-sprinkled ark, or through a God-vindicating slain lamb: over an ark containing the God-written law on indelible stone, the miraculously budded rod, and the golden pot of manna; or through men in the profoundest submission to the authority of God: conforming, in punctilious and reverential affection to His appointments, and rejoicing in everlasting life received from His hand as the reward of faith and obedience.

The curse is removed when "the tabernacle of God is with men" in the corporeal establishment of all these Mosaicallly adumbrated realities of coming experience. Then will the angels of God be seen "ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (Jno. i. 51). Then shall His servants "see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads, and there shall be no night there" (Rev. xxii. 4). Then shall Israel hear a voice behind him, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it" (Isa. xxx. 21). Then shall they experience the blessedness of the communion promised. "Before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." Till then, communion is but half truth. We pray, and our prayers are known to ourselves, and they are known to God; but His thoughts or dispositions towards our prayers are not made known to us till the right time, and so we pray the prayer of faith in the darkness. It befits not His greatness or His holiness that He should speak familiarly in an age like this, when little less than perfect barbarism prevails in all the earth.

It would be refreshing, as no language can describe, to have His response to our advances. He will guide our affairs in answer to our requests; but this is a silent answer, and all the answer suitable to a state of things described by a David as "a dry and thirsty land." The day of "streams in the desert" is coming.

The tabernacle is a prophecy of it, but it is also a prophecy of the days of drought that now prevail, when men, as foretold, "run to and fro and seek the word of the Lord and find it not" (Amos viii. 12). A recognition of these things is of great value to us while the time of silence lasts. They save us from the destructive disappointment that awaits the anticipations universally fostered by a false theory of God's relation to man.

We have now to look at that portion of the tabernacle which was divided off from the holiest of all by the veil which concealed the ark from outside view. The veil itself challenges our attention first. Why was it there? As a literal element of the tabernacle, we know why it was there, viz., to provide a concealed recess for the symbols of the divine presence in Israel's midst; but the question now concerns the significance of the veil as part of the Mosaic shadow. Why was there a veil? We see the answer when we ascertain what it represents. This we ascertain from the circumstance recorded by Matthew, that when Jesus died, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matt. xxvii. 51); considered in connection with the exegetical remark of Paul in Heb. x. 20, that there is a "new and living way which Jesus hath consecrated for us *through the veil*, THAT IS TO SAY, HIS FLESH." The veil, then, stands for the flesh of present mortal nature, as possessed by Christ in his natural days. This nature veils off or stands between us and the glorious realities signified by the golden ark-throne in the holiest of all. It was natural, therefore, that in a structural prophecy of good things to come, there should be a counterpart to this time of waiting and preparation. The veil divided the two apartments: the veil of the flesh divides the two states.

The veil had to be torn asunder that we might enter from the one to the other. This was done in Christ. It could not be done in any other; for while any man could have been crucified, any man could not, under the law of sin and death, have risen to glory, honour and immortality. Any one could have died, but mere death was not passing through the veil. The inner side of the veil was the immortal state, and this is not entered except by resurrection. If Christ had not risen, his death would have been in vain, as Paul teaches (1 Cor. xv. 17). A successful rupturing of the veil required the righteousness of a perfectly obedient man, which existed only in Christ. Therefore, the veil, while standing for the flesh-nature, stood particularly for the Christ form of that

nature—through which only could the new and living way be opened.

The concurrence of the rending of the Temple veil with the death of Christ might seem to indicate death simply as the rending; and so it might be considered in the case of Christ, in which it was the completion of a perfect course of obedience. The resurrection sequel was ensured, and was only a question of a few days. He could exclaim, "It is finished," though resurrection and many other things remained to complete the glorious programme of the divine work in him, because all was secured by the course completed in his death. So the rending of the Temple veil could proclaim the opening of the new and living way, though resurrection had to follow crucifixion before the opening was actually achieved.

Popular religion easily adjusts itself to the figure of the veil in so far as it attempts any elucidation of the Mosaic significance. It finds the counterpart of the veil in the "body," and the counterpart of the interior of the Holy of Holies in the Spirit (or, in their language, the disembodied) state, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." This is neat enough as a matter of plausible exposition, but it is in conflict with many elements of the truth, and notably with the most proximate fact in the case, viz. :—That it was not as a so-called "disembodied spirit" that Christ entered the holiest (state) as "our forerunner," but as a glorified body which the apostles handled, and which they afterwards saw visibly ascend out of their sight.

The veil was a composite fabric. It was not a simple sheet of linen or of any other woven stuff: it was composed of various materials and various colours, "blue, purple and scarlet and fine-twined linen of cunning work" (that is, clever, complicated needlework), and it was embroidered with cherubic figures. Where are we to look for the significance of this complexity? Looking at Christ (who "opened the new and living way *through the veil*, that is to say HIS FLESH,") we readily get the answer. The veil did not stand for the flesh merely, but for the form of it provided in Christ, who blended in himself all the elements foreshadowed by the different materials of the symbolic veil. If it had been a prophecy of the flesh merely, a red cloth would have sufficed. But such a prophecy and such an appointment were impossible, as we readily discern when all the truth involved is seen. "Fine-twined linen" is a speaking part of the symbolism. Linen always stands as a

figure for righteousness, as illustrated in the bridal array at the marriage supper of the Lamb, which it was explained to John represented the righteousness of the saints (Rev. xix. 8); and also in the wedding garment, for lack of which the speechless guest was expelled from the marriage feast (Matt. xxii. 11-12). Hence we easily read righteousness in the fine-twined linen of the veil; and that a special righteousness, a perfect righteousness deftly wrought, as signified by fineness of the twining or working. It is the prophecy of a perfectly righteous man who should be no product of accident, but the express provision of divine workmanship, as exemplified in the begetting of Jesus by the Spirit (Matt. i. 20; Luke i. 35), giving point to the apostolic declaration that "he of (or by) God is made unto us righteousness, sanctification, wisdom and redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30). Mere flesh and Adamic generation would have lacked this element of the veil. A mere son of Adam would have been fit for killing, but not for raising to immortal life, because a mere son of Adam would have been, as he is everywhere, a mere sinner. It was needful that the Adamic nature should be divinely handled, divinely shaped, divinely embroidered with the antitypical "fine-twined linen," before there could be in the nature of Adam the undefiled and holy one required for the taking away of the sin of the world, that the way into eternal glory might be opened through the veil. Those who allege Jesus to have been the Son of Joseph, come into collision with this part of the Mosaic prophecy.

But though a sinless man was needed for this work of wisdom and mercy, yet he had to be a man clothed in the very nature that is the historical sinner, and that has come under death by sin; for the very aim of the whole institution was that this nature should be redeemed in him. Hence the scarlet enters into the composition of the veil. It was not all linen. Had it been all linen, the prophetic import would have been that an angel or an immaculate man (a new man provided outside the Adamic race) would open the way into the holiest of all by death and resurrection. But it was fine linen, blended with *scarlet*. Scarlet always stands for sin in scripture metaphor, viz., "Though your sins be as scarlet" (Isaiah i. 18); "a scarlet-coloured beast" (Rev. xvii. 3), &c. But the difficulty with some is how to associate such an ingredient with the sinless Son of God. There ought to be no difficulty if the whole case is kept before the mind. It is not the whole case that "he was without sin:" it is part of the case that he was "made

sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21); that he was made of a woman in the likeness of sinful flesh (Gal. iv. 4; Rom. viii. 3), and that by a figure God hath laid on him the iniquities of us all (Isaiah liii. 6), and that he bore our sins in his own body to the tree (1 Peter ii. 24). These are the testified facts; they need have no difficulty for us in view of the historic fact that he was born of a mortal woman who was under death because of sin. As we contemplate the babe of Bethlehem, born after nine months' gestation, built out of his mother's blood, and nourished by his mother's milk, we cannot resist the conclusion forced on us by the words of Paul, that "he partook of the same flesh and blood" as those he came to redeem, and that he was made in all points like unto his brethren (Heb. ii. 14-17). He was palpably and before our eyes thus made subject to the sin-constitution of things that has prevailed on the earth "through one man's offence," which enables us to understand the otherwise unintelligible statement of Paul that, when he died, "he died unto sin once" (Rom. vi. 10). *A sinless man made subject to the consequences of sin*: this is the combination of the fine-twined linen and the scarlet. There is no difficulty when each element in the case is allowed its place. The difficulties arise from looking too exclusively at one or two elements. Rome has created difficulty by her doctrine of immaculate conception, in which she has latterly included Mary herself. This doctrine has gone through the world by tradition, and breaks out here and there in unsuspected places. Renunciationism has troubled us with it in a special shape, and well-meaning minds perpetuate the trouble by their superficial partiality for a view that seems more honouring to Christ than the truth.

There remain the blue and the purple. Blueness is scripturally associated with healing (Prov. xx. 30). This is the prophesied result of the Christ work, "with His stripes we are healed." It was fitting that the veil prophecy should contain the counterpart of this. As to the purple, while without the specific indication of its import that we have in the other cases, we have a general clue in the fact that it is always associated with royalty. "They put on Him a purple robe" in mock recognition of His claim (Jno. xix. 2). So the queenly rider of the apocalyptic scarlet-coloured beast "was arrayed in purple and scarlet" in token of her power and the character of it. Consequently, we may, without fear of mistake, recognise in the purple ingredient of the veil fabric the prophecy that he who should take away

the sin of the world, and open the way unto eternal glory, should be a royal personage (*purple*) as well as an holy one (*white*), a sufferer (*scarlet*), a King as well as a sacrifice, a healer (*blue*) as well as a ruler, and the bearer of the divine glory (*the cherubic figures*) at both stages of his manifestation.

All these foreshadowings have had their perfect fulfilment in the righteous Son of David, heir to David's throne, the coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords—who hath opened for us a new and living way, "through the veil, that is to say, his flesh," in being put to death in the flesh but quickened by the Spirit, and exalted far above all heavens, waiting for the appointed time for his enemies to be made his footstool.

The pillars upon which the veil was hung may have a meaning. They were four in number, made of shittim wood covered with gold, standing in sockets of silver, and filleted with hooks at the top for the suspension of the veil. We all know that pillars are used figuratively to denote leading and upholding men, as when it is written, "James, Cephas and John seemed to be pillars" (Gal. ii. 9), or when it is said, "He is a regular pillar." Here are four pillars on which the Christ-veil is exhibited to view and held in its place for tabernacle use. It is a remarkable fact that the testimony for Christ has been shown to the world by and hooked upon four particular writers who were "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word"—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (Luke was an eye-witness at the second stage). Was this the meaning of the Mosaic prophecy in this particular? We have no positive authority for alleging it, but it looks wonderfully like it. There must have been a reason in a structural parable why four, and not six or any other number, was adopted for the pillars holding the veil. We are not told the reason, but the facts seem to point to it.

The composition of the pillars agrees with this understanding of them. Wood, perishable human nature, coated and beautified with the gold of faith in preparation for the clothing upon with the immortal; and as regards their official pillar position, standing upon the *silver* foundation of purity for which they were chosen. (Silver is always the figure of purged character. Mal. iii. 3; Isaiah i. 22, 25.) The hooks of gold would stand for the pens of faith by which the "evangelist" testimony was given to the world.

And now we are outside the holiest of all, and outside the veil, but still inside the tabernacle in the holy or first chamber—corresponding to the present life in its divine relations. We have considered the second chamber first because it is first described, though last made, for the reasons already glanced at. But the first chamber is first in our experience, and therefore the first in which the qualified visitor would have found himself on entering by the door of the tabernacle from the outside. It differs from the holiest of all in several important respects. There is no manifested glory of God, and no light except what comes from the lit candlestick with the seven branches. The natural light is excluded by the coverings of the tabernacle, and the light of the cherubic glory in the holiest is intercepted by the veil. Darkness artificially dispelled is the characteristic, then, of the holy place.

To this there is a complete parallel in the holy state pertaining to the present life of the saints. There is no manifested glory of the Lord: that is veiled off by the earthly nature of present experience. There is light, but it is merely "the light of *the knowledge* of the glory of God" irradiated by the lit candlestick of the word of the Lord. The saints walk by faith, and, therefore, by the light of the golden candlestick, which is sevenfold, as intimating its perfection for the purpose in view. This is a real light, though faint by comparison with that which is within the veil. It is a light of actual demonstrated truth. It is neither cunningly devised fables nor uncertain opinions, but the exhibited realities of divine operations in Israel's history, authenticated to us by the testimony of eye-witnesses (from Moses to the companions of Christ), and confirmed in various ways apparent to attentive intelligence.

The light was caused by the combustion of oil supplied to the lamps morning and evening, without which the light would have gone out—whence we may gather the idea that the candlestick does not represent the word of the Lord in the abstract, but that word as incorporate in living believers, after the example of the seven apocalyptic candlesticks which stood for seven light-bearing communities of saints. It is manifest that the word of the Lord can have no operative existence apart from living reflectors. Inspiration itself is but the intelligence of God apart from a living medium. And when this inspiration, acting through the prophets and apostles, had incorporated itself in writing, the writing was

not in itself the light, but the mere means of the light when it enters into the knowledge and understanding of living believers. The word as oil becomes in them the light, when combusted in their understanding, and by this light they walk in the darkness. This will enable us to understand why the lamps had to be replenished morning and evening.

The candlestick, though all of gold (pure faith), did not stand for perennial light, like the glory shining between the cherubim : such light is only possible in the spirit state in which we shall know as we are known, and never faint or weary. The only light we can have at present is the light of illuminated brains, and this is not a fixed light, but a light that requires constant renewal by daily supplies of the oil of the word. "Order the lamps upon the pure candlestick from the evening unto the morning before the Lord continually" is the type. Nothing less than the daily reading of the word can answer to this type.

The light of the truth burns steadily under such a process : under any other, it goes out for all practical purposes of saintship. This view of the case gives the reading of the Scriptures a place of importance which it does not receive in current forms of religion. It also strikes at the root of the ecclesiastical idea that religious enlightenment is a kind of semi-miraculous illumination by the "Holy Ghost." It emphasises the declaration of David, "The entrance of thy words giveth light ;" and of Paul, "The Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through the faith that is in Christ Jesus."

The oil was to be supplied by the children of Israel ; "pure oil, olive, *beaten for the light*" (Lev. xxiv. 2). This is in harmony with the fact that Israel has furnished the men who were the mediums of the oil-word, and that the same was delivered in much affliction—(beaten for the light). Whether this was an intended meaning we are not informed, but the correspondence is striking.

The exclusion of the natural light is evidently a part of the symbolism. There was no window in the tabernacle, and the light that would have come from the open roof was intercepted by the several coverings that were laid across. We have no indication of the divinely-intended meaning of this, beyond what may be furnished in the Scriptural question : "Who can by searching find out God?" and the apostolic statement : "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God ; they are foolishness unto him, because they are spiritually discerned." As we behold the

darkened interior of the structure intended to symbolise the relation of God to man, lit only by an apparatus forming part of the symbolism, we are plainly informed that "the light of nature" can throw no light on the question of what man's relation to God is, or what God's purpose with him is, or how man can be acceptable with God. In short, that "religion" is an affair of revelation exclusively, and that "natural religion" is a myth. There is truly no such thing as natural religion. Religion, to be religion, must be a means of actual reconciliation with God, and it is from God only that we can learn the terms of this reconciliation. What man devises is not religion, but will-worship, or worship according to human will. It may be acceptable to man; but if it is not acceptable to God it has no reconciling power, or power to bind again what has been broken, and, therefore, is not religion—all which is in perfect accord with the fact that natural light had no place in the interior of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The golden candlestick stood on the left hand of the holy place as one entered from the door. The next object catching the eye was an altar, standing in front before the veil of the most holy—not an altar for offering sacrifice but an altar for offering incense. The altar for offering sacrifice—a much larger altar—was outside the tabernacle. The interior of the holy place would not have been a fitting place for this altar when the significance of things is considered. The holy place typified the holy state arising out of the divine appointments for the purpose, chief among which is the sacrifice of the holy one. It would not have been appropriate to give a place to this sacrifice in the place signifying the state arising out of it. It was more in harmony with the relation of things that the altar of burnt offerings should be outside the tabernacle, though in the holy court. But though there is no altar of sacrifice in the holy place, there is the altar of incense on which morning and evening it was the high priest's part to offer incense with fire taken off the altar of sacrifice. This incense altar was of wood covered with gold, and resembled the ark in being finished on the top with a royal crown, and having gold-covered staves always in the rings ready for use. All these features would have the meanings we identified in connection with the ark in the last chapter. They represented the same community but in a different state and time—namely, *now* instead of *then*; in the mortal instead of the immortal.

Incense we saw to symbolise acceptable prayer. The altar of incense represents the sacrifice of prayer offered with Christ-fire on the gold-plated foundation of faith, without which it is impossible to please God (Heb. xi. 6). The presence of this altar in the Mosaic Holy and the daily consumption of incense upon it is a powerful inculcation of this truth from God, which is otherwise so often declared in the Scriptures, that men are not acceptable to Him who do not "pray without ceasing," and in "everything give thanks," offering "the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Heb. xiii. 15)—"a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations." No strange incense was to be used. Only God's own promises and God's own commandments must be breathed in prayer. God's own truth is the only acceptable basis of approach. Man's thoughts and inventions are odious to Him. This is only natural, as we might say; great men can only be acceptably approached by inferiors on the basis of the great men's own views of what is proper. How much more must man conform to God. "I will be sanctified in them that approach unto me" was His comment on the destruction of Nadab and Abihu when they presumed to offer strange fire.

The altar of incense, though wholly a symbol of prayer, was associated with atonement, in being touched once a year with "the blood of the sin-offering" slain and offered outside (Ex. xxx. 10), which is an intimation that prayer is not acceptable except at the hands of those who have come into contact with the sacrifice of Christ in the way appointed—the understanding, belief and obedience of the gospel, in being baptised into his death. Men who worship apart from this are worshippers on the outside of the tabernacle, and invoke death in presuming to come near without the blood of the sacrifice required. The altar of incense had no relation to the stranger in any sense or way. It was in the holy, which no stranger dare enter, and it was both anointed with the holy oil and sanctified with the atoning blood, with which the stranger has not come in contact. Also it was to be served only by the priests, with whom the stranger has no connection. It is only those who have submitted to the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus that are "a royal priesthood," qualified to acceptably "show forth the praises of Him who hath called them from darkness into His marvellous light, which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God" (1 Pet. ii. 9).

On the right-hand side of the holy place, against the inner side of the south wall of the chamber, stood a table about 3 ft. long, 18 in. broad, and 2 ft. 3 in. high, made of hard wood covered with gold (Ex. xxv. 23). On it were placed two piles of cakes, of fine flour, six in a pile, twelve in all. On each pile (or row) was placed a vessel containing a quantity of frankincense in process of burning. The cakes were to be renewed every sabbath, and the old ones eaten by the priests in the holy place. They were called the shew bread (Ex. xxv. 30), because always on show "before the Lord." But what were they there to show? First, the national constitution in twelve tribe subjection to the law of Moses. We learn this from their number, which connects them with the "twelve tribes of Israel," and from the statement that the cakes were to be considered as taken from them as an offering for a memorial (Lev. xxiv. 7-8). This clue unites with certain apostolic expressions in attaching an Israelitish character to the whole economy of true religion and hope and holiness, as existing in this imperfect state. The holy place figures this economy, and it is meet, therefore, that it should contain the insignia of its national association. We know who said "*Salvation is of the Jews*" (Jno. iv. 22), "to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants, and giving of the law, and the promises" (Rom. ix. 4). We are all familiar with Paul's description of the hope of the gospel as "the hope of Israel" (Acts xxviii. 20), "unto which hope," as he further said, "our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come" (xxvi. 7).

The moderns have entirely forgotten this aspect of the salvation which the gospel discloses and offers. The twelve cakes of the shew bread may suffice to recall them to the truth in this matter. "The bread of God" (as the shew bread is called, Lev. xxi. 6) "is he that cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world" (Jno. vi. 33); but the shape of it is Israelitish, not only as to its historical associations, but as to its future development. We not only see in Jesus a Jew (Jno. iv. 9), "the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. i. 1); but as we look forward, we see him enthroned in Zion, on David's throne, as King of Israel and Lord of the whole earth (Mich. iv. 7; Isaiah ix. 6; Jer. xxiii. 5; Zech. xiv. 9). We not only see the twelve cakes piled on the table in the Mosaic holy place to "show" the truth; but in the finished antitype we see twelve thrones for the twelve apostles, over the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28; Luke

xxii. 30). Thus the law and the prophets and the gospel coincide in exhibiting this much-forgotten feature of divine truth.

The divine plan is one from the beginning. "In Abraham and his seed" is the basis of blessing laid. There has been no departure from the purpose formed at the beginning. There have been adjustments and accommodations arising out of Israel's disobedience, but the main plan has been steadily pursued even in the calling of the Gentiles to be grafted into the good olive tree (Rom. xi. 24). But because "they are not all Israel that are of Israel," the vast majority in their generations having been rebels like those who fell in the wilderness under Moses, the main position has become obscured, and many have jumped to the conclusion deprecated by Paul, that "God hath cast away His people whom He foreknew." The fact is that in the midst of all the confusions inseparable from an enterprise operating on flesh and blood, there have always been a remnant like Elijah's seven thousand. This remnant in our age is mainly to be found among adopted Israelites (Gentiles adopted through Christ). Still, even these are the same class spiritually, and will be incorporated with the accepted natural remnant in the day when the plan is brought to its full completion.





## CHAPTER XV.—INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE TABERNACLE.

HERE are one or two minor analogies connected with the shew-bread which a brief word may suggest before passing on to the remaining aspects of the Tabernacle. The smoking frankincense on the twelve cakes may tell us that the class in Israel who are reckoned as the true and final commonwealth of Israel are those only who are as an odour of a sweet smell to the Creator in the genuine thanksgiving and praise that ascend continually from their circumcised and enlightened minds. It is not enough to have Abraham's blood; there must also be Abraham's faith and obedience.

The fact that the cakes were eaten by the priests touches the truth at three points. 1. Only the class of mankind who are called and constituted "priests unto God" are the qualified and destined partakers of the hope of Israel. 2. This hope can only be eaten in the holy place to which the truth calls men, by the gospel and baptism, outside of which men are "without Christ, and having no hope," as Paul alleges in Eph. ii. 12. 3. In the final evolution of things natural, Israel in their twelve tribes disappears by absorption in the priestly order, who, largely recruited in numbers at the close of the thousand years, become at last the sole and immortal survivors of earth's population in the perfect state to which the whole purpose is tending.

Turning our eyes from the two piles of shew-bread, a-smoke with the fragrant fumes of the prayer-incense, the only other feature challenging our attention before we retire through the curtained door of entrance (of which a word presently) are the walls of the holy place. These walls were formed by the inner surfaces of the gold-plated boards, which supplied the frame-work of the tabernacle. Presumably, the gold-plating of the boards would be polished. The interior would therefore be resplendent with the glory of a burnished surface reflecting the light of the seven-branched lit candlestick—itsself gleaming with a similar radiance, as also the incense altar and table of shew-bread. The splendour of such an interior would be softened a little

by the veil at one end, and the entrance curtain at the other, and also by the roofing of similar material thrown across, and by the earth-floor of the apartment. Still, the general effect would be dazzling; and when we consider the spiritual significance of the material yielding this lustre, the glittering interior of the holy place becomes a speaking parable of the mental condition that renders men acceptable to God—without which, it is pointedly declared, “it is impossible to please God” (Heb. xi. 6)—a faith true as gold, precious as gold, shining as gold. The nature of faith enables us to understand why it should have such a prominent and emphatic assertion in the symbolism of the holy place; and this symbolism is the most powerful condemnation imaginable of the present attitude of all ranks of society towards divine things.

Faith is confidence in the testimony of God concerning Himself and His purposes, and therefore is “the substance of things hoped for” (Heb. xi. 1). It is unmistakably illustrated in the remark of Paul concerning Abraham’s belief in the promise that he should have a son by Sarah when she was past age. “He staggered not at the promise of God *through unbelief*, but was STRONG IN FAITH . . . being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform” (Rom. iv. 20). Considering this, we are justified in regarding the shining walls of the holy place as a proclamation of the fact that no man is acceptable to God who is not characterised by an unhesitating faith in all God’s declarations and appointments; or, to put it positively, that the anti-typical holy place is composed of men and women whose first and most powerful moral characteristic is implicit, cordial and childlike belief in the word of God, and resultant conformity to its requirements, and that faithless and disobedient doubters are no part of the gold of the sanctuary.

How is it possible it could be otherwise? If man resents unbelief or doubt in man as a personal affront—if man exacts confidence and credence as a condition of friendship with man—how could we expect the Eternal God, against whom we have sinned, to have any pleasure in us if we stand aloof in unsympathetic unfaith towards Himself, or doubt or indifference concerning His promises? Some are ignorant enough to expect it, if we are to judge by the views and doctrines that are so prevalent in our day; but the truth is not altered by popular misapprehension, however widespread. The essentiality, the indispensability of faith is proclaimed not only by the shining gold in every part of the Mosaic

Tabernacle, but by the vision of the Holy City to John in Patmos, "which was pure gold, like unto clear glass," and concerning which it was expressly proclaimed that "the fearful and unbelieving" had no place therein. God will condescend to man if man believe; but the world is unbelieving, and therefore "the enemy of God." "How can ye believe that receive honour one of another?" enquired Jesus. The position of wisdom is plain, though very uncomfortable, for the time being.

As we pass out of the holy place, it is through curtains or hangings suspended on five gold-sheathed pillars of shittim wood, standing in sockets of brass. The pillars and the hangings formed "the door of the tent"—not the door of the Tabernacle to which the assembly often gathered; such was the opening in the curtain wall enclosing the court in which the Tabernacle stood. The hangings of "the door of the tent" were of the same material as the veil of the holiest—"blue, purple, scarlet, fine-twined linen" (Ex. xxvi. 36). The pillars were the same as those upholding the veil, except that they were five in number instead of four, and stood in sockets of brass instead of silver.

There is little difficulty in discerning the significance of these things when the main fact is held in view, that the holy place represents the holy or separated and reconciled state into which men are brought in this life by divine institutions appointed for the purpose, apart from which they are unjustified sinners, without hope, though recipients of the goodness of God, "who sendeth His rain upon the just and the unjust." We know who has proclaimed himself "the door" of the reconciled state—even him of whom it is testified that "God was in Christ" reconciling the world unto Himself. Therefore we easily recognise Christ in the hangings of "blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine-twined linen." In being baptised into Christ, we pass through these hangings and stand in the holy place, constituted members of "the royal priesthood, the holy nation," which Peter alleges the saints to be (1 Pet. ii. 9). Those who are not baptised into Christ stand outside the holy place.

But how is it that the same materials—which, as the veil separating the holiest, represented Christ in his mortal nature as the Lamb of God to take away sin by the rending of the flesh-veil in himself (the passing through which should lead into the immortal state)—should now stand for the means of entrance into a state which, though holy, is still mortal and imperfect? The answer is

that it is the same Christ in another relation. Though it is true that it was the personal Jesus that was represented by the veil, in opening the way into the holiest of all in the sacrifice of himself, it is no less true that it is the personal Jesus that is brought to bear on outside sinners when his achievements are offered by apostolic report to their faith as the means of their introduction to a relation of favour and hope. Therefore materials representing him are in place, both at the door and in the veil. Christ is as much the door of entrance to the holy state as he is the opener of the way into the holiest. He is the door as well as the veil, and the doctrines symbolised by the blue and purple and scarlet and fine-twined linen (considered in the last chapter) are as much in operative view at the initial stage of a sinner's justification as they are when he stands in the immortal throng of glorified saints at the last to ascribe salvation, and glory and honour, "to Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood."

What may there be in the five pillars suspending the door hangings as distinguished from the four pillars holding up the veil! If pillars represent men, what men in this connection? If the four pillars of the veil stand for "the four evangelists," as the witnesses to the world in all generations of the sufferings and resurrection of Jesus, what five men are distinguished in connection with the work of preaching this risen Jesus as the door of entrance into saintship, reconciliation, and hope? This phase of the testimony of Christ is represented peculiarly by the epistles which are the outgrowth of the apostolic work after Christ's departure from the earth. Now, it is a fact that these epistles have five authors, and only five—Paul, James, Peter, Jude, and John. This may not have been what was meant; but here is the fact; here is, at least, a coincidence; and here may be the very meaning. It may be said there were twelve apostles engaged in the work of preaching Christ as the only name given under heaven for the salvation of men, and not only twelve apostles, but a multitude of helpers besides, and that, therefore, the idea of regarding the five pillars standing as a prediction of five workers is out of the question. But this would not necessarily exclude the suggestion; because the multitudinous agency of the first century was transitory, and passed away with the generation, whereas the literary form of the testimony of Christ, which has been both the most lasting and the most effectual form of it, has been limited to

the five men whose names have been given. In all generations since the apostolic age, the doctrine of Christ as the way of salvation has rested on the testimony of these five men, when all others have been silent in the grave.

Supposing this is the right view, it would yield a suggestion as to the five pillars standing in brass sockets while the four veil pillars stood in silver sockets. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as representing companionship with the Lord in the days of his flesh, would represent a work done upon a divine foundation in so far as it was accomplished within the precincts of the Mosaic Constitution. Jesus was a Jew, and subject to the law, and so were his twelve apostles. They were therefore operating upon a divinely-established basis which would be appropriately shown by silver sockets to the four pillars. The epistolary phase of the works which came after was upon a different footing, illustrated by the exhortation: "Let us *go forth* unto him *without (outside) the camp*, bearing his reproach" (Heb. xiii. 13). While this attitude was a divine attitude, still it differed in having no organic foundation such as the first phase of the work had. The Jew had a city and a polity, visible upon earth, of which he could boast a divine origin. Whereas Paul had to say, "We have here no continuing city, but seek one to come." It was an inferior position, and mostly Greek in its elements, and therefore not inappropriately represented by sockets of brass to the five pillars.

Passing out of the holy place with a farewell glance at the interior walls of gold covered boards, it may occur to us to enquire as to the number and size of the boards, and the method by which they are held together. I do not know that we shall find significances so personal as those just suggested, because of the lack of detailed information on some historical points; but some general meanings will be evident.

First of all, the mechanical compactness of the whole structure is remarkable. It would not be possible to fit together a portable chamber that would be more solid while standing or more easily taken down when the time came to resume the journey. There was no need for nails or hammers either in putting up or taking down; it was a mere process of fitting together adjusted parts. The basis consisted of 100 heavy sockets of silver, which were let into or laid on the level ground—each socket weighing about a hundredweight, and having a square hole on its upper side to receive one of the two tenons at the bottom end of each gold covered board. Two

sockets went to one board to hold it in true position. There were in all forty-six boards, each board about 15 feet in length (or height as it would reckon when reared on its end) and 2 feet 3 inches in breadth—shittim wood covered with gold from end to end on all sides. The sockets being placed in the correct order on a ground plan measuring two sides of about 50 feet each and one end of 18 feet across, the boards would be reared upon their ends close together, forming a square enclosed on three sides—the east side being left clear for the curtained door. There were four corner pieces, each formed of two boards coupled together above and below and let into four sockets underneath. But boards standing on end would not be very stable, so they were bound together by bars passing like hoops round a barrel along the entire length of the tabernacle on the three sides. The bars had hold by brackets or rings solidly fixed in the boards. The bars were four in number, and to receive them there were four rings on the outer surface of each board at regular intervals from top to bottom. In addition to these four bars on the outside of the boards, there was a middle stay shot through the centre sideways of each board, midway between top and bottom, having the two bars above and two below. There would remain a tendency in the side walls at the open end to fall in. To correct this a cord was fixed to the top of each board by a hook and carried to a pin stuck in the ground some distance outward from the base of the board. Thus keyed together, the walls of the tabernacle possessed great cohesion and stability.

These are mechanical features with mechanical aims ; but it is not impossible to extract a spiritual significance collateral with the revealed imports of the tabernacle and its furniture. It is probable that, thoroughly seen into, the whole economy of the divine intervention in human affairs, of which the tabernacle is the structural allegory, would be found to possess a coherency of mutually supporting parts little suspected by those who idly glance backward on the history of the matter, and see in it an apparent chaos of unconnected details. How adapted have been the measures of every successive phase of the work to accomplish the objects suitable to the circumstances of the time in their relation to whatever is coming after. How unsuitable the law of Moses would have been for the time of Adam or Noah : but how suitable for a community grown to two millions. How out of place would have been political prophecy when there were no

“peoples, nations, and languages,” but only a sparse and scattered agricultural and patriarchal community; but how much a light in a dark place when the confused and evil state of mankind, grown to struggling millions, presents a distressing and insoluble problem. How suitable to Abraham the promise of personal possession of the land of his pilgrimage: how much more suited to a later age is the Gospel of the Kingdom, in a more general form. How effectually did a thousand years of the futile “righteousness of the law” prepare for the grace of God that brought salvation by faith in Christ Jesus. How powerfully did the prevalence during all that time of ceremonial scrupulosity open the way for that idea of holiness which is the kernel of the calling in Christ Jesus.

These are scattered hints, which merely touch on trains of thought that may be profitably followed in the direction suggested, namely, by way of discovering that the whole method of divine procedure has been not only consecutive from the beginning, but so framed as to bind all parts into a connected whole, as much contrived and adapted to reach the glorious result at the end as the mechanism of a plant in root, stem, tendrils and leaves is designed to reach and yield the beauty and fragrance of the flower.

Coming to the details of the tabernacle frame-work, there is probably more signified than we can possibly discover. The separate boards covered with gold doubtless tell of separate men of faith, who have been as a wall to the divine work in all ages. Who these are as a class, the scriptures plainly reveal—the prophets—“of whom the world was not worthy,” who through faith performed their several parts, from Enoch downwards. There were 52 boards, including the four pairs braced together for the corners. There may be as many prominent names as that among the servants of God from the beginning. The corners are turning points. At the turning points of Israel's history, the prominent servants were generally in couples, *e.g.*, Aaron and Joshua, Samuel and David, Elijah and Elisha, Ezra and Nehemiah. The mainstay, shooting through the middle of all the boards and holding them together, might have its counterpart in Moses, to whom all deferred throughout their generations. The four bars girding them outside would be amply paralleled in the four beacon-light dispensational prophets:—Noah, Samuel, Daniel, and John the Baptist. The cords and the pins, keeping the boards upright, might find their analogy in the leading person in each prophet's circle, who upheld

his hands and favoured his cause with the cord of a practical support. They all stood socketed in the silver of divine choice.

These are mere suggestions—not altogether at random. They are based on the general clues actually supplied, and proceed on the reasonable assumption that the tabernacle, being a structural parable of the truth in its historical and doctrinal development, would be likely to reflect the details of the literal history in the details of its mechanical construction.

The framework of the tabernacle being set up, it was next clothed in a remarkable manner. Four coverings were laid over it so as to form a roof and hangings on three sides, leaving the door end clear. The four coverings were not all of the same material, nor of quite the same dimensions or pattern. *The first* was of similar character to the door-hangings, and the veil—a composite fabric of blue and purple and scarlet, on a ground of fine linen. It was formed of ten parts or curtains, divided into two sections of five each. Each curtain was about 42 feet long, and 6 feet in breadth; and had 50 loops of blue down one side at regular distances, and 50 gold hooks or buttons down the other, allowing of their being fastened together. Five were fastened together into one curtain; and the one curtain so obtained was spread over the tabernacle lengthways, from side to side, so as to fall over and cover the west end and sides of the tabernacle. The other five were fastened together in the same way, and laid over the forepart of the tabernacle. From the dimensions given, this part would just reach to the door end, but not fall over the end.—*The second covering* was of goat material, whether skin or hair does not appear, as “hair” is not in the original. It was probably goat’s hair woven into a kind of thin matting. It was formed in the same way as the first covering of separate curtains: tacked together, but the curtains were eleven in number, instead of ten, and the hooks were brass instead of gold. They were tacked together in two unequal sections, of five curtains and six; also, in length they exceeded the curtains of the first covering by three feet. They were laid across the tabernacle over the first covering in the same way as the first covering, from side to side; but being longer, they overlapped the first covering on each side by one cubit, or 18 inches; also being broader, through the front section having six instead of five curtains, it overlapped the first covering on the west end, and also fell a little way over the door front, forming a sort of head or frieze to the entrance 2 cubits, or 3 feet deep. The

*third covering* was of rams' skins dyed red, and the *fourth* of badger skin, or seal skin. These coverings do not appear to have been divided into curtains, but were probably stitched together in one piece, according to the shape of the skins used. They would be drawn over the goat's hair curtains, and form the outer roofing or protection for the whole.

The literal purpose served by these coverings is obvious. Resting on the sloping cords all round the tabernacle, they would not only afford protection to the holy interior with its vessels, whether from the sand of the desert, or the ravage of rain-storms, but they would impart to the whole structure a certain air of graceful *neglige* and majesty, which was becoming the habitation of the Holy Presence in Israel's midst. But where shall we look for the spiritual significances? Some of them we have found already. The first covering, formed of the same material as the Christ-veil and the Christ-door, doubtless brings Christ to view! but in what relation? If the boards of the tabernacle represent the prophets, we have Christ thus surrounding, enclosing, and overtopping them all, as the one investing name of protection and grace—the name above every name yet connected with and embracing all other subordinate names in the word and house of God. But why in ten parts? There is no clue unless it is supplied by the use of "ten times" as the finishing degree of anything—Daniel and his companions "ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers" (Dan. i. 20); "Changed my wages ten times" (Gen. xxxi. 7); God doubled Pharaoh's vision to express certitude (Gen. xli. 32). Christ tenfold would be an intenserate of the same rule. It may also be that His word has ten historic phases which he will be able to disentangle for us from the chaotic story of things. Why the golden hooks and loops of blue? Is it that each part of the true work of Christ on the earth is held together by the golden hooks of faith in his people holding on to the healing blue loops of kindness and truth both in God and in all the saints? Perhaps. Why two sections of five curtains each? Here we are at a loss unless there is a reference to the two-fold composition of the body of Christ, as consisting of Jew and Gentile, or to the division in the body of Christ, foreshown in the parable of the ten virgins, of whom "five were wise and five were foolish."

The second covering introduces the subject of the goats. They are related to the sheep in a certain way. They herd with them

and browse with them in the agricultural customs of the East ; and in the spiritual bearings of things, they form an element in the constitution of the house of Christ, in its ecclesiastical development in the earth. The history of the Christ name has been a history of the true and the false all the time : the spiritual and the carnal : men who in the humility of children are subject to the law of Christ in all things, and men who are only partially subject, and who push with the horn and fight where the lambs submit or flee. The history of Europe shows us this history in its fulness : " fighting bishops " and " Christian politicians." They have answered a purpose in the development of things : they are a covering to the work of God, as against barbarians and Mahomedans : they have supplied a system for the transmission of the Bible, &c. But they are no part of the blue and purple and scarlet and fine-twined linen. They are a fabric of goat's hair. They are ecclesiastically organised, and therefore the goat's hair is divided like the first covering into separate curtains. But the connecting hooks are hooks of brass—not the golden hooks of faith, but a mere unreasoning assent to tradition. The loops were not loops of healing blue, but of the common hemp of sociality, which has no healing in it in the final issue of things. Their ten curtains would tell us may be of the ten horns that make war with the Lamb ; and the eleventh curtain, of the eleventh or Papal horn that came up after the ten on the head of Daniel's fourth beast. This eleventh curtain fell over the east end of the tabernacle, just far enough to show over the door, but forming no part of the door. The Papal Church has been to the front all the while, as the pretended way of entrance, but those entering the sanctuary pass under the Romish mat of goat's hair suspended in front. They do not touch or pass through it ; they touch the Christ-hangings of blue and purple, scarlet and linen, and pass through the apostolic pillars of gold. The covering of goat's hair was longer and wider than the linen covering of blue and purple, so that when it was spread over the latter it concealed it from sight. The goat institution has always been the largest and most consequential in the world's affairs. The true Christ-work cannot be seen for it. When men ask for the Christian Church, it is Rome or Canterbury that comes into view. The seed of the exiled woman, " who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ," are not visible on the face of public life.

Over the goat's hair was spread a covering of rams' skins dyed red, and not divided into curtains, and without specified measurements. This would tell us of something outside the ecclesiastical arrangement. The material and the colour both speak of brute force. The rams were aggressive animals, and the significance of redness may be taken as supplied in the answer to the question in Isaiah lxiii., "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel!" "Blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. . . . I will tread down the people in mine anger." Blood-shedding aggressive power would be the import of rams' skins dyed red. Where shall we look for this? "The powers that be" undoubtedly, which, as Paul says, "bear not the *sword* in vain"—a sword ready to be unsheathed and bathed in blood at any time either in the enforcement of justice or the repulsion of aggression. The redness being added to the skin by dye, would show that the function represented by the redness was not necessarily inherent in the thing represented by the skin. It would mean power to kill without obligation to kill. The skin government would possess the judicial and military powers at discretion, as in the permitted government of man.

But how could such an element have place in a divine arrangement of things? The objection implied in this question might hold good in reference to the perfect state of things contemplated in the promises of God concerning the earth; it has no force as against the temporary and imperfect institutions represented by the tabernacle. "The powers that be are *ordained of God*" for the time being, as not only Paul declares, but as Daniel informed Nebuchadnezzar: "God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Dan. v. 21). Outside the false church is the State upholding the church, preserving the situation till it has answered its purpose: over the goat's hair is the covering of rams' skins dyed red.

Over the covering of rams' skins dyed red was the covering of badger skins or sealskin, that translators are not agreed which it matters not: badger skin and sealskin are equally skin in a state of nature. Here is a covering outside of all coverings—one that bears the brunt of the weather, one that looks towards the sky, having had no artificial treatment, no dyeing, no cutting up into curtains, no hooks, no loops—evidently representing something that is the ultimate protection of men having divine relations. What can this be? What else can it be than nature—the goodness

of God in nature? "His tender mercy is over all His works." "He sendeth His rain on the just and the unjust." Even the natural sympathy of man with man, outside all artificial arrangements, is often a natural protection when all others have failed. "The earth helps the woman." It cannot positively be said that this is the significance of the outmost covering of the tabernacle; but the trend of graduated significances from the holiest outwards would strongly point to such a conclusion. The tabernacle, with all its details, would then stand before us a complete parable of the way of God with man during the world's troubled progress from darkness to light.





## CHAPTER XVI.—THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE.

THE Tabernacle did not stand nakedly in the midst of the people. It was fenced off from familiar contact by a wall from seven to eight feet high which stood all round it at a considerable distance from the tabernacle itself, enclosing an area of 11,250 square feet, forming a court about 150 feet long and 75 feet across with the tabernacle in the centre. The wall was not a brick wall or a stone wall, but a curtain wall of linen suspended on wooden pillars—the pillars standing in brass sockets let into the ground; each pillar ornamented with a silver capital, and a fillet of silver with a hook inserted, to receive the suspending rings of the curtain.

The material of the curtains is the first thing that challenges discernment as regards spiritual significance. Fine linen is invariably employed to typify righteousness (Rev. xix. 8; Psa. xlv. 14; Matt. xxii. 11-12). The whole economy of the Divine work upon earth of which the tabernacle was a veiled prophecy as well as a germinal commencement, is walled off by righteousness. The unrighteous world has nothing to do with it. "The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. vi. 9). "There shall not enter therein anything that defileth or that worketh abomination or loveth or maketh a lie" (Rev. xxi. 27). The world in general lieth in wickedness: that which is prevalent in it is not of the Father (1 Jno. ii. 16).

This linen-walled enclosure of the tabernacle tells us that the world is outside the purpose of God concerning everlasting things, or as Paul literally expresses it, "has no hope and is without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 12). It is a speaking testimony on this first and most unpopular of all first principles of the truth. People in our day are slow to recognise this simple lesson. They will listen to the doctrine of God's existence: and admire the beauty of His commandments, and even applaud the gospel of the kingdom and life eternal. But when you tell them of an outer wall of righteousness which separates them as mere children of nature from the household of God and the future glory connected with

it, they are incredulous, and worse—rebellious. They have been taught they have a right to the goodness of the world to come, “if there is one”—which is their doubtful way of expressing themselves. They have not realised that as sinners, they have no rights whatever except the right to occupy a grave, and that it is the Lord’s self-restraint—because of His purpose, that leads to their being tolerated at all.

The Mosaic parable will be useful to all such if it enable them to realise that “they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. viii. 8), and that a man to be acceptable to God, must come into harmony with His institutions, and the principles which they embody. Parabolically speaking, they must come inside the walls of righteousness with which He surrounded the tabernacle of His love. This they may do by entering the gate at the east side, which was “a hanging of blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen,” suspended on four pillars (Ex. xxvii. 1-16). We have already seen that these materials in combination represent Christ. Through Christ, and through him alone, may sinners enter. He proclaimed himself “the way” and “the door”: which harmonises with the type before us. When we enter through him, we are inside the encampment of righteousness which the Lord has pitched in the earth.

The four pillars may be taken to mean the Gospel narrators, on whose united testimony, Christ is held up before the gaze of all men, as “The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” In addition to these four, there were 56 pillars planted round the tabernacle for the holding up of the linen curtains. Many notable servants of God were employed in the work of holding up the work of his righteousness in all the ages during which, “at sundry times and in divers manners, He spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.” A divine enumeration of them might show us the 56, besides the four evangelists. *The sockets of brass* show us their standing in the flesh: the *setting of the sockets in the earth*, their placing among the people to whom the testimony was delivered; *the shittim wood* of which the pillars were composed, the failing nature in which their service was rendered; *their silver mountings*, the spiritual garnishings which qualified them for divine employment: the hooks, the pins stuck in the earth, and the cords connecting the pillars with the pins for support—the private and faithful coadjutors who upheld them in their work.

Entrance through the gate was only for eligible people : and their eligibility consisted in their compliance with various prescribed requirements. The uncircumcised were not invited ; and the presumptuous sinner was forbidden the altar (Numbers xv. 30).

Consider the application of this. People are sometimes moved to approach God from a desire for the good they hope to secure for themselves, without recognising other elements involved. God certainly offers good—the highest good it is possible to conceive. He proposes to confer the perfection of well-being, and invites men to avail themselves of it : “ whosoever will : ”—But men who come without respect to the conditions of the invitation, will find themselves repelled at last, like the crowd who followed Christ for the sake of the loaves and fishes, which he more than once provided in connection with his public ministrations.

Consider what those conditions are as involved in circumcision. Literally, circumcision was a cutting-off of the flesh of the foreskin, in token of the accepted covenant of God, to choose Abraham's posterity as a people for himself (Gen. xvii. 9-14). In virtue or efficacy, it was “ nothing ” in itself, except as a kept commandment (1 Cor. vii. 19). Its significance was everything ; and this was double : 1st (as a token of the covenant) that rejected man had no relation to God except by Divine choice ; and 2nd, that this choice was based upon submission to the Divine will, even when involving the sacrifice of human pleasure. Circumcision deprived the subject of it of the means of the destructive self-indulgence common among the Gentiles, and therefore always carried with it this hint or meaning, that the acceptable rule of life with God is the “ denial of ungodliness and worldly lusts,” in accordance with His commandments : that obedience and not gratification is the ground of acceptance with Him.

The common thought of the world ignores this feature of the Divine work. Human impression and human feeling are allowed to govern all conceptions of what is right in man. The will of God is forgotten. In fact, people generally do not realise that such a thing as the will of God exists. They reason as if the universe existed by them and for them. They leave out of account the fact that God has made all things for Himself, and that man himself is but a permitted form of His power, whose part as a sinner is to bow in deepest reverence before Him, and to enquire in bated breath what He would have him do.

A right apprehension of the lesson of the tabernacle—a right interpretation of this structural parable—goes far to enlighten the mind as to the true attitude of man before God. This speaking parable invites worship on the basis of Divine choice only, and that choice exercised only where there is the right and obedient mind : “humble and contrite of heart, broken in spirit, trembling at His word.” It, therefore, condemns all “natural religion,” so-called : and places the religions that tribes and nations have invented for themselves where Paul placed them when he said, “God in times past suffered all nations to walk in *their own ways* ;” “and winked at these times of *ignorance*” (Acts xiv. 16 ; xvii. 30).

There can truly be no such thing as natural religion when religion is seen as the institution of reconciliation or re-binding (re-ligion) which God has appointed for the restoration of condemned sinners to His favour. They are all “alienated from him by wicked works,” and how can people in that position dictate to God the terms of their reconciliation? God has been pleased to make advances : it is those advances that sinners must receive and adjust themselves to. The nature of them is indicated in this Mosaic parable. There stands the tabernacle in the midst of its court—formed by the white curtains of righteousness. Righteousness is *that ONLY which God considers right*. People not in harmony with this—who neither know nor conform to His revealed will—are by the sheer necessity of things outside the encampment of reconciliation, which He has set up in the earth in Christ. Even when they see this and want to enter, circumcision is required. In the case of the Jew after the flesh, circumcision of the flesh was the sufficient part in the shadow of things. But in the substance of all this shadow, there must be circumcision of heart ; the cutting off of “the desires of the flesh and of the mind” as the rule of life—and the recognition of God’s choice, God’s appointment, God’s invitation, God himself—as the only basis of approach : “circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (Col. ii. 11).

As we look at the shadow again, we see circumcised men approach “the door of the congregation” with something in their hands : either a lamb or a kid of the goats, or it may be, leading a sheep or bullock or goat or heifer. Their circumcision is not enough : they must offer sacrifice to be accepted. This is con-

nected with the leading feature of the court, inside the gate—the great altar of sacrifice—“hollow with boards”—a temporary structure covered with brass, and measuring about eight feet long and broad, and nearly five feet high from the ground, with horns at the four corners on which to bind the heaped-up sacrifices with cords; and four rings for the insertion of staves to carry it when on travel; a brazen net-work underneath to give free action to the consuming fire: and accessory utensils—such as pots, shovels, basins, flesh hooks, fire-pans, —all made of brass (Ex. xxxviii. 1-7).

The language of this part of the type is unmistakable. It tells us that sinful man, even with the utmost docility of spiritual circumcision, and desiring to come within the walls of righteousness, cannot approach God acceptably except by sacrifice. What the significance of this is we have often had to consider. In the type, it was an animal, whose life-blood poured out was a confession that God is just in requiring death as the visitation of sin; that He who is so great in the underived and deathless nature and vastness of His being; who is so unsearchable in the greatness of His power and the perfection of His wisdom—is righteous in making disobedience and slight a capital offence not to be passed over even by mercy, except when His dreadful sovereign supremacy has been asserted, recognised, and vindicated.

But this terrible truth, which is the basis of all acceptable worship, was only asserted and acknowledged in the shadow when the worshippers under Moses approached with the appointed sacrifice. It had to be enforced in fact as well as in token, before the forbearance of God could grant the remission of sins unto life eternal. Granting life eternal is taking a man into His eternal fellowship without reserve: such stupendous grace could only be vouchsafed in connection with the stupendous enforcement of His unchallengeable supremacy — of which He declares Himself “jealous,” as is reasonable: for who should be supreme but the Eternal? He proposed this enforcement in the actual bloodshedding of an actual representative man, in whom the individuality of all other accepted men should be merged in the way appointed in the institutions of the Gospel. And even this man, to be acceptable, had to be faultless as regards the principle that had been set at naught—the principle of absolute submission: though a sufferer from the evil effects springing from its subversion in the first Adam, and its continuing subversion in all his sinful

descendants. Such a man could not be found in the automatic propagation of flesh and blood. Therefore He had to provide him, which he did in the way recorded in Luke i. 35. It was, therefore, all the work of His own favour (or grace) in subserviency to the indispensable assertion of His own supremacy and holiness.

It pleased Him to foreshadow this arrangement of His love and wisdom in the appointments of the Mosaic service for centuries before He decreed the moment suitable for its actual effectuation. "The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin," as Paul declared : that is, it was not compatible with the Divine wisdom that sin should be remitted unto life eternal in connection with a merely typical acknowledgment of the principle that had been violated. Had He considered the shedding of the blood of bulls and goats a sufficient expression of the principle, to warrant the forgiveness of sin and bestowal of life eternal, and appointed it so, then the blood of bulls and of goats would have taken away sin. But His wisdom viewed the matter otherwise, and enlightened reason concurs in His appointment : (for though reason by itself is no guide in divine matters, it is a faculty intended to reflect the divine reason when the light of the knowledge thereof shines in the heart). God required that there should be an actual assertion of the violated principle of His supremacy in the death of the men under sin. Animals were not sinners : their death was no meeting of the case. It was a mere prophecy in figure of what was coming. God purposed the death of one representing all who should be one with that one ; who should thus die for them, and by whose stripes they should be healed, and with whose blood by a figure they should be washed : not, however, on the principle of substitution, for God's righteousness is not violated in the death of Christ, but "declared." It would be violated in a man dying who ought not to die. The provided representative became related to death by derivation from a mother who was a descendant of the man by whom death entered into the world. He could, therefore, stand for all who come unto God by him. They are reckoned as dying in him—which would be unnecessary if he died instead of them. And his death does not release them from death at once, as it would do if his death had been a substitutionary death ; it merely opens the way for a gradual deliverance from death on a principle which conserves the supremacy of God, as expressed in the infliction of death while conferring life on sinners by a probation to be consummated at the judgment seat. All parts of the truth agree together.

But though the Mosaic arrangement was a mere shadow, it was a most emphatic declaration and enforcement of the truth it embodied—a truth that the world in general ignores and rejects with a hearty unanimity : ignores in its blindness : rejects in its folly—with results disastrous to itself alone, for man cannot hurt God. The truth is that man, as he now is, is separated from God, and cannot return except in the way of God's appointment, and must perish apart from that way. No truth is more clearly visible than that, as we gaze upon the tabernacle, standing inside its curtained enclosure of linen. Men think God is bound to save them if they are "good," as the popular phrase runs. They forget that they are sinners, and in a state of alienation from him, ending in death, which He alone can terminate. They forget that God made man for His own objects, and that He will save them for no other. They altogether fail to realise the relative positions of God and man.

These relative positions are shown in the Mosaic parable before us ; and they are proclaimed in the gospel which brings before us the substance of the shadow. The gospel tells us that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. v. 19), on His own terms : and that apart from these, man is "without God, and has no hope" (Eph. ii. 12). The Mosaic institution shows us God in the typical tabernacle for reconciliation, and the congregation outside destitute of His friendship, unless they conformed to the institutions and appointments related to that tabernacle. The lesson thus doubly enforced is unmistakable, and leaves no alternative but that of complete submission, which God requires and reason demands. The acceptable attitude is often enjoined in the Scriptures, and clearly expressed in God's own words : "To this man will I look that is humble and contrite in heart and trembleth at my word" (Isaiah lvi. 2).

Returning to the tabernacle, we perceive that, after the altar of burnt offering, there is a laver or large vessel, filled with water, at which the priests have to wash (or lave) before entering into the tabernacle to perform its services. As the Lord Jesus and the saints are the antitypical Aaron and his sons, the significance bears on them ; and bearing on them, bears also on all who will finally be reconciled to God, through them, on the principle that, whatever is true of the first fruits, is true also of the harvest coming after. After sacrifice, washing—purification, making clean. This is no accidental order of events. In the popular conception of things,

sacrifice would be enough, for the whole burden of their preaching (where there is any earnest preaching at all) is that the blood of Christ is the only essential for a sinner's salvation. As their hymn says: "The sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains." As they exclaim—"Only the blood; nothing but the blood!"

This is not an enlightened statement of the case. The blood is only an ingredient in the process of reconciliation: in what way, we have seen. After reconciliation must come reformation, if the reconciliation is to continue in force. The sinner must "walk worthy of the vocation to which he is called" (Eph. iv. 1), and if he do not, he will be rejected; so Paul says (Heb. vi. 8), and, in preaching thus, he only re-echoes the plain teaching of Christ, who says, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit will be taken away" (Jno. xv. 2). "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (Jno. xv. 10). The unprofitable servant is to be cast out (Matt. xxv. 30). We must walk as children of light (Eph. v. 8) otherwise "we shall die" (Rom. viii. 13). The Lord is our judge at last as to whether we are what he describes as "fit for the Kingdom of God" (Luke ix. 62). We appear before him for this purpose, at his appearing—that he may render to us according to our deeds (2 Cor. v. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 1).

Life after introduction to Christ is, therefore, a probation. This is the lesson of the laver. It is not enough to have God's righteousness declared in sacrifice, and endorsed in our baptism into the death of Christ: we must wash in the laver. We must conform to the exhortation, "Wash you, make you clean: put away the evil of your doings" (Isaiah i. 16). Literally this is done by subjecting the mind to the influence of the word of God. The word of God is always spoken of as the cleansing power (Jno. xv. 3; Psa. cxix. 9; Eph. v. 26), and, in actual experience, it is found to be so. Kept clean by the word, we shall be qualified for admission into the holiest, in the change to the incorruptible.

Thus the analogy of the Mosaic parable to the realities in Christ is complete. The process of drawing men from alienation to glorification is clearly discernible in all its appointments. Humility of mind—circumcision of heart—enters the Christ-gateway, on receiving the gospel; offers the Christ-sacrifice, in being baptised into the death of Christ; washes in the Christ-laver in coming under the purifying power of his commandments: enters the preliminary "holy" place of the divine Tabernacle, in

becoming a member of the body of Christ ; to radiate the candlestick light of the truth, and offer the incense-sacrifice of praise continually, and eat of the bread of Israel's hope, and wait for the manifestation of the glory of God in the great day of atonement, when all things reconciled will be gathered together in the "holiest" under one head—even Christ : and the true tabernacle of God will be with men, and there shall be no more curse and no more pain and no more death.

But just as there are many details in the course of human progress from the alienated state established at the beginning, to the perfectly reconciled state that will be reached at the end, so there are many other types in detail, connected with the attire of the priests, the ceremonies observed in connection with various sacrifices and the purging of various offences, and the forms of various approaches to God, both national and individual, both priestly and private.





## CHAPTER XVII.—THE PRIESTS AND THEIR ATTIRE.

THE appointment of a Tabernacle and its various appurtenances as a meeting place between God and Israel (for such God declared it to be—Ex. xxix. 43), necessitated the appointment also of an order of men to act as intermediaries: how otherwise could Israel acceptably draw near. Israel was unfit to draw near. Even as early as the manifestation of Yahweh on Mount Sinai, before Moses had received directions for the construction of the tabernacle, God had forbidden the people to touch the Mount on pain of death (Ex. xix. 12). Their unfitness was alleged to consist of their “uncleanness” (Lev. xv. 31)—a term expressive both of their physical and moral defilement—the character of the entire human race—the one growing out of the other. Man is an unclean and corruptible organisation, physically considered, living or dead: and his thoughts and actions are of the same complexion. We see him in his true nature when we compare him as he is, even at his best, with what he is promised to be—the pure, incorruptible, spiritual, ever-living, and glorious nature of the Lord Jesus and the angels.

That God should dwell with men at all was esteemed by Solomon a great condescension on the part of a Being to whom it is humbling Himself “to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth” (Psa. cxliii. 6). That He should dwell with unclean and rebellious man seemed contrary to the fitness of things. In a sense it was so, as is shown by the reservations by which the condescension was safe-guarded. The erection of the Tabernacle was an intimation of His willingness to be approached by man for mercy, but not at the sacrifice of his holiness, or his authority, or his majesty. Hence, familiar and indiscriminate approach was not invited: “I will be sanctified in them that approach unto me.” He would be approached in a consecrated and concealed recess, and that only once a year, and that only by blood shed, and that only presented by a man of His own choice, assisted by men of His own appointment, and attired in a way prescribed by Himself.

Moses was directed to "take Aaron, thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office." The priesthood was to be Aaron's, and his successors by a perpetual ordinance: any stranger obtruding himself upon the sacred office was to be put to death (Num. xviii. 7). The sons were to be assistants: the father only was to be high priest: all were to be physically without blemish. Any disfigurement was to be a disqualification, though not for the eating of the sacrifices (Lev. xxi. 17-23). They were to live by the offerings made to God by the people: they were not to have any land inheritance: God was to be their inheritance (Num. xviii. 12-20). They were to stand between God and the people.

This was all part of "the figure for the time then present" (Heb. ix. 9); part of "the form of (divine) knowledge and of the truth" (Rom. ii. 20).

Its general significance is scarcely to be missed. We have seen it in other connections: that man cannot approach God except in God's own way: that this we can only learn by the revelation of His mind, and that all other so-called religion is the mere device of human ignorance and presumption.

Its particular significance concerns Christ, who is the substance of all these preliminary shadowings (Col. ii. 17). In Him we see a chosen mediator (1 Tim. ii. 5)—not self-appointed: "No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Heb. v. 4). It was God who said, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek" (Psa. cx. 4). We see him offer blood—not the blood of bulls and goats, but his own blood: he alone entering the holiest "heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. ix. 24). We see Him the perfect one, without spot, without sin, without superfluity, or incongruity—and this, his character from the beginning: yet assisted by his originally blemished sons in the ultimate development of his priesthood; for his children—his seed—the forgiven saints, are to reign with him as priests as well as kings (Heb. ii. 13-14; Isaiah liii. 10; Rev. v. 10). When they live as the immortal priests in the great mediatorship between God and man, they will live not as other men live—by the fruits of the ground—but by Christ, the power of God, and the great offering, whom they will eat daily by a figure in partaking of his life and subsisting in the constant communion of his love. Their former sins—all blotted out—will be no flaw in their

position ; though blemish in this respect would have been fatal in the high priest.

The whole Mosaic shadow tells us how far away are the people who think to commend themselves to God, by fair moral behaviour apart from Christ. It proclaims with loud confirming voice what Christ testified of himself : " No man cometh unto the Father but by me." It preaches the gospel that Peter preached : " There is none other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved " (Acts iv. 12) : and that Paul preached, " Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins " (Acts xiii. 38). It even gives us the gospel of the Kingdom in the constant presence of the purple in all its fabrics.

The men chosen as priests were not only to be of a certain family, but they were to be dressed in a particular way, which is minutely prescribed. Their outfit, when complete, was to be " for glory and for beauty." It is said so several times (Ex. xxviii. 2 : 46).

There is a good deal condensed into this expression which is as much a part of the Mosaic parable as any other ingredient in it.

It cannot be that " glory and beauty " of dress were aimed at in the sense that would commend itself to a child, or a savage, or a fop. Yet, as a matter of fact, the attire of the high priest would be highly picturesque : it would be pleasing to the eye as regards symmetry of form and combination of colour : indeed, with the addition of the frontal-plate of pure gold, the shoulder-buckle of gold-set onyx stone, and the glitter of the twelve rich-set precious stones in the breast-plate, it would be nothing less than splendid. " Glory and beauty " describes it all.

What do we see in this but the fact that glory and beauty are the attributes of Divine wisdom, whether we regard it intrinsically or in its living expression in all experience. Qualities are best discerned by contrast. Baseness and hideousness are the reverse of " glory and beauty." We have but to look at the ways of men apart from God to see how inglorious and ugly they are—in all ways and senses. The man who is the slave of vice : the community that is given over to lust and violence : the nation that is sunk in superstition, idolatry, and darkness—are extreme illustrations of the ugliness that belongs to human nature divorced from light and law—an ugliness that extends to the faces and persons, as well as the minds of men. But there are many intermediate

shades—from the partial insipidities of the common people to the ornamental brilliancies of high life. Even the fair aspects of average refinement are but the picturesque wrappage of that which is unbeautiful in itself. In a word, the natural man, in all his manifestations, is an ugly creature. He is indebted for the little ameliorations that we see in modern life to the indirect scintillations of the glory and beauty that belong to revelation. There is more profound philosophy than people imagine in the Bible classification of “the works of the flesh” and “the works of the spirit;” and on James’s apparently narrow-minded declaration, that “every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of Lights.” It will be found upon a broad and full study of the subject that the natural man left to himself is fruitful of all ingloriousness and unbeautiffulness while he lives till his exhausted and withered organism becomes the natural heir of the corruption and hideousness of the grave.

But in nature and upshot, the spiritual is “glory and beauty”—take it how we may. Whether in character, as the man who brings forth the fruits of the spirit, in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, and goodness (Gal. v. 22): or in nature, as the angels, pure, incorruptible, and glorious, who are the sample to us of the state to which men are by the gospel invited when offered “glory and honour and immortality.”

There is another great contrast between the natural and the spiritual, which is overlooked in almost all systems of human thought, philosophical or theological. The natural is fixed, mechanical, and intrinsic, while the spiritual is wholly an affair of Divine volition and permission, and, therefore, connected with the unlimited. As a rule, the spiritual is supposed to be as much an element of human nature as the natural, only requiring to be evoked, like electricity, by friction. This is found untrue in experience, and untrue in Bible teaching. The two are strictly separate. God is not in man, though man is in God. The divine is extraneous to the human, though the divine comprehends all things. What of God gets into a man, whether morally and intellectually now by the illumination of the word, or physically afterwards, in the change to the immortal, has to come from without. The doctrine of “light within” as “light within” is untrue to nature, and a misunderstanding of revelation.

The antitypical “glory and beauty” of the Aaronic garment is less the physical glory of the spirit-nature than the moral and

intellectual glory of the spirit-mind, as expressed in what is understood by "doctrine." This we see when we come to consider their constitution in detail.

The preponderant materials were "gold, blue, purple, scarlet, fine-twined linen" (Ex. xxviii. 6-8): the materials of the veil, and the gate hangings of the tabernacle. The significance of these materials we saw in considering the tabernacle itself:—tried faith, healing by chastisement, royal destiny, sin-nature, and spotless righteousness. The question is, what is there of "glory and of beauty" in these significances? The appropriate answer would be, what is there not of glory and beauty in them? They all involve one transcendent truth, which is to all others as the sun in the heavens—the hallowed supremacy of God as the rule of being. Consider: What is faith but trust in His word? What is tried faith but faith put to the test by Him? What is healing but His act who says, "I wound and I heal?" and whose are the stripes but His, whom it pleased to bruise the saving Son, with whose stripes we might be healed? Who so royal as the King of glory, whether in Father or Son, to whom every knee shall bow? What is sin-nature but nature cursed by God because of disobedience? What is righteousness but the doing of His perfect will.

Thus God is in every aspect of the typical garments: and there could be no greater "glory and beauty" than this proclaimed fact that He will and must be worshipped and obeyed as "head over all" before there can be true well-being (in "body, mind, and estate") for man whom He has made. None so beautiful and glorious as He: "Ascribe ye greatness to our God. He is the Rock. His work is perfect: all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity: just and right is He." He proclaimed His name to Moses: "Merciful and gracious, slow to anger and of great kindness—plenteous in goodness and in truth." What more glorious than the absolute ascendancy of such a beneficent Being, who with all goodness, combines all wisdom and power? What more delightful and ennobling to created man than the ecstasy of loving adoration of the unlimited and perfect fountain of existence? What more beautiful than the reign of love between God and man and among all the creatures of His hand?

The man chosen as priest had to be covered with garments having all these meanings in a concealed manner. God not only plainly declared, "I will be sanctified in them that approach unto me," but He required such to be arrayed in vestments which were

not only glorious and beautiful in an artistic sense, but which typically proclaimed the supremacy of God and the complete subordination of man as the conjoint and indispensable conditions of acceptable fellowship. We may miss all the meanings intended, but some of them are very manifest.

Not man unclothed : not man naked : not man as he is in himself, but man invested or "clothed upon" with superadded attributes or conditions, is acceptable. And these superadded conditions must be of divine pattern and prescription : "see thou make all things according to the pattern shown to thee in the mount" : "ye shall not add thereto or diminish aught therefrom."

This, in the Mosaic shadow, is the condemnation of all human invention in religion ; and the confutation of the popular idea that sincere ignorance or ignorant sincerity is eligible in worship : or that man can save himself by his own devices. Man is "condemned already," and can only get out of this position by God's own provision, of which man can only become aware or avail himself through the enlightenment of revelation. The revelation is abundant and clear, if men would but make themselves acquainted with it. This Mosaic shadow is part, and no inconsiderable part, of the revelation.

"These are the garments which they shall make : a breast-plate and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle" (Ex. xxviii. 4). The ephod is first described, both in the specification and in the record of manufacture" (xxxix. 2). It was not the first put on, but it was evidently the most important of all the garments, for it contained the shoulder buckles of onyx stone on which the names of the Twelve Tribes were engraved in two groups of six each, "for a memorial before the Lord ;" and also the four-square breast-plate of judgment, with the 12 precious stones of different quality and colour, set in gold, and each having the name of one tribe—to be borne on Aaron's heart when he went into the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually (xxviii. 29).

The order of putting on appears to be given in Lev. viii. 7-9 : 1, the coat ; 2, the girdle of the coat ; 3, the robe, or skirt, with pendant bells and pomegranates on the lower edge ; 4, the ephod ; 5, the curious girdle (or sash) of the ephod, with which it was secured ; 6, the breast-plate ; 7, the Urim and Thummim, or framed collection of 12 precious stones ; 8, the mitre ; 9, the golden plate (or holy crown) in front, inscribed with the words, HOLI-

NESS TO THE LORD, to be worn always upon Aaron's forehead, "that they might be accepted before the Lord" (Ex. xxviii. 38).

It may be possible to discover in this order of investiture the shadowed history of the development of the antitypical high priest. At this we shall look when we have considered the garments themselves.

1. *The Coat*.—This was a tunic, or long inner garment, of fine linen, of woven work, and embroidered (Ex. xxviii. 39; xxxi. 27). The fine linen is the symbol of righteousness, as we have seen: the weaving and embroidery would stand for the particular works or overt acts in which righteousness is expressed: as it is said by John, "He that *doeth* righteousness is righteous" (1 John iii. 7), and as it is figuratively said of the King's bride in the day of glory, "she shall be brought unto the King in raiment of *needlework*." This, then, is the groundwork of the mental attire which renders the clothed man acceptable: white, pure, beautiful, righteousness, or the disposition to do what God commands, expressed in the actual rendering to Him what He delights in, which we can only know by His requirements.

2. *The Girdle of the Coat*.—This was a sash of the same material (Ex. xxviii. 39), used as a sort of easy belt to draw the coat together at the loins, giving fit and comfort in the wearing of the garment. Its literal use is seen in the statement that Jesus "took a towel and girded himself" (Jno. xiii. 4)—tucking up his loose robe for convenience of action. Its figurative use is frequently illustrated: *e.g.*, "She girdeth her loins with strength" (Prov. xxxi. 17); "I girded thee about with fine linen" (Ezek. xvi. 10); "Gird up the loins of your mind" (1 Pet. i. 13). The typical significance of the girdle of the priestly linen coat, as distinguished from the coat itself, would therefore be intelligent and executive righteousness, in addition to the sentiment and habit of righteousness: a resolute binding together and strengthening of the principles of righteousness for action.

3. *The Robe*.—This was a skirt of blue woven work—answerable almost to the modern petticoat of female attire, only that it was an outer garment, and did not reach to the ground, but fell some eight or ten inches short of the lower end of the inner coat or linen tunic. It was fastened over the tunic at the waist, exactly like a petticoat, except that the fastening was not with string, but by the grip of the garment at the bound border of the

upper opening. It would be put on by being slipped over the head. It was strengthened at the upper edge with a woven binding like a habergeon (Ex. xxviii. 32); and the lower hem was finished in a remarkable way, namely, with a row of tassels resembling pomegranates, worked in purple and scarlet, alternated with bells of gold—"a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate" all the way round. The explanation connected with this was as follows: "His sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not" (Ex. xxviii. 35).

We have already seen that blueness is healing. This blue robe (or skirt), resting upon an inner tunic of white linen (righteousness) is an allegorical intimation that there can be no healing of human woe except by righteousness: and that righteousness—namely, that which God appoints to be such—will at last heal with such completeness of effect that there be no more curse, "and the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." But the healing will never conceal the righteousness: therefore, the tunic reaches below the blue skirt, and is visible to the spectator's eye: an edging of white at the bottom is the finish of the priestly attire.

But the artificial pomegranates of purple and scarlet: Well, pomegranates are fruit: the streak of scarlet speaks of sin-fruit to be healed, and the purple of the kingly nature of the healing institution; the golden bells, with their sound, tell us of the means: namely, the preaching of the word of faith, both when the Great High-priest goes into heaven, and when He comes out: for preaching is not ended when Christ comes, though its particular object changes. The everlasting gospel is preached after the Lamb stands on Mount Zion (Rev. xiv. 1-6); and John himself, who took part in the first preaching when Christ went away, takes part, with his brethren, in another preaching after Christ comes, to "many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Rev. x. 11). This is the will of God, that His name be proclaimed, with all that is involved in that, in the two stages, "when he (the high priest) goeth into the holy, and when he cometh out." Silence would be stagnation: it would be disobedience in the high priest: the golden bells sound, "that he die not."

In so far as the brethren of Christ are covered with the name of Christ, and in him are an holy priesthood, the figure would have a minor application to them as the sounders of the truth and the doers of his commandments—"a bell and a pomegranate, a bell

and a pomegranate"—words and deeds, words and deeds, of Divine character.

4 to 7.—*The Ephod and its Attachments.*—Ephod is an untranslated word: that is, it is the Hebrew word lifted into the English version, because there is no modern garment that is its equivalent, and therefore, it cannot be translated, except as to its root meaning: *Oracular*. It appears to have been a kind of waistcoat or frock, closed behind the shoulders instead of in front (Ex. xxxix. 4), and finished in a short skirt or girdle, reaching to the loins (verse 5).

As already remarked, it was the most complicated, beautiful, and significant of all the priestly garments. In material it differed from the others, except as to the main fabric, which was "fine twined linen." On this appears to have been embroidered ornamental work in gold, blue, purple, and scarlet. We are exactly told how the gold was used. It was "beaten into thin plates and cut into wires to work in the blue," &c. (Ex. xxxix. 3). A garment with a white ground, with cunning work embroidered on it in gold and colours, would certainly have an aspect of "glory and beauty." Though differing from the other garments, it was allied to them in blending their white and blue in its constitution. It was different only in being more complete in its texture, adding the gold and the purple and scarlet to the white and the blue. It was of identical constitution with the veil and the door-hangings of the tabernacle and the gate of the court, as its typical significance required: for while the fine linen and the blue betokened separate elements of the way of righteousness, the combination of the whole in the ephod prefigured the perfect qualification of Christ for the priesthood, as it prefigured his perfect qualification in the several aspects typified by the gate, and the door, and the veil.

What this perfect qualification was, we considered in connection with these earlier types, and need not repeat. Suffice it that it blended the assertion of every Divine right and prerogative that has been violated by man, as was beautiful in a representative man caused to draw near on behalf of the rest: "I will cause him to draw near and he shall approach unto me" (Jer. xxx. 21). "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me" (Lev. x. 3).

These are two clues in the ephod to the subject of the condemnation of sin and the declaration of the righteousness of God in the crucifixion of Christ (qualifying him to be the representative high priest "to appear in the presence of God for us"). The constitution

of the ephod (gold, blue, purple, and scarlet, on a ground-work of white), is a typification of the method of the development of Christ as the great high priest, and of the principles that have become incorporate in him as the result of that method. The gleaming shoulder-buckle of onyx stone, engraved with the names of the tribes, and the resplendent collection of twelve differently coloured gems, set in ouches of gold in the breast-plate—each having cut into it the name of a tribe — tell us of the objects of the priesthood.

The language of the type is this: "Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breast-plate of judgment *upon his heart* when he goeth into the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually," "and *upon his two shoulders* for a memorial" (Ex. xxviii. 29, 12).

The heart to love and the shoulders to carry—in memory : this agrees with all that Paul tells us in the antitype concerning the priesthood of Christ in Hebrews : "We have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God"—"to appear in the presence of God for us"—"called of God an high priest, after the (perpetual) order of Melchizedec," who "because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them:" and John : "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous:" and again Paul : "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Some see in the onyx stones and the breast-plate, the nation of Israel, since they contain the names of the tribes. This is not inconsistent with the apparently more limited application of the apostolic interpretation. It is not so limited as it seems. Who are the nation of Israel in the ultimate and final sense? Not every son of Abraham after the flesh. "They are not all Israel that are of Israel." The commonwealth of Israel finally consists of those who are reconciled to God through Christ, many of whom are adopted Gentiles. They are a multitude that no man can number, and will finally fill the earth. They are comprehended in the twelve tribes in their final organisation. Meanwhile, they are represented in detail, in their development from generation to generation, by the same high priest who makes intercession for them all, according to their need. Therefore, the high priest's

function could not be more appropriately represented than by the memorial names of the twelve tribes on heart and shoulder.

That precious stones should be used to represent them is an intimation that they will at last be both excellent and immortal. That they should be set in gold shows that faith will never be absent from our relation to God, though sight will blend with, and in a sense, swallow it up. That they should be called the Urim and the Thummim (Light and fulness) is an indication of the fact that without light, precious stones have no beauty; and that when the light shines upon them, their beauty is a radiant fulness. The light that developed the beauty of the stones in the ephod when Aaron "went in before the Lord" in the dark interior of the tabernacle, was the glory that dwelt between the cherubim. The antitype will be seen in its completeness when the glory of the Lord beautifies the perfected tribes of Israel with light and immortality.

When the glory of the Lord departed from the temple (Ezek. xi. 23) there was no answer from the glory that used to cover the mercy seat: the breast-plate of the high priest sank to a mere piece of lustreless jewelry. The ephod was no longer a medium of communication with God. This is why, afterwards, when a claim of belonging to the priesthood was put forward by certain families who could not show their pedigree on the return from Babylon, it was said to them that "they should not eat of the most holy thing till there stood up a priest *with Urim and Thummim*," that is, a priest with the means of Divine communication through the breast-plate, called, therefore, "the breast-plate of judgment" (Ex. xxviii. 30).

The breast-plate was held in its place by gold chains inserted in gold rings at the four corners, and ending in other rings. These other rings were fastened with a lace of blue to other corresponding rings fastened in the lower part of the ephod, and at the shoulder-buckles (verses 22-28). Considering the significance of gold as tried faith, we here have faith as the fastenings of the foundations of the commonwealth of Israel, and not only faith, but mutuality of healing-faith—ring to ring held with a lace of blue—"the mutual faith both of you and me" (Rom. i. 12). "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Faith suffuses the whole economy of things Divine, as a warming under-glow, pleasing to God, and ennobling and comforting to man.

8. *The Mitre.*—This was a head-covering of linen—a crown of righteousness : a different thing, both in form and meaning, from the split, two-horned, towering headpiece of an ecclesiastical bishop : which identifies the wearer with the two-horned beast of the earth. The Aaronic mitre was a comfortable bonnet of white, surmounting the entire priestly outfit as the token of kindly purity presiding over all. The Papal head-gear is associated with a double-headed system of draconic rapacity and iniquity—Church and State—Pope and Emperor. But the linen bonnet (or mitre) was fronted by

9. *The Plate of Pure Gold.*—Engraved with the words, “Holiness to the Lord,” and tied with a lace of blue to the fore-front of the mitre. The explanation connected with it was this : “It shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts : and it shall be always upon his forehead that they may be accepted before the Lord” (Ex. xxviii. 38). “The iniquity of the holy things” is at first sight a strange and obscure expression. It becomes intelligible when we look into it. The holy things were the things which Israel were required to offer, whether as free-will offerings, or first fruits, or sacrifice. They were made holy in being consecrated to God : but as emanating from an unclean people, they were considered as tainted with their unholiness, and therefore as unfit for presentation, except through a cleansing medium. This cleansing medium under the law was the high priest. The defilement came upon him, but was neutralised, as we might say, by the ceremonial holiness of the ever-visible assertion of the holiness of God on the frontal plate of gold. Thus he was qualified to “bear the iniquity of the holy things” without harm, and the offerings through him (with the plate “always upon his forehead”) were “accepted before the Lord.”

This was the type. The antitype is manifest in Christ, “the mediator between God and man.” Mankind are unfit to offer God anything in which He can take pleasure, by reason of their state—“alienated by wicked works”—“dead in trespasses and in sins”—which are apostolic definitions (Col. i. 21 ; Eph. ii. 1). “We are all as an unclean thing : and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” (Is. lxiv. 6). Yet we are invited to come : yet not in our own capacity, but through one who has borne the iniquity of the invited worshippers in partaking of their unclean nature and coming under the curse of the law which condemned

their transgressions, and triumphing over it by resurrection. He has thus borne the iniquity of the antitypical holy things without harm by reason of that "Holiness to the Lord," which in a tried faith was exhibited to all Israel when manifest in their midst as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and since more conspicuously shown in the preaching of the Apostles: "whom God hath set forth as a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God: to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 25-26). Like Israel's gifts, we are "accepted before the Lord," notwithstanding our imperfections, because of the proclamation of the holiness of the Lord in the life and death of the high priest through whom we come. But this feature is more particularly exhibited in the consecration of the high priest with the blood of sacrifice, which we shall next have to consider in connection with the order of investiture.





## CHAPTER XVIII.—THE CONSECRATION OF AARON AND HIS SONS.

IN about twelve months from the night that Israel broke up their settlement at Rameses in Egypt, and marched at the command of Moses to their first encampment at Succoth, the various parts and appurtenances of the Tabernacle had been made and finished, and were brought to Moses by those of the children of Israel who had made them. "According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work. And Moses looked upon all the work, and behold they had done it as the Lord commanded, even so had they done it; and Moses blessed them" (Ex. xxxix. 42-43).

Moses then received orders to set up the Tabernacle "on the first day of the first month of the second year." Moses did so, fixing the sockets, rearing up the pillars, fastening the cords, and placing the various coverings and hangings in their several specified positions: putting the ark and the mercy-seat and the cherubim inside the veil, and the candlestick and the table, &c., in the holy place, in the various places appointed for them. Having set the bread in order, and lighted the lamps, and offered incense on the golden altar, there remained the consecration of Aaron and his sons for the exercise of the priests' office—as to which, elaborate directions had been given and were now carried out.

"This," said Moses to the assembled congregation, as he proceeded with the ceremony of consecration, "is the thing which the Lord commanded to be done," and the narrative describes in great detail what was done, including the investiture of Aaron with the holy garments—in the order of which, as remarked in the last chapter, it may be possible to discover the shadowed history of the development of the antitype: for in his official relations, Aaron was undoubtedly a type of Christ.

First, Moses washed Aaron with water. This is the type of moral cleansing, as we saw in connection with the laver, as also shown in David's expression, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity" (Psa. li. 2). "Water," as a figure, is used by Jesus to represent the Holy Spirit (Jno. vii. 38-39). Aaron stood to

represent the seed of Abraham. The washing of Aaron with water was, therefore, a prefiguration of the moral cleansing to be effected in a son of Abraham by the Spirit in preparation for the priestly office. The application of this in the antitype may be discerned in the operation of the Spirit, which, though resulting in a son of David according to the laws of maternity, produced such a Son of David as the world had never seen before, viz., a sinless man : human nature morally cleansed. "He did always those things that pleased the Father." He could ask, without fear of successful answer, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" "He did no sin." He was in this sense "without spot," which could not be affirmed of any other son of Abraham.

Some experience a difficulty here. They say that if the begetting of Jesus by the Spirit had such an effect as this, he was not of the same nature as ourselves. The simple answer may suggest itself in the question : Are there not different sorts of the same nature in everything? Contrast a crab-apple with a delicious Blenheim : a worn-out cart-horse with a high-blooded charger : a mumbling Maori savage with a British peer—different sorts, but the same nature. Jesus was a man, but not as other men in his powerful affinity for God, and his abhorrence for everything in opposition to His will. He was human nature mentally washed in this sense by the Spirit. If it were not so, to what can we attribute his spotless divinity of character? It is there : was it an effect without a cause? Education cannot account for it—for other Jewish children had as good an education as he. Education had something to do with it, doubtless, but it was only as the culture of good seed in good soil. The parable of the sower touches the subject : the same seed produced different results, according to the nature of the soil. The "soil" differs in different men, and yet they are all men. Christ was a man, yet his mental soil differed from all men's. He had the impulses common to all men, but conjoined with these, a power of control possessed by no man. And this was the result of the antitypical washing to which, in him, the seed of David was subjected in harmony with the Mosaic figure.

Then Moses put upon Aaron the coat of fine linen, in which we may recognise righteousness as the work of instruction superimposed upon the prepared nature (see last chapter : item 1—*The Coat*). Then, the girdle of the coat—righteous principle blooming into the activity of a righteous life. Then the robe of blue, with the bells and pomegranates—healing developed for us by the stripes

to which he submitted, in conformity with the revealed necessities of the case : in connection with the (bell) words and (pomegranate) deeds of his obedient life, followed by his healing resurrection—a healing in which both he and his brethren are joint partakers—and the proclamation thereof, when he went into the holy place (heaven itself).

Then Moses put on Aaron the ephod, with all its memorial adjuncts of “glory and beauty”—the shoulder onyx stones and the breastplate, followed by the mitre and the holy crown of gold, engraved, “Holiness to the Lord” (as particularised in last chapter). Christ became the fully equipped High Priest in the particulars symbolised by these, after his resurrection. Entering heaven itself, “to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. ix. 24), he “bears the iniquity of the holy things” (after the type of Aaron) in that the blemished approaches of his people (who come in his name, and merge their individuality in his), are forgiven and accepted for his sake : in whom sin has been condemned (Rom. viii. 3) : the curse of the law endured (Gal. iii. 13) : and the righteousness of God declared (Rom. iii. 25-26).

The names of all the saints he bears,  
Engraven on his heart ;  
Nor shall the meanest saint complain  
That he hath lost his part.

His priesthood in the age to come is only a continuation and enlargement of this work. He is a priest “after the order of Melchizedek,” in the sense of having an unchangeable and humanly underived priesthood, in contrast with the Levitical priesthood which was dependent upon family extraction, and limited to a certain period of mortal life (see Heb. vii. 20-28).

Thus is the development of the antitypical priest in harmony with the order of Aaron’s investiture with the holy garments.

But Aaron was not fully qualified to enter on the priest’s office until he was also anointed with the holy oil, and sanctified by the blood of the sin-offering commanded to be offered (see Lev. viii. 10, 14, 30). The meaning of this in the antitype is manifest.

1. *The Holy Oil.*—The testimony is that Jesus was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows (Heb. i. 9). This was the Spirit, as Peter declares : “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit, and with power” (Acts x. 38). It was not enough that he should be the sinless seed of David according to

the flesh : It was needful that " the Spirit of the Lord God should be upon him " (Isaiah lxi. 1), by which he should be " anointed to preach good tidings to the meek," as Jesus declared was fulfilled in him (Luke iv. 18-21). This was a further extension of the Spirit's work beyond the work symbolised by the washing of Aaron with water. The Spirit not only begat Jesus, but when he was 30 years of age, it descended upon him in a visible shape, and abode upon him (Jno. i. 32-33), and remained with him in measureless fulness (Jno. iii. 34), enabling him to say, " The Father dwelleth in me." Without this, he would not have been able to do the works which bore witness of him that the Father had sent him (Jno. v. 36) : for as he said " of mine own self, I can do nothing " (Jno. v. 30). This anointing of the Spirit was essential to the completion of his priesthood in other respects : how otherwise could he " through the Eternal Spirit have offered himself without spot unto God ? " (Heb. ix. 14). How otherwise could he have known for whom to intercede ? (Rom. viii. 26). How otherwise could he have " searched the heart and the reins, to give every man according to his work ? " (Rev. ii. 23).

The holy oil was also sprinkled upon " the Tabernacle and all that was therein," and upon " the altar and all his vessels," and upon " the laver and his foot " (Lev. viii. 10-11). The proximate and Mosaic purpose of this was " to sanctify them." The antitypical significance was the same as the anointing of Aaron ; for all the elements of the Tabernacle and its furniture represented some phase or other of the work of God in Christ, as we have seen : and therefore all had to be anointed with the typical oil to fill in the " pattern."

2. *The Sacrificial Blood.*—But the sacrificial blood was applied to everything as well—Aaron and his sons included (see Lev. viii. 14-15 ; 23-24). An atonement had to be made by the shedding and the sprinkling of blood for and upon them all (Lev. xvi. 33). As Paul remarks, " almost all things by the law are purged with blood " (Heb. ix. 22). Now all these things were declared to be " patterns of things in the heavens," which it is admitted on all hands converge upon and have their substance in Christ. There must, therefore, be a sense in which Christ (the antitypical Aaron, the antitypical altar, the antitypical mercy-seat, the antitypical everything), must not only have been sanctified by the action of the antitypical oil of the Holy Spirit, but purged by the antitypical blood of his own sacrifice.

This conclusion is supposed to be weakened by the statement of Lev. xvi. 16, that the atonement for the holy place, altar, &c., was to be made "*because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins.*" That is, it is argued from this, that the holy things would have had no uncleanness in themselves apart from the uncleanness of the children of Israel. This must be granted, but it must also be recognised that because the children of Israel were sinful and polluted, the holy things were reckoned as having contracted defilement in having been fabricated by them and through remaining in their midst. This cannot be denied on a full survey of the testimony. They were ceremonially unclean, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and had to be cleansed by the holy oil and the sacrificial blood before they were acceptable in the Mosaic service.

Now, *this is part of the Mosaic figure.* There must be an antitype to it. What was it? The holy things, we know, in brief, are Christ. He must, therefore, have been the subject of a personal cleansing in the process by which he opened the way of sanctification for his people. If the typical holy things contracted defilement from connection with a sinful congregation, were not the antitypical (Christ) holy things in a similar state, through derivation on his mother's side from a sinful race? If not, how came they to need purging with his own "better sacrifice" (Heb. ix. 23).

Great difficulty is experienced by various classes of thinkers in receiving this view. Needless so, it should seem. There is first the express declaration that the matter stands so: "it was, therefore, necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these (Mosaic sacrifices), but the HEAVENLY THINGS THEMSELVES *with better sacrifices* than these" (Heb. ix. 23). "It was of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer" (viii. 3). "By reason hereof, he ought as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins" (v. 3). "By his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (*for us*, is an addition inconsistent with the middle voice of the verb employed, which imports a thing done by one to one's own self) (ix. 12).

There was next the necessity that it should be so. The word "necessity," it will be perceived, occurs frequently in the course of Paul's argument. The necessity arises from the position in which men stood as regards the law of sin and death, and the

position in which the Lord stood as their redeemer from this position. The position of men was that they were under condemnation to die because of sin, and that not their own sin, in the first instance, but ancestral sin at the beginning. The forgiveness of personal offences is the prominent feature of the apostolic proclamation, because personal offences are the greater barrier. Nevertheless, men are mortal because of sin, quite independently of their own transgressions. Their redemption from this position is a work of mercy and forgiveness, yet a work to be effected in harmony with the righteousness of God, that He might be just while justifying those believing in the Redeemer. It is so declared (Rom. iii. 26). It was not to be done by setting aside the law of sin and death, but by righteously nullifying it in One, who should obtain this redemption in his own right, and who should be authorised to offer to other men a partnership in his right, subject to required conditions (of their conformity to which, he should be appointed sole judge).

How to effect this blending and poisoning of apparently opposing principles and differing requirements: mercy and justice: forgiveness and righteousness, goodness and severity, would have been impossible for human wisdom. It has not been impossible with God, to whom all things are possible. We see the perfect adjustment of all the apparently incompatible elements of the problem in His work in Christ, "who, of God, is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30).

We have only to receive the simple facts testified in the case to reach the end of all difficulty. With immortal soulism and eternal torments, the solution is impossible. With the doctrine of human mortality, it is otherwise. We see Jesus born of a woman, and therefore a partaker of the identical nature condemned to death in Eden. We see him a member of imperfect human society, subject to toil and weakness, dishonour and sorrow, poverty and hatred, and all the other evils that have resulted from the advent of sin upon the earth. We see him *down in the evil* which he was sent to cure: not outside of it, not untouched by it, but in it, to put it away. "He was made perfect through suffering" (Heb. ii. 10) but he was not perfect till he was through it. He was saved from death (v. 7) but not until he died. He obtained redemption (Heb. ix. 12) but not until his own blood was shed.

The statement that he did these things "for us" has blinded many to the fact that he did them "for himself" first—without which, he could not have done them for us, for it was by doing them for himself that he did them for us. He did them for us only as we may become part of him, in merging our individualities in him by taking part in his death, and putting on his name and sharing his life afterwards. He is, as it were, a new centre of healthy life, in which we must become incorporate before we can be saved.

The antitype of the cleansing of the holy things with blood is manifest when we look at Christ as he now is, and contrast him with what he was. He was a mortal man : he is now immortal. He was a sorrowful man ; he is now "full of joy with thy (the Father's) countenance." He was an Adamic body of death, corruptible and unclean : he is now a spiritual body, incorruptible, pure, and holy. What lies between the one state and the other? His own death and resurrection. Therefore, by these, he has been purified, and *no one else* has been so purified as yet. Any one else delivered will be delivered by him, as the result of what he did in himself.

If there was one injunction of the law more strenuous than another, it was that contact with death in any form, however remote or indirect, was defiling. Even to touch a bone made a man unclean : or to be touched by a man unclean from such a cause had the same effect. We have the perfect antitype in the Lord born of a death-bound woman, and therefore made subject to death : it was "that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man ;" but he was the first to taste, in the process of redemption from it. He was a "body prepared" for the work : prepared as to its power to evolve sinlessness of character, but prepared also as to subjection to that death which it was designed to abolish (2 Tim. i. 10). In him were combined the antitypical "holy things" requiring atonement, "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions in all their sins."

The reverence for Christ commands respect which leads some men to consider him immaculate in all senses and in no need to offer for himself, but it is not "according to knowledge." It is not consistent with the Divine objects in God "sending forth His son in the likeness of sinful flesh." All these objects blend together, but they are separable. One of them was to "condemn sin in the flesh" as Paul says (Rom. viii. 3). The stumblings that have

taken place over this expression are doubtless due to that other truth, that Christ did no sin, and in this sense was the "Lamb of God without spot." But the stumblings do not get rid of the expression as affirming a truth. Some would explain it as meaning the moral condemnation of sin by Christ during his life. This cannot be the meaning in view of the statement with which it is conjoined that what was done was "what the law could not do." The law condemned sin so thoroughly in the moral sense that it is called "the ministration of condemnation." Then some have suggested that it means the flesh of the sacrificial animals. This is precluded by the intimation that Christ was sent "in the likeness of sinful flesh" for the accomplishment of the work in question—the condemnation of sin in the flesh. This is, in fact, the reliable clue to the meaning. That he was sent "in the likeness of sinful flesh" for the accomplishment of the work shows that it was a work to be done in him. Some try to get away from this conclusion (and this is the popular habit) by seizing on the word "likeness" and contending that this means not the same, but only like. This contention is precluded by the use of the same term as to his manhood: "he was made in the *likeness* of MEN." He was really a man, in being in the likeness of men: and he was really sinful flesh, in being in "the likeness of sinful flesh." Paul, in Heb. ii. 14-17, declares the likeness to have been in the sense of sameness: "Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, it became him likewise to take part of *the same*."

The statement remains in its undiminished force that "God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for (or because of) sin condemned sin in the flesh." It is, in fact, a complete and coherent statement of what was accomplished in the death of Christ, and a perfect explanation of the reason why he first came in the flesh, and of the reason why John the apostle insisted so strenuously on the maintenance of the doctrine that he had so come in the flesh. Possessing sinful flesh was no sin in him, who kept it under perfect control, and "did always those things that pleased the Father." At the same time, being the sinful flesh derived from the condemned transgressors of Eden, it admitted of sin being publicly condemned in him, without any collision with the claims of his personal righteousness, which were to be met by an immediate and glorious resurrection.

There was a purpose in it, which is variously stated. These various statements conjointly admit us to what may be called God's objects in the case—apart from which, there can be no understanding of the matter. With those objects in view, it is not only intelligible but admirable. But those objects cannot be discerned or appreciated apart from *God Himself*. The subject begins there. That is why the subject remains dim, so long after other parts of the truth are understood. We cannot understand God, yet we can have some idea of the relation between Creator and created. We may know that the rights are all on the side of the Creator, and that the reasonable attitude of the created is that of absolute submission, and that any departure from this attitude is treason, and that death is just in the case of treason. We may also find it easy to recognise that though He is kind, and ready to forgive, He cannot grant forgiveness apart from such an *amende honourable*, as will preserve intact the mutual relations of Creator and created. This, in simple language, is the explanation of the entrance of death by sin, and the granting of life by forgiveness for Christ's sake, after "setting him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood" (Rom. iii. 25). We are "justified by his blood" if we believe—(see Rom. v. 9; Acts xiii. 38-39). There is no difference between the shedding of the blood of Christ, and the condemnation of sin in the flesh. For this blood-shedding was what is otherwise expressed as "the pouring out of his soul *unto death*." And what is death but the condemnation of sin? Christ did no sin, but he inherited the condemnation of sin in deriving his nature from a daughter of Adam, the condemned: and he was considered as having the sins of his people laid upon him, in so far as the sins of his people were to be forgiven for the sake of what should be done in him. "He shall bear the sin of many." "God hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all." "He was wounded for our transgressions." "He was made sin for us who knew no sin." "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

For this view of blood-shedding, we are indebted to the explanation vouchsafed in the law, as to the requirement of blood in sacrifice. This explanation is as follows: "*The life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul*" (Lev. xvii. 11). The pouring out of the blood was therefore the pouring out of the life—therefore the infliction of

death : and therefore an illustration of what was due to sin, and an acknowledgment on the part of the offerer that it was so. But being the blood of an animal which had nothing to do with sin, it was only a typical illustration or declaration of God's righteousness in the case. It was not a condemnation of sin in its own flesh, but a mere shadow which God was pleased to establish in Israel's midst, in educational preparation for the actual condemnation which was to be carried out in his own son, in whom, "sent forth in the likeness of sinful flesh" for (or because of) sin, he "condemned sin in the flesh."

This sacrificial condemnation of sin in the eyes of all the world (for by record and report, all the world has seen Jesus on the cross), is otherwise said "to declare the righteousness of God for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God" (Rom. iii. 25). These terms are as lucid as profound. They constitute an inspired definition of the object in the case. No view can be right that cannot be brought within the terms of that definition. It is, in fact, the final easement of all difficulty where the mind is able to rise to the Divine point of view involved in the statement. The crucifixion was a Divine declaration, and enforcement of what is due to sin, and as it was God's righteous appointment that this should be due to sin, the infliction of it was a declaration of God's righteousness.

If we limit our view to "the individual man Christ Jesus," and look at him in the light of what is due to individual character as between man and man according to the "justice" of common parlance, we may have a difficulty in seeing how the righteousness of God was declared in the scourging and death of a righteous man. But this is not looking at the subject in the light in which it is prophetically and apostolically exhibited. It is not looking at it in the character that belongs to it. Jesus did not come into the world as an individual, but as a representative, though an individual. In this sense, he came "not for himself," but for others, though he was included in the coming. And it was to carry out Divine objects towards all. As he said, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." He speaks of the work which the Father had given him to do. This work was to establish salvation by forgiveness, but forgiveness on conditions, and these conditions involved the declaration of the Father's righteousness in the public condemnation of sin in its own flesh in the person of

a guiltless possessor of that flesh. Paul declares it was so, and controversy really ends with his words.

It only remains that we realise how completely the fact is in harmony with the statement. We cannot see this unless we recognise that Jesus was a wearer of Adam's condemned nature, and the bearer of the sins of his people—not that Christ might be punished for others, but that God's righteousness might be declared for others to recognise, that they might be forgiven. The gospel provides an opportunity of close identification with what was done: "Buried *with him* by baptism *into death*." "Crucified with Christ." In this posture, they receive the remission of sins "*through the forbearance of God*" (Rom. iii. 25). This is the other great fact of the case—God's forbearance, His kindness, His readiness to pardon *when His claims are conceded*. This excludes the popular view of vicarious suffering. If Christ paid our debts, there would be no forgiveness, but exaction, and thus would be blotted out the crowning glory of the apostolic proclamation. God is kind and will forgive, but God is great and will be exalted: and in the matter of life eternal, He has provided His own method both of exalting Himself and humbling us; and in the presence of it, there is nothing left for us but to bow in reverence—before the crucified but resurrected son of His love.

We may appear to have wandered far away from the sacrificial blood sprinkled on the sanctuary and the altar, and the laver, and on Aaron "to make an atonement for them." Not really have we done so. The operation was a type of God's work in Christ, and it helps us to understand that work rightly, and especially in that one aspect of it which the doctrine of human immortality has made it so difficult for moderns to receive, viz., that Christ himself was included in the sacrificial work which he did "for us." "For himself that it might be for us," for how otherwise could we have obtained redemption if it had not first come into his possession, for us to become joint heirs of?

The necessity for Christ coming personally into the operation first, comes out very clearly—perhaps more clearly than anywhere—in the study of Paul's statement concerning Israel: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." The method of this work is before us without any fog. First, Paul says he was *made under the law* to redeem them that were under the law (Gal. iv. 4). He was *himself born under the law* that he might work the work that was to be done for others in that position. Not only so, but in

bearing the curse of the law away, it had to *act on himself*. This will be seen if we ask how he took the law away; he did it by bearing it. "Being made a curse for us." How? Instead of us? No: by himself coming under it. This is Paul's teaching. "As it is written, *cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*" It might seem in Moses that the clause about the cursedness of hanging on a tree means mere human infamy: but we must suspend our impressions in the presence of the Spirit of God in Paul. Mere human infamy is not the curse that Christ has redeemed us from, but the curse of God, as evident from his statement in the immediate context: "As many as are of the works of the law are *under the curse*, for it is written, *cursed is every one* that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10).

Christ was cursed by the law in the mode of his death. He could not be cursed in any other way, for he was not a transgressor of the law. But in this way, he was cursed. And it is probable that this clause was inserted in the law for this very purpose—that Christ might innocently die under the curse of the law, and so take it away: for the law can do nothing more than kill. When he died, he was no longer under the law, which was made for mortal men, and had dominion over a man only as long as he lived (Rom. vii. 1). When he rose, he was free from the curse of the law—redeemed by his death. It is by union with him as a resurrected free man that we obtain this redemption wrought in him. This is what Paul says: "Ye also are become dead to the law *by the body of Christ* that ye should be married to another, even to him *who is raised from the dead.*" He was born under the law and redeemed from the law, that we might be redeemed by sharing his redemption. This view of the matter enables us to understand Paul's allusion to what the death of Christ accomplished in relation to the law: that he "abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances" (Eph. ii. 15); "blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. ii. 14). But the result was achieved *in himself*.

This is the whole principle: redemption achieved in Christ for us to have, on condition of faith and obedience. It is not only that Israel are saved from the law of Moses on this principle, but it is the principle on which we are saved from the law of sin and death, whose operation we inherit deriving our nature from Adam.

Christ partook of this nature to deliver it from death, as Paul teaches in Heb. ii. 14, and other places: "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, it became him likewise to take part of the same, that *through death* he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil. Understanding by the devil, the hereditary death-power that has reigned among men by Adam through sin, we may understand how Christ, who took part in this death-inheriting nature, destroyed the power of death by dying and rising. We then understand how "He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." We may also understand how "our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. vi. 6), and how he "died unto sin once," but now liveth unto God, and to die no more (verses 9-10).

All which enables us to understand why the typical holy things were purified with sacrificial blood, and why the high priest, in his typical and official capacity had to be touched with blood as well as anointed with the holy oil before entering upon his work. When we say, as some in their reverence for Christ prefer to say, that the death of Christ was not for himself but only for us, they destroy all these typical analogies, and in truth, if their view could prevail, they would make it impossible that it could be for us at all: for it only operates "for us" when we unite ourselves with him in whom, as the first born, it had its first effect.





## CHAPTER XIX.—THE FINAL DEDICATION.

THE tabernacle when established, was for individual use. Israelites in trespass, or in distress, or in special prosperity for which they desired to express gratitude, were to come near in trespass-offering, peace-offering, or thank-offering in the manner prescribed. But independently of all this, there was a routine daily service to be conducted by the priests when their installation was complete, and before the daily service, there were stages in the process of installation. All this will reward consideration in detail.

We have already considered the opening stages of that process. It was not complete with the operations described in the last chapter. After the anointing with the holy oil, and the sprinkling with the blood of the sin-offering, there was the offering of the ram of burnt-offering (Lev. viii. 18) and the ram of consecration (verse 22) and the waving of a composite offering of "consecrations for a sweet savour" (verses 26-28)—followed by a seven days' seclusion in the tabernacle, at the close of which, "the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people" (Lev. ix. 24).

We may find an interesting counterpart to all these details in the truth plainly revealed since that time, concerning Christ, of whom and his work, they are declared to have been the concealed foreshadowings.

Some views entertained concerning Christ, prevent the true recognition of Christ in the signification. The Roman Catholics cannot find a place for their immaculate Christ in a ritual and an apparatus for every part of which, atonement had to be offered. Nor are the Protestants more favourably situated with a view that makes the work done by Christ the saving of immortal souls, for which there is no counterpart in a system that at every step proclaimed death as the heritage of sinners. Nor can those other views more equally adjust themselves to a typology which involved the high priest in every operation at every stage. Under Paul's guidance, even the sin-offering (the bullock) with whose blood, after the anointing with the holy oil, Aaron and his sons were

sprinkled, brings Christ into view. The bullock (in hide, flesh, and interiors) had to be carried outside the camp and burnt (Lev. viii. 17). Paul's comment on this is as follows: "The bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burnt *without the camp*. Wherefore Jesus also that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, *suffered without the gate*. Let us go forth therefore unto him, without the camp, bearing his reproach" (Heb. xiii. 11-13). Paul thus identifies Jesus in crucifixion with the bullock burnt without the camp, whose blood was sprinkled on the furniture of the sanctuary, then on Aaron, and afterwards on his sons, and on all the people. Under apostolic guidance, we see Christ both in the bullock, in the furniture, in the veil, in the high priest, and in brief, in all these *Mosaic* "patterns," which he says were "a shadow of things to come" (Heb. viii. 5 : ix. 23 : x. 1 : iii. 5). All were both *atoned and atoning for* (Lev. xvi. 33).

There is no counterpart to this if Christ is kept out of his own sacrifice, as some thoughts would do. He cannot so be kept out if place is given to all the testimony—an express part of which is that as the sum total of the things signified by these patterns, he was "purified with" a better sacrifice than bulls and goats—viz., his own sacrifice (Heb. ix. 23, 12). If he was "purified," there was a something to be purified from. What was it? Look at his hereditary death taint, as the son of Adam, through whom death entered the world by sin, and there is no difficulty. Look at the curse of God brought on him in hanging on a tree (Gal. iii. 13 ; Deut. xxi. 22, 23). We must not get away from the testimony. As the antitypical bullock without the camp, Jesus was a *sin-offering*—an offering to be burnt, consumed—to be which, he had to be the very nature cursed by sin, that, "the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. vi. 6). As the antitypical victim of the accursed tree, he personally bore the very curse of the law, as Paul argues: that thus, God might lay on him the iniquity of us all, and make him to be sin for us who knew no sin: and that thus, in being baptised into his death, we might be washed from our sins in his own blood, God forgiving us for Christ's sake (Eph. iv. 32).

But this is going back on our subject. We have left the "bullock for a sin-offering"—in which, we see Christ crucified. The ram for burnt-offering, though killed, and the blood sprinkled on the altar (Leviticus viii. 19), was not carried out of the camp.

This carrying out of the camp was the repudiation of sin, antitypically effected in the direful experience which led Jesus, outside Jerusalem, to exclaim, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The ram of burnt-offering was not carried out of the camp, after being slain, but was burnt on the altar, which we may take to represent the second stage of the one great offering, viz., the consumption and absorption of the human nature of Christ in the change to the Father-nature after his emergence from the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. It was "a burnt sacrifice for a sweet savour, and an offering made by fire unto the Lord" (Lev. viii. 21). Such was the man Christ Jesus, after having been offered as the sin-offering, when he stood restored to life on the morning of the third day, ready for the fire of the spirit to flash forth in transforming energy upon his re-vitalised human nature. He had been offered as a sin-offering: in which there was "putting to grief," "forsaking," "curse." He was now, "a burnt sacrifice for a *sweet savour*"—acceptable to God and joyful to Christ. The Spirit, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," changed the human substance of the Son of David into the divine nature that is glorious and lives for ever.

Then Moses "brought the other ram, *the ram of CONSECRATION*, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram. And he slew it, and Moses took of the blood of it, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's *right ear*, and upon the thumb of his *right hand*, and upon the great toe of his *right foot*, and the same with Aaron's sons.

Here was a third stage whose significance is indicated by its characteristic term, "consecration." The blood of the ram of consecration was not offered upon the altar, but applied to the leading faculties of Aaron and his sons: ear, hand, and foot. Blood is life: blood poured out is death: but blood applied to ear, hand, and foot is life devoted to hearing, working, and walking in the ways of God.

There was to be a method in this hearing, working, and walking: something to hear, something to do, somewhere to go—a definite working life in appointed forms—as indicated by Moses placing the parts, and inwards of the offered ram of consecration upon Aaron's hands to "wave," or sway backwards and forwards "before the Lord:" but not until he had placed on the parts of the offered animal, in Aaron's hand, "an unleavened cake out of the basket of unleavened bread that was before the Lord, and a

cake of oiled bread, and one wafer" (Lev. viii. 25-28). Unleavened bread was the symbol of "sincerity and truth" (see 1 Cor. v. 8) : an oiled cake, food of joy and gladness (Isaiah lxi. 3) ; a wafer, the bread of God—manna in the wilderness (Ex. xvi. 31), as representing him who came down from heaven to give life to the world (John vi. 51). The combined meaning seems to be this, that the life which succeeds sin-offering is a life of consecration, not contemplative and supine, but of active, joyful work in righteousness : yet, there is the intimation that this ideal is not reached till the immortal state : for Moses took all "from off Aaron's hands, and burnt them on the altar upon the burnt-offering : consecrations for a sweet savour : *an offering made by fire* unto the Lord" (verse 28).

In the application of these things to Christ, we see him (1) a sin-offering "without the gate," like the bullock outside the camp ; (2) the sacrifice "for a sweet savour" in his joyful change to spirit-nature when he awoke from the sin-offering state on the morning of the third day (like the ram of the burnt-offering consumed on the altar, as "an offering of sweet savour by fire unto the Lord") ; (3) his entrance thereafter into a state of total consecration to the Father's service, in which, without the fatigues and intermissions of mortal life, he would be wholly occupied in the joyful exercises represented by the waving of parts of the ram of consecration, garnished with the piece of unleavened bread, the oiled cake, and the manna-like wafer—all "burnt on the altar as consecrations for a sweet savour" (verse 28).

We have to remember that the law, while declared "a shadow of good things to come," is also said to be "not the very image thereof." A miniature is "the very image" on a small scale, but a shadow is the rough and exaggerated outline of an object. The ordinances of the law are a rough outline of things concerning our relation to God—now and hereafter : but the details cannot have an exact resemblance. There are various sacrifices and various things to represent various aspects of the truth which in reality centre in one object—the man Christ Jesus, as the first-born among many brethren.

The stages in the typical consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood were an interesting and useful exercise for Moses and the faithful men related to the process. But they had a deeper meaning than they knew. "So hath the Lord commanded," was about as far as their enlightenment extended. This was really the

first lesson of all godliness, and of the utmost consequence for them to learn. It is the last that moderns apprehend: the commandment of God as the reason of a thing. We learn it over again, and with renewed force in the study of the law of Moses. Nevertheless, it is a delightful exercise to be also able to trace analogies and foreshadowings of the ultimate purpose of God with man on the earth, in the midst of ordinances and appointments for which no higher reason was given to Israel by Moses, than "so hath the Lord commanded." This ultimate purpose is neither more nor less than the gradual metamorphosis of the race by a complete assimilation of the will of man to the will of God, and the complete extinction of human antagonisms to God in the abolition of human nature by voluntary sacrifice, required by God, and Divinely accepted, and ratified in a transformation which will change it from a mortal thing to a state of equality with the angels. The whole process is exemplified in Christ the first-born, and foreshadowed in these diversified ordinances of the law. It is only partially experienced by his brethren in the present state: but they became related to the whole process by association with him in whom it has been wholly accomplished, and in the end they will become the subjects of its entire operation.

They become identified with the sin-offering stage in being baptised into the death of Christ. Christ "suffered without the gate," as the bullock was burnt outside the camp: and they "go forth to him without the camp bearing his reproach." Any man in a hearty manner identifying himself with the death of Christ in the way provided in the gospel, and rejoicing in it as acceptable to God, and certain to lead to unutterable good in the end, will certainly find himself "without the camp," even in Gentile society—both as regards his acceptability with Gentile friends, and as regards their suitability for his society. But he can bear it, if he remembers it is of Divine appointment. It helps him to remember this when he thinks of the body of the sin-offering carried outside the camp under Moses, and when he thinks of the antitype in Christ, who was "rejected of men," and conveyed out of Jerusalem to be crucified, that sin might be condemned in the flesh.

He becomes identified with the burnt-offering "sweet savour" stage when he rises from baptism to "present his body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God," through Christ, who has become "the Lord, the Spirit," by transformation; and he becomes identified with the ram of consecration, with all its adjuncts in the

wave-offering, when he goes forth in the diversified activity of a life consecrated to God.

This is the measure of his experience of the Mosaic significance for the time being. It is no small measure when realised in the full intelligent joy of the truth—in faith and hope. Still, it is *nothing* by comparison with Christ's actual experience in the Spirit-state—which every true worshipper in the sanctuary will be permitted to share, in the change from this burdened mortal-state to the glory of the incorruptible at the coming of Christ.

One aspect of that experience is pleasant to contemplate : *activity*. This was the feature of the wave-offering as distinguished from the other sacrifices. There was *action* ; and the nature of the action is betokened by the unleavened bread, oil and cake, and wafer waved with it : "righteousness and holiness." These were all consumed by the altar-fire : all taken into Spirit-nature. Popular theology thinks of the saved state as a state of passive "bliss." It is evident from the type before us that the life of Spirit-nature will be a life of active service in holiness. This is confirmed by what is testified concerning the angels with whom the saints are to be raised to equality : "Bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, that *do his commandments*, hearkening to the voice of his word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that *do his pleasure*."

This is a charming prospect. We are liable to think of the Kingdom as a place of rest. This it will truly be, but not the rest of inaction. Nothing is more irksome to a state of strength than inactivity. 'Tis only infirmity that delights in the ease of the couch : "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles : they shall run, and not be weary : they shall walk, and not faint" (Is. xl. 31). Immortal energy will want suitable scope, though doubtless allied with the ability of a perfect self-composure when required. And this scope it will find, to the constant joy of its possessors. What will be its forms of activity in detail, we cannot know in advance, except that they will have to do with the government of men and the worship of God. We may be sure that "the pleasures of the chase" (so exhilarating to the children of the flesh) will form no part of their delights, whose chief joy is to confer blessing on even the meanest of creatures. "The unleavened bread, the oiled cake and wafer," tell us of joy in righteousness, holiness, and kindness, whose forms will be infinitely diversified in a perfect and holy state.

While the bulk of the ram of consecration was consumed on the altar as "an offering made by fire unto the Lord," part of it, after being waved, was to be eaten, with unleavened bread from the basket in the holy place (Lev. viii. 29, 31). The cooking and the eating were to be done by Aaron and his sons at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and any flesh or bread remaining uneaten was to be burnt (32). The meaning of this we may see, if we reflect that the consecrated state in its final development is the immortal state, into which "the forerunner hath for us entered." The entrance into this state is by the eating now at the door. None will be found in the consecrated state who have not now availed themselves of the means of consecration in the spiritual eating of the flesh provided—"My flesh which I give for the life of the world"—JESUS—eaten, too, "not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. v. 8). And when the whole family have eaten, the surplus flesh and bread will be burnt with fire, destroyed in judgment: withdrawn in anger: the door shut: no further admission to the consecrated state. Many will run eagerly after the grace of God in Christ when his glory is revealed—to be met only with the fateful words: "Too late!"

And all this consecration work was to be gone through for seven days in succession: "Ye shall abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days." "Ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days until the days of your consecration be at an end, for seven days shall he consecrate you. As he hath done this day, so hath the Lord commanded to do, to make an atonement for you" (verse 35, 33). We may see in this the larger shadowing of the reconciliation work. In its completeness, it extends over seven thousand years, embracing the whole family of God that will people the earth as its ransomed population in the endless ages. The family in this sense are at the door of the tabernacle for seven days of a thousand years each—the seventh a Sabbath of rest, but still a day of atoning work.

On the eighth day, there was a specially imposing ceremony which we can scarcely err in regarding as the typification of what will occur at the close of the Millennial phase of the kingdom, when "the Son shall deliver up the kingdom" to the Father, "that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 24, 28). Moses gave directions as to certain things to be done, and said to Aaron and the elders, "To-

day (the eighth day) the Lord will appear unto you." The things being done, "the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat, which, when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces" (Lev. ix. 1, 4, 23, 24). Could there be a more perfect type of that final filling of the whole earth with the glory of the Lord, which has been the burden of promise from the beginning?

We know little practically of the state of things that will prevail on the earth in the eighth millennium from Adam's expulsion from Eden and onwards. But we know this, that "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying" (Rev. xxi. 4). We know that "the throne of God and the Lamb" will be established; and "His servants shall serve Him and they shall see His face and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle nor light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xxii. 3-5). What more fit illustration of such a state than the spectacle of Israel on their faces in the presence of the manifested glory of the Lord on the eighth day after the commencement of the consecration work?

The nature of the preparations made on the eighth day for this manifestation may appear to interfere with such an application. It was a re-offering of the dedicatory sacrifices: *for Aaron*, a calf and ram, for sin-offering and burnt-offering respectively: *for the people*, a kid of the goats for sin-offering, and a calf and a lamb for burnt-offering, and a bullock and a lamb for peace-offerings, with their appropriate meal-offerings. It may be asked what parallel could there be in the deathless state reached after the thousand years, to the offering of

"Lambs and bullocks slain?"

The answer does not seem difficult. There will always be the antitype to these things. It will never drop out of truth or memory that the salvation attained through Christ is a *salvation achieved by sacrifice*. It will always be a theme of joyful celebration among the glorified righteous that they owe their position "to him that loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood." Would it not, then, be in perfect keeping with the attainment and the nature of the perfect ages that will succeed the kingdom of the thousand years that they should be inaugurated by

some special recognition of the sacrificial foundation upon which the glory stands?

Every form of God's work hitherto and what has been revealed concerning the constitution of the age to come, supplies an affirmative answer to this question. First, the individual privileges of faith in this present state have always been associated with sacrifice, from the very gate of Eden to the divine condemnation of sin in the flesh on Calvary. Second, wherever the gospel savingly comes, it brings the broken body and shed blood of the Lord in the memorial supper to be partaken of by the most enlightened believers. Third, in the midst of all the glories of the restored kingdom of David under Christ in the age to come, the Lord's death is memorialised in the restoration of sacrifice on the most elaborate scale, in the offering of which, the Lord himself takes prominent part, "for himself," too, as expressly declared (Ezek. xlv. 22).

What the form of the inaugural ceremony of the perfect age in this respect will be, we may not know exactly: but in view of the type before us, and the considerations just referred to, we shall not wander far from very strong probability if we suppose—(when the post-millennial Gog and Magog have been destroyed, and the mighty congregation of the responsible dead have been dealt with before the Great White Throne)—that there will be some great ceremonial reassertion of the righteousness of God as sacrificially accomplished in Christ and ratified by every living soul present, preliminary to that wondrous transfer of the visible headship from the Son to the Father, that "God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 24-28).





## CHAPTER XX.—THE ROUTINE SERVICE OF THE TABERNACLE.

THE Tabernacle was ready for congregational use after the dedicatory services considered in the last two chapters. It was "holy unto the Lord," and no one could intrude without being guilty of sacrilege on pain of death. Not even the priests could approach the altar without washing at the laver, or the inner holy without sacrificial blood.

It is all meaningless mummerly to a mere naturalist. To the enlightened state of mind that comes from taking all facts into view, and not those of nature merely, it must appear as a powerful means of creating and developing the sentiment of reverence and the conception of holiness. This is the highest grace of which human character is capable. To the merely natural mind, there is nothing to revere: no holiness to cultivate—but only things to know and sensations to feel—under the bias of which, human character sinks into coldness and grossness, and barrenness. The ordinances of the law were designed to draw the mind up to a higher level, on which worship in holiness warms and expands and beautifies the character. Its typical nature was a secondary element reserved for later elucidation by the Spirit of God in the apostles. Its immediate object was to bring Israel near to God in holiness. It succeeded in this as regards a class in all their generations; and even as regards the unsanctified bulk, it kept them in a certain outward shape and attitude of separateness, which was subservient to the Divine purpose in calling them out of Egypt and organising them as a nation on the basis of the law. The law was a schoolmaster (not "to bring unto" Christ as the interpolated words of King James's version of Gal. iii. 24 expresses it, but to prepare the way for Christ). Without the preliminary effects engendered by the long previous currency of the law of Moses, the situation would not have been suitable for his manifestation.

The mechanical sanctities of the tabernacle and its service have been misapplied in the ecclesiastical corruption of the gospel that set in, after the apostolic age, through the influence of the

Judaising class that arose in the very days of the apostles through the circumstance that the bulk of gospel believers in the first place was composed of Jews under the law, and included even "a great company of priests" (Acts vi. 7 : xxi. 20). It is a practice of "the church" to "consecrate" buildings and cemeteries and water and vestments and bells and many other things ; and it is a tradition of the people that such things are "holy," and cannot be familiarly used without desecration. The mechanical and ceremonial holinesses of the law have been brought forward into the exercises and applications of the gospel, with a result that is truly disastrous as regards the saving work of the gospel. Men are enthralled in a ritual system as truly lifeless and superstitious as the worship of the heathen ; and their minds are diverted from the true holiness inwardly appertaining to the true house of God—"the church of the living God"—"whose house (and temple) we are, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope steadfast unto the end" (1 Cor. vi. 19 ; 2 Cor. vi. 16 ; Heb. iii. 6).

Nevertheless, the prevalence of a semi-Mosaic ecclesiasticism is not without its use. It has doubtless helped to modify the arid barbarism of the clay-nations of the north, which swarmed down and occupied the countries of decrepit Rome. It has imparted to them a certain kind of civilisation which is an improvement on the savage manners of their forefathers ; and it has given them rudimentary conceptions of higher things, which render them more suitable material for the operation of the Divine discipline that will presently come forth out of Zion, than if they were pure Zulus or Matabeles. God can turn evil to good account.

The congregational use to which the tabernacle was to be put after the hallowing ceremonies of dedication, is indicated in the enumeration : "Your vows, your free-will offerings, your burnt-offerings, your meat-offerings, your drink-offerings, and your peace-offerings" (Num. xxix. 39).

But before we consider these in detail, we must look at the routine service of the tabernacle which was established independently of individual use. These were daily, monthly, and yearly ; and something is revealed to us in these respective allotments of time in their particular associations—not revealed in the sense of being made known for the first time, but revealed in the sense of showing us the emphasis divinely attached to

matters otherwise made known, but which might escape casual attention.

1. *Daily*.—The high priest was to replenish the oil-lamps of the seven-branch candlestick, and offer incense before the vail, *every morning and evening*: and on the great altar, he was to offer a lamb in sacrifice *every morning and evening*. These were *perpetual services*—things always in the life—things always before the mind. Remembering what they signify (as ascertained in previous chapters), what a lesson they convey: *the combusted oil of the lamps*, the radiation of the truth from the enlightened mind: *the grateful odour of the fire-diffused incense*, acceptable worship, thanksgiving and supplication: *the offered lamb*, the crucified Jesus recognised as the basis of approach.

These daily services speak of things which must enter into life every day. Some things may be casual, as the remembrance of the Egyptian deliverance in the passover; but these are to be incessant, as the taking of daily food. They tell us it is God's pleasure that it should be so; and reflection will certainly tell us that it is in accordance with the most elementary conceptions of wisdom that it should be so.

First, the light—should the mind ever be dark? Is it not the essential condition of even human friendship that enlightenment should be a thing of normal habit? But enlightenment is not native: darkness is. Enlightenment to be attained or retained must be kindled by external appliance, and there must be renewal. Light the lamp and leave it, and it will go out. Enlighten the mind and neglect it, and it will become dark again. It is so on all subjects, especially the knowledge of God, for which the mind has the least affinity. Dress the lamps every morning. Read the Bible every day. This will keep you supplied with the oil that will cause light. "Thy word is light": it is *the* light. "Thy word is truth": it is *the* truth. Any other truth is darkness for the highest purpose of life, as all men will feel when suddenly confronted with the glory of God at the coming of Christ. Knowledge of mines: knowledge of metals: knowledge of countries: knowledge of languages or of physical elements—is all very well in its place: It is the knowledge of God and His ways and His intentions and His will that constitutes the true light of life.

The exhortation of the Mosaic parable in this particular is distinct: dress the lamps daily. It is a matter of command: we must obey. It is a matter of expediency, and we ought to con-

form : for if the lamps are not snuffed and the oil replenished, our light will burn dimly and be in danger of going out, as many men experience. Do not say—"We are not a priesthood yet." Ye are such in Him. Ye are now a holy priesthood, as Peter declares (1 Pet. ii. 5), "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

So with the incense, which is "the prayer of saints" (Rev. v. 8 ; viii. 4) : It is a daily obligation : a daily benefit—a pleasure to God and an advantage to His people. I have known men argue against its necessity. They say, "God knows, without being told." This is true, but is not a good reason for the neglect of prayer, in view of the great help it is to us in gendering the habit of expansion of mind towards God, in view of the pleasure it affords to God, and in view of its inculcation by this Mosaic lesson. It is altogether a benighted and beggarly view of the subject that would leave everything to God : He requires us to do our part with Him. And part of our part is to express our appreciation of His greatness and goodness and our gratitude for His benefactions, and our desires for His guidance in all our ways. The man who says, "God does not require me to tell Him all that : He knows all about it : He will look after me without my troubling myself"—is like a hog, lying in its mire, grunting in its passive satisfactions, as the owner looks over the wall of its sty. Such a man is no pleasure to God, and will pass away with the natural permutation of things. "The Lord taketh not pleasure in fools." "He taketh pleasure in the righteous." "The prayer of the righteous is his delight." All these things are testified ; and it was shown in unmistakable parable when the high priest every morning put sweet-smelling incense in his censer on the fire taken from the altar, and waved his censer before the Lord in the holy place. An enlightened man will therefore be found obeying the apostolic precepts which enjoin prayer without ceasing, and in everything, thanksgiving. After Christ's own example, he will "give thanks" before partaking of meals ; and like Daniel, bend his knee more than once a day, "coming boldly to the throne of grace, that he may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. iv. 16).

As for "the daily sacrifice"—the morning and evening lamb—we instinctively say as we look towards Christ, "Behold the Lamb of God." With him in head, heart, and hand, the true worshippers now draw near. Not now with a bleating animal

with literal blood pured out, but with the recollection of faith in "the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest" in the last times of Judah's history (1 Pet. i. 19-20), we come to God in prayer every day. We cannot come otherwise acceptably. We are sinners who can claim no attention on our own behalf. We have to say with Daniel: "We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but *for Thy great mercy*;" and His great mercy has taken this form: Christ crucified and given us as the form of our approach—combining God's great exaltation and our great humiliation. Every time we bend the knee, it is in the name of Jesus, crucified and raised, as the declaration of God's righteousness; and this "every time" is very often. It is not limited to public assembly. It was morning and evening in the type, and it is not less frequent in the antitype. And every time we thus "offer unto God the voice of thanksgiving," it is required that we do so with the mental discernment of the slain lamb of the antitype. That is, we are required to have Christ crucified before our minds as the basis of our permitted approach—not as an innocent substitute on whom our punishment has been inflicted, but as a representative perfect elder brother, in whom God's righteous dealing with sin has been exhibited, for our humble endorsement that the way of mercy may be open for healing—in forgiveness and deliverance.

With the two lambs to be offered "day by day for a continual burnt offering—one in the morning, the other at even," were to be offered also a meat-offering, consisting of flour baked with beaten oil—a kind of "Yorkshire pudding." And a drink offering of "strong wine to be poured unto the Lord" (Num. xxviii. 3-7). Meat—that is, bread—for it is a modern association that identifies "meat" with the article only that is supplied by the butcher: no vegetarianism intended—meat is for strength; wine for gladness (Psa. civ. 15). What can be the meaning of their addition to the lamb of the daily sacrifice, but this, that the service of God is not all humiliation and sorrow and solemnity? Israel were early taught the joyful side of their relation to God. On the further side of the Red Sea, on the morrow after their thrilling deliverance from Egyptian pursuit, they sang under the leadership of Moses, "The Lord is my *strength* and *song*: and He is become my salvation." The Psalms of David are divine exemplifications of the class of sentiment that is appropriate to the divine relationship in the

present evil state. True, there is much shadow in them ; it is not possible in human language to express deeper sorrow than some of them reflect. But there is more light than darkness : more joy and jubilation than lamentation. Most of them are in this vein : “ O clap your hands all ye people ; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands. Sing forth the honour of His name : make His praise glorious. Sing aloud unto God our strength : make a joyful noise to the God of Jacob. Take a psalm and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. . . . With trumpets and sound of cornet, make a joyful noise before the Lord the King. Let the sea roar and the fulness thereof ; the world and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands : let the hills be joyful together.”

Joy belongs to faith in God and knowledge of His purposes and His way. There is no true joy apart from it. It means the full activity of the highest faculties of man—which cannot be realised in connection with any other exercise of the human mind. Science or sport brings only a part of the human brain into action ; godliness—(of the enlightened sort—and there is no other true sort, for the godliness of darkened sectarianism is no more true godliness than sewer gas is fresh air)—godliness brings the whole brain into action, and therefore kindles noble joy. “ Thou hast put gladness into my heart more than when their corn and wine are increased.” It was appropriate therefore that a meat-offering and strong wine should always accompany the sacrificial lamb, morning and evening.

That these three things—the light of knowledge, the incense of prayer, and the sacrificial condemnation of sin—should be the subjects of *the daily service of the tabernacle*, is an illustration not to be mistaken as to the places which these things should have in the lives of His people. They condemn the loose thoughts of moralists, who would relegate all three to the region of uncertainty and neglect. They condemn no less the fraternal Laodiceanism that can only be roused by polemics, and who regard the daily worship of God as a weariness. They show us the sort of people whom God approves, and they throw the right light upon the various kinds of worldliness that unfit for the service of the true sanctuary. “ The Lord hath chosen the man that is godly for himself ” : and these institutions of the Lord’s house admit us to the divine estimate of the man that is godly. Many men in the

truth have a name to live and are dead : the chill of their spiritual corpses is liable to infect living saints with a sense of shiver, who have to keep close to the fire to drive the cold away.

2. *Weekly*.—On the Sabbath day, the daily sacrifice was to be doubled. “Two lambs of the first year without spot,” with their accompanying meat and drink-offering, were to be offered on the seventh day, “beside the continual burnt offering” (Num. xxviii. 9-10). Why double work on the day of rest? The answer is to be found in the meaning. Joseph told Pharaoh: “For that the dream was *doubled* unto Pharaoh twice, it is because the thing is *established* by God” (Gen. xli. 32). Two lambs in the morning and two lambs in the evening had both one meaning. They were doubled on the seventh day for emphasis, because of the foreshadowing of the day. The seventh day was of special service to God — “holy of the Lord, honourable,” on which Israelites were to specially honour him, “not doing their own ways, nor finding their own pleasure, nor speaking their own words” (Isaiah lviii. 13). So the seventh thousand years, though an age of rest or Sabbath-keeping, will be a day of special activity in the service of God through all the earth, in the ways appointed, with Jerusalem and the temple, as the centre of the rushing currents of national life. Commerce will no longer be the be-all and end-all of national enterprise. “Many nations shall go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths.”

3. *Monthly*.—“At the beginnings of your months,” there was to be a special service of a gladsome character. “In the day of your gladness and in your solemn days and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings” (Num. x. 10). “Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel and a law of the God of Jacob” (Psa. lxxxi. 3-4). On that day, the first day of the month—marked and dated by the advent of the new moon—there was to be a large addition to the daily sacrifice. There were to be seven lambs, two young bullocks, and one ram, besides the daily lamb of the morning and evening; and these additional burnt-offerings were to be accompanied by proportional meat-offerings and wine-offerings in the quantities specified—(Num. xxviii. 11-14)—in

addition to which, there was to be an offering of one kid of the goats for a sin-offering.

This was a more casual, yet a larger, form of special service than the Sabbath or the daily : once in thirty days as compared with once in seven days or twice in one day. Its occasion was the completion of a larger cycle of the divine beneficence to man. It takes the moon about thirty days to perform her circuit round the earth. All the benefits she confers in that circuit, we cannot know. Some of them we know. She prevents stagnation in the waters of the earth by causing their rise and fall and so giving us the tides. She mitigates the darkness of night, and even imparts to it a silvery beauty, which is often more acceptable than the glory of the day. She exercises subtle magnetic influences on the condition of earth's inhabitants which we cannot estimate. She gives us a standard of time measurement which is of greater value than familiarity allows us to appreciate.

That the periodicity of such an ordinance in nature should be chosen as the occasion of a special recognition of man's relation to God, is significant. It shows that God finds pleasure in our appreciation of His works. It shows that he disapproves of the sluggish intellectuality that takes them all as a matter of course. There is a liability in men to do this. Accustomed to the automatic operations of the laws of nature, they are liable to become insensible to the eternal power and wisdom in which they have their root. In a sense, the motions of nature are a matter of course. They are established and cannot be interfered with : yet they are not reasonably regarded, if considered without reference to the contriving energy in which they had their origin. "He commanded and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever. He hath made a decree which shall not pass." To look at them and not admiringly recognise the wisdom that has made them is to be like a cow or any other beast—which dimly looks, sees, feels, but does not understand—well enough in its place, but only as fattening flesh to be eaten. "O Lord, how great are Thy works ! Thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this" (Psa. xcii. 5). "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein" (Psa. cxi. 2).

What man, who has made some great and clever thing, does not enjoy the appreciation of intelligent visitors ? What man gets any satisfaction out of the unintelligent gaze of the uninitiated ? If

this be so with us, who are in the faint image of the Creator, we may understand why God should delight in the recognition of His works by the intelligent creatures He has made, and why He should have selected the completion of the moon's monthly journey for a special exercise in this direction.

There is an evident counterpart to the Mosaic monthly institution in the blessed age that is coming with the advent of the saints to power. It is "*from one new moon to another,*" as well as from Sabbath to Sabbath, that all flesh appears in the temple courts to worship (Is. lxvi. 23). It is "every month" or once a month, that the Apocalyptic wood of life (the saints) yields its fruit for the healing of the nations (Rev. xxii. 2), and it is "according to his months" that the literal tree on both sides of the temple river yields its fruit "whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed . . . the fruit thereof shall be for meat and the leaf thereof for medicine" (Ezek. xlvii. 12). There will be no monotony in a state of things in which the whole population is roused with the advent of every new moon in the heavens to a special service of worship and praise, and a special distribution of healing and blessing. The prospect of the Kingdom is a prospect of an endless succession of joyful activities.

But what nation, as at present constituted, would care for the activities of holiness? It is "when Thy judgments are made manifest" that "all nations will come and worship before Thee" (Rev. xv. 4; Psa. lxxxvi. 9; xxii. 27-29; cii. 16-22; Isaiah xxvi. 9). Till then, the only kind of activity that appeals to the general taste is the activity of the racecourse or of the circus, or of the theatre, and other polluted forms of public life. There are to be "new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." Among many detailed features of delightfulness will be the monthly recurrence of special feasts of praise, joy, and blessing.





## CHAPTER XXI.—THE ANNUAL SERVICES.

**A**NNUAL.—There were several annual services appointed for observance in the tabernacle, recurrent “three times a year”—which might seem a contradiction. How could they be annual if held three times in a year? The answer is, each of the three was special in itself, and came only once a year: the passover, the reaping of the first fruits, and the ingathering of the harvest, which included the feast of tabernacles. The particulars may be learnt in Num. xxviii. and xxix.; Lev. xxiii.; and Ex. xxiii. 14-16.

The annual is the largest natural cycle recognised in the tabernacle service. Other periods enter into the administration of the law in temporal things, such as the six years of service or debt, ending in liberty: or forty-nine years of exile ending in unconditional restitution; but these are not natural periods; that is, they are not measured by the movements of the heavenly bodies, and there was no provision for their recognition in the ritual of the sanctuary. The year is a natural period, and the longest natural period in the life of man. His life is but a repetition of years. The year, therefore, would naturally stand as the symbol of his whole life.

That “once a year” certain things should be done was an intimation that the things signified stood related to his whole life, that is, that the will of God required these things in paramount recognition in the lives of those who would be acceptable to Him.

1. THE PASSOVER.—The passover was for the whole congregation to keep. But there was a special observance in the tabernacle. During the seven days of the feast, while the people were living on unleavened bread (“sincerity and truth”—1 Cor. v. 8), the priests were to offer every day, in addition to the daily morning and evening sacrifice, “two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year” without blemish as a burnt-offering, and “one goat for a sin-offering” (Num. xxviii. 19)—along with their appointed meat-offerings, already considered. If

the burnt-offering mean, as we seemed to see a chapter or two back, the absorption of the mortal by the flaming-power of the Spirit, then two bullocks (double strength, or all our strength) : one ram (natural fatherhood) : seven lambs (the very perfection of child-like innocence, sweetness, and simplicity) would be an intimation that man could only attain the immortal in a complete dedication to God of natural powers and relationships, in a perfect submission to His will as the law of life. Christ in all this conformed to the foreshadowing of the law, and we conform to him when we obey him as called upon to do (Heb. v. 9). "The goat for a sin-offering" shows us the anti-typical sacrifice of sin's flesh—a pushful, masterful thing—which was put to death on Calvary, "that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. vi. 6-10) though in Christ, its pushful masterful tendencies were all overcome beforehand, as Jesus said, "I have overcome," that the sacrifice (without blemish) might be accepted for us. Thus was blended with the Passover celebration, the typification of a perfect submission to the will of God as a basis of reconciliation.

There is something significant in this association of the highest spiritual attainments with the annual celebration of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, for we must not forget that the primary object of the feast was to keep this event in national memory (Ex. xii. 14-27). The modern attitude is that of unbelief concerning the divine nature of the plagues : the death of the first-born ; and the opening of the Red Sea for Israel's escape ; and lo, here, not only is the historic reality of these things linked with a feast which has been kept by Israel in all their generations ever since to the present day, but involved in their celebration is the shadowing of the highest final achievements of God's purpose in Christ. The world's scepticism in the matter is an insult to reason. Moses and Christ are the two poles of God's great work. The miracles of Moses and the miracles of Christ are the two ends of a great historic fabric : they make one piece. If Moses foreshadows Christ, Christ embodies, authenticates, and proves Moses. They are inseparable. The idea of a man believing in Christ without believing in Moses is the monstrous outcome of ignorance. Christ celebrated the passover with his disciples : in this he held up Moses and the first-born to our view : for the passover had no meaning apart from the Lord passing over the blood-sprinkled houses of the Israelites in Egypt on the night that he went through the land and destroyed the first-born in every house in Egypt. Christ said the passover would be "fulfilled in

the kingdom of God" (Luke xxii. 16) which implies the typical nature of the passover feast, in harmony with Paul's teaching that Christ is our passover, sacrificed for us (1 Cor. v. 7). Thus, Christ in the kingdom and Christ on the cross unite with Moses in Egypt on the night of the exodus—which may enable us to understand why the final song of salvation is "the song of *Moses* and of the Lamb" (Rev. xv. 3).

The sacrificial endorsement of the passover in the permanent annual services of the tabernacle is an intimation that a continual recognition of God's work in Egypt is part of our acceptable qualification before Him. How utterly does this consideration condemn our generation which treats lightly and doubts the works He did in the land of Ham. In what an odious light must our flippant, unbelieving contemporaries appear in the eyes of the Eternal, who has condescended to do and record all these mighty works, only to be laughed at by their conceited mediocrities—under the leadership, too, of their clerical leaders! There is a pungent force little suspected in the question of Christ: "If ye believe not the writings of Moses, how shall ye believe my words?" The tempest of his anger will presently awake them to their senses, when he fulfils his promise: "*According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt* will I show (again) marvellous things. And the nations shall see and be confounded at all their might, and they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth, and they shall fear."

2. THE FEAST OF FIRST-FRUITS.—This differed from the first anniversary celebration, in being founded upon an institute of nature, and not upon a divine interposition in the nation's affairs. Yet we shall find it no less spiritual in its uses, whether in its proximate and literal bearings; or its typical and remote significances.

As regards the first, it was a recognition of the divine beneficence in providing so bountifully for human need in the products of the soil—which even the Gentiles are reasonably expected to discern as the testimony of nature. As Paul told the inhabitants of Lystra, though God had left all nations to walk in their own ways, God, who made heaven and earth and the sea and all things therein, "had left not Himself without witness in that He did good and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts xiv. 15-17). But the "witness" is only faintly discerned—and mostly not discerned

at all. Men use the divine goodness as the creatures crunch their oats and turnips, with a gastric satisfaction merely, without taking thought of the exquisite wisdom and superb goodness that have contrived and provided such suitable substances for the sustenance of man and beast. Israel were not to be like the nations in this respect. They were to make the harvest an occasion of joyful recognition of the goodness of God. It was to be a long-drawn-out festivity beginning "from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to thy corn" (Deut. xvi. 9) and lasting till "thou hast (fully) gathered in thy corn and thy wine"—a festivity tempered with the sobrieties of worship, and therefore lacking the tendency to surfeit and weariness which belong to the mere revel of Gentile celebrations. They were to come and bring in their hand "a tribute of a free-will offering to God, according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee: and rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou and thy son and thy daughter and thy manservant and thy maidservant and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow that are among you in the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place His name there."

But the feast of the first-fruits was not to be confined to an acknowledgment of the goodness of God in nature: it was to be associated also with the history of their divine origin as a nation in the wonders of the exodus from Egypt. They were formally to bring that history into view in their observance of the feast. A speech was specially provided for them with which they were to address the priest on bringing the first-fruits for presentation. They were to say (Deut. xxvi. 2-10) "A Syrian ready to perish was my father; and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous; and the Egyptians evil entreated us and afflicted us and laid upon us hard bondage, and when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice and looked on our affliction and our labour and our oppression. And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with great terribleness and with signs and with wonders. And he hath brought us into this place and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey. And, now, behold I have brought the first-fruits of the land which thou, O Lord, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt worship the Lord thy God."

Thus, again, is the modern mood of mind rebuked that would class the Egyptian deliverance among myths and legends. Natural men can see a mild beauty in making the yearly harvest an occasion of thanksgiving: but to mix up with it an explicit acknowledgment of the Mosaic miracles is nauseous to their superior wisdom. There is no true reason at the bottom of their intellectual aversions. Harvests are lovely, but if we had only harvests to trust to for hope as to futurity, we should be in darkness. It is the overt participation of divine power in human affairs, as authenticated in Israel's history, that gives us that "strong consolation" of which Paul speaks, and therefore furnishes a reasonable ingredient in the festal celebrations of Israel—from none of which, indeed, was it ever absent.

But it is the special service in the tabernacle, in which the feast of the first-fruits came to a ceremonial focus, as we might say, in the hands of the priests, that more particularly calls for our attention at the present time. The particulars are set forth in Lev. xxiii. and Num. xxviii. The Israelites were neither to eat bread made from the new flour, nor eat parched corn or green ears of the ripening harvest "until the self-same day that an offering of first-fruits" was presented in the tabernacle (Lev. xxiii. 14). This was to consist of a sheaf to be waved by the priest before the Lord, to be followed by the offering "of a he lamb of the first year without blemish," both to be offered "on the morrow after" the first Sabbath of the harvest season. From this they were to count an interval of 50 days, or seven weeks and a day, by which time, the whole harvest would be gathered in, and then they were to bring—not a sheaf, but two loaves of the new flour baked with leaven: and these were to be waved by the priest before the Lord, and accompanied by the sacrifice of "seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock and two rams" for a burnt-offering of sweet savour. They were all first to be waved before the Lord: and then offered as a burnt-offering with their accompanying meat and drink-offerings (before considered): and followed by the sacrifice of "a kid of the goats for a sin-offering" (Lev. xxiii. 12-21).

Whatever undiscoverable significances may be concealed in these details, some things are too plain to be missed. Reserving for a moment their counterpart in Christ, and taking the proximate application first, what can be plainer than the teaching of the waved sheaf that it is God's pleasure that we should actively serve

Him in the use of the goodness He confers upon us? the sheaf representing the God-given bread of the field, and the waving signifying action, and the place—in the tabernacle before the Lord—denoting His service. This is the first thing that strikes the mind in contemplating the allegorical teaching of the ceremony. The second thing is still more apparent. Why should this expression of gratitude to God for creature mercies and willingness to consecrate their use to His service, be mixed up with the offering-up of slain animals?—seven lambs, a bullock, two rams, and a goat? Herein, as we have before seen, is the allegorical enunciation of a truth concerning the relations of God and man that is very distasteful to natural religionists of every kind: viz., that God will not be approached by sinners, even for the presentation of thanksgiving, apart from the acknowledgment of their position as proclaimed in blood-shedding, and of His righteousness and holiness in requiring this of them. But it is more. The animals offered were to be without blemish. It was a prophecy that God would provide an acceptable sacrificial approach in a man without sin, though bearing (in the nature to be sacrificed) the sin of all His people—Adam included. This prophecy centres in Christ, who proclaimed himself “the way,” and plainly declared, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

The ritual of the feast of first-fruits is, therefore, the enforcement of that most unpalatable truth,—that sinners are in no position to approach God even in harvest thanksgiving until invested with the name of him in whom sin was condemned, and by whom it was taken away. How they are to be invested with that name has been revealed in the teaching of the apostles. The belief and obedience of the gospel in baptism brings the obedient sinner into relation with him who was the antitype of all these animals. Without this relation, they are strangers and aliens—sharing the goodness of God in nature, “whereof all are partakers,” but without hope concerning the life to come; and without a standing in His presence for the loving communion of worship.

When men quarrel with this negative bearing of the divine institutions upon them, they act either in ignorance or forgetfulness of the holiness, majesty, and prerogative of God. They are like savages who would resent the enforcement of etiquette if they happened to stray into the courts or passages of a palace. Enlightenment recognises that man is unfit for fellowship with God, and gladly welcomes and conforms to the conditions which the

goodness of God has prescribed for the acquisition and enjoyment of so great an honour as to be "called the sons of God"—invited to come boldly to His throne for favour through Christ—and Christ alone.

In addition to these general significances, there is an interesting personal shadowing of Christ in the ordinances of the feast of first-fruits, and of the relation of his work to his people. Christ is expressly called "the first-fruits" in Paul's letter to the Corinthians: "Christ *the first fruits*" (1 Cor. xv. 23): "the first fruits of *them that slept*" (verse 20) which connects the subject with the resurrection. "The first that should rise from the dead" (Acts xxvi. 23): "the first begotten of the dead" (Rev. i. 5); "the first born of every creature" (Col. i. 18). Not only is Christ called the first-fruits, but the term is applied also to his people (James i. 18; Rev. xiv. 4). In this there might be confusion if we did not remember that in an important sense, he and they are one—one Christ in head and body.

But this is not the whole explanation. They are both the first-fruits, at two separate stages, recognised in the type. How they are literally so, we may discern as we look forward to the accomplishment of the purpose of God upon the earth. This accomplished purpose shows us the earth occupied by an immortal population as the result of the work of the Kingdom of God; and this immortal population, considered as a life-harvest, we perceive to have been preceded by two preliminary first-fruits of that harvest: Christ, as the individual victor over the grave, exalted to God's right hand to die no more; and the saints who are glorified at his coming and united to him, as a bride is to her husband, and associated with him in the work of rearing the rest of the family of God during the thousand years; they (Christ and the saints) are both first-fruits in relation to the harvest to be gathered in at the close of that period.

Now, in the type, there are two phases of the first-fruits which we shall probably not err in identifying with these two phases of the completed work of God upon earth. There is first, the single sheaf, at the beginning of the feast, to be waved before the Lord "on the morrow after the Sabbath," and offered with a single he lamb with meat and drink-offering; and then seven weeks afterwards, two loaves, made out of the flour yielded by the sheaves, and baked with leaven, and accompanied by the sacrifice of seven lambs, one bullock, two rams, and one kid of the goats.

The single sheaf we may take to be Christ personal : and the offering of a he lamb, his own sacrifice for himself as a fellow-sufferer with his people : the meat and drink-offering, the strength and gladness growing out of his painful submission to death. The "morrow after the Sabbath": the very period of the week—namely, on the morning of the first day of the week, Sabbath being past; that he rose and ascended to the Father (Jno. xx. 17). Exactly seven weeks afterwards, "when the day of Pentecost had fully come" (Acts ii. 1) that is, when the feast of the first-fruits had arrived—the second phase of the first-fruits was exhibited in the public divine endorsement of the friends of Christ by the out-pouring of the Spirit : fitly represented by *two leavened loaves*—*two* to represent their plurality as distinguished from the individual Christ : *loaves*, as a product of the sheaves, to signify the friends of Christ who are a product of him : and *leavened*, to denote that they are not "without blemish," as Christ was, but stand before God as *forgiven sinners*.

There is a little lack of chronological correspondence in so far as the sacrifice of Christ corresponded with the night of the passover, and not with the presentation of the first sheaf of harvest, which was seven weeks after. This presentation began the feast of weeks on "the day of Pentecost," and coincided, not with the individual Christ but with Christ in his body as represented by the company of his friends that "stood up with Peter and the rest of the apostles" on that memorable day. One would have expected that the presentation of the personal Christ would have corresponded with the presentation of the sheaf of first-fruits as the sacrifice of the antitypical lamb corresponded with the slaying of the passover ; and that the presentation of the Christ first-fruit community would have corresponded with the offering of the two loaves at the end of the Feast of Weeks, seven weeks afterwards. But, perhaps, there was design in a departure from chronological exactness which admitted of Christ and the passover coming into conjunction in point of time, and at the same time allowed of his synchronising in his people with the offering of the sheaf of first-fruits : for they are both one, and both described as first-fruits. Such a distribution of the meanings of the types in their fulfilment allowed of the right relative place being given to the next great annual celebration.

3. THE FEAST OF INGATHERING.—"Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, *after that thou hast gathered in thy*

corn and thy wine" (Deut. xvi. 13). This was the most elaborate and intricate of all the feasts of the year, combining equally with the others, the two elements of national gratitude for bountiful goodness, and the national recognition of Egyptian deliverance, but exercising Israel much more deeply and setting forth in much more detail the conditions of human acceptability with God, and the foreshadowing of His purpose to finally abolish all curse.

Noticeably, the *seventh* month was the month of its celebration—which of itself points to completeness and finish, and therefore, to the end of God's work. The first day of the month as the day of the new moon was already under the law a monthly observance, at which we looked in the last chapter, but in this seventh month, the first day appears to have been emphasised above the first days of the other months. Israel were commanded to observe it as "a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation," or gathering of the people, who were to do no secular work on that day, but to assemble in endorsement of the special offerings to be made in the tabernacle that day—at which we have already looked. Then after an interval of eight days—namely, on the tenth day of the month, they were to have a day of special consecration to God, a day of atonement, a day of solemn gathering, a day in which they were to refrain from ordinary employment, and concentrate their minds upon God in penitence, a day in which they were to "afflict their souls"—a fast day, in fact, from evening to evening. The law of the day was very stringent. "Whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work on that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people." Then in five more days, they were to take "boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook," and make booths, in which "all that are Israelites born shall dwell for seven days, that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths *when I brought them out of the land of Egypt*" (Lev. xxiii. 40-43).

This in the mellow days of autumn, in a warm climate like Syria, would be a pleasant sequel to the severe exercises of the first part of the feast. The annual encampment of the volunteers in August, which all who take part in it find to be such a season of zestful and healthful change, may give some idea of the delight that this feast of tabernacles or booths was calculated to afford :

only that instead of being limited to male adults, it embraced the whole population, and gave the families and even the servants a taste of the pleasure of a week's camping-out, with special commissariat supplies, under aromatic tree branches : and instead of being associated with horseplay and ribaldry, it was connected with the most ennobling exercises of the mind of which man is capable.

While Israel were to be seven days thus pleasantly encamped, a special series of sacrifices was to be offered in the tabernacle with a singular variation from day to day. On the FIRST DAY of the encampment in booths (15th of the month) the burnt-offering was to consist of 13 young bullocks, two rams, and 14 lambs, without blemish, with their appropriate meat and drink-offerings, and a kid of the goats for a sin-offering—besides the daily burnt-offering : on the SECOND DAY, the same, except that the number of young bullocks was to be 12, instead of 13 ; on the THIRD DAY, the same, except that the number of young bullocks was to be 11, instead of 12 ; and so on, the number of young bullocks diminishing by one each day, till the seventh day, when the number of the day and the number of the bullocks had come level—seven bullocks on the seventh day. Finishing on the eighth day with a grand assembly of the people, and only one bullock, one ram, *seven* lambs, and one goat.

We shall probably find the meaning of this in the contemplation of this feast of ingathering as the type of the final harvest of life eternal, of which Christ is the individual, and his people the collective first-fruits. To this harvest all the work of God has been working forward from the beginning. That it should be foreshadowed by *the last* of all the feasts of the year is fitting ; and that this feast should be held on *the seventh month* is in the same line of harmony, also that it should commence on the first day and last nearly the whole month, is striking. That it should begin with a joyful trumpet blast is suggestive of the great joy with which the arrival of the day of God will be hailed. That this should be succeeded by a day of affliction, in which every one should be bound on pain of death to take part, is in agreement with the revealed fact that after the joy caused to the people of God by the Lord's re-appearance in the earth and "the marriage supper of the Lamb," there will immediately ensue a time of trouble in which the nations of mankind will learn the righteousness of submission by the things they will suffer. And then the encamp-

ment in arboreal booths for seven days, during which they were to "rejoice before the Lord in the abundance of all good things which God had given them" is nothing but a splendid adumbration of the rest and gladness of the Kingdom of God following on the terrible events connected with its setting-up.

But what are we to make of the greater number of sacrifices offered in the tabernacle and the gradual dwindling in the number of young bullocks—more bustle, more elaborateness in this the last of all the feasts of the year, and yet a feature pointing to curtailment? We may see the meaning of this if we consider that the kingdom will be a time of much more activity in purely divine service than at any previous period of the world's history, and yet that as it draws to a close, the world is getting nearer the time when all sacrificial work of reconciliation—whether in type or antitype (for there will be both in the kingdom) will have served its purpose, and the seven bullocks (perfected work) will coincide with the seventh day (perfected time) and the work of God will be finished.

The grand assembly on the eighth and finishing day of the feast—when the sacrifices were reduced to *one* bullock, *one* ram, seven lambs, and *one* goat, may be taken to denote the crowning feast of worship and praise that will mark the close of the kingdom when the un-written in the book of life having been given over to the second death, there will remain none upon earth but the innumerable multitude of those who, during the whole history of man from Adam's expulsion from Eden downward, have been "foreknown, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified," according to the definition of the process by Paul in Rom. viii. 29-30. They are, thenceforth, the happy occupants of this noble planet for ever.

The sacrifices shrink to one in the final ceremony, because they are about to disappear, the lambs, however, remaining seven, because the lamb character (harmlessness, innocence, simplicity) is the perpetual basis of all: "charity never faileth." The bullock (human strength): and ram (the dignity of mankind): the goat (the self-assertion of the flesh) all vanish in the change which consumes and transmutes flesh and blood into spirit-nature: but the Lamb remains for ever the distinguishing symbol of the perfected community of the guileless and loving and rejoicing sons of the Lord God Almighty.



## CHAPTER XXII.—VOLUNTARY SERVICE.

IN addition to the regular services of the tabernacle, which we have passed under review—the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly ordinances—there were various occasions of voluntary service, of which particulars are specified, and all of which partook more or less of the typical character belonging to the national exercises.

The first was enacted before the erection of the tabernacle—and immediately after the ratification of the covenant of Sinai. It has a significance all its own. It related to the form of altar to be employed where as yet there was no altar of the detailed description included in the specifications of the tabernacle. As Christ is the antitype of the altar, it has a special bearing on the mode of his appearance in the flesh and on an important element of truth rejected by those who believe that Joseph was the natural father of Jesus.

It occurs immediately after the proclamation of the ten commandments from Sinai. “An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings and thy peace-offerings. . . . And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone, for *if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it*” (Ex. xx. 24-25). Speaking of Christ, Paul says, “We have an altar” (Heb. xiii. 10). Therefore, we study Christ in the typical altar of the law as well as in all its shadows. Earth or stone is of the earth. The altar-man must be of our nature; but the stone must not be dressed. It must not be shaped with any human tool. It must be in the shape received from the hand of God. Human manipulation would defile it. This is the declaration of the type.

The antitype is clear as noon-day. Man had nothing to do with the preparation of the Christ-altar. Jesus was the Son of God direct (Matt. i. 20; Luke i. 35; Isaiah vii. 14). Had he been the son of Joseph, he must needs have been what other men are—by nature a transgressor. He could not have been what he was—the lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Pet. i. 19-20); undefiled

and separate from sinners (Heb. vii. 26) ; without sin (Heb. iv. 15 ; 1 Jno. iii. 5). He was the earth and stone of human nature derived from Mary, and, therefore, physically weak and mortal because of ancestral sin, as she was : but through the absence of human paternity, there was a power in this physically weak nature of Adam to overcome which no other man possessed. It matters not whether we consider this power as the absence of the irresistible bias derivable from human procreation or the presence of " help " arising from the participation of the Holy Spirit in the inception of his being. The practical result was the same. He was not " defiled " by human manufacture. He was, by God Himself, " made unto us righteousness," as Paul says.

The beauty and the power of all this is lost to those who believe that Joseph, the husband of Mary, was the actual father of Jesus. It is a question if salvation itself is not lost to such : for salvation is more than once predicated upon our belief that he is the Son of God (1 Jno. iv. 15 ; Acts viii. 37 ; Jno. ix. 35 : iii. 16, 36). The unhappy thesis is based upon the supposition that Matt. i. and ii. and Luke i. and ii. are spurious. For this supposition, there are no real grounds. The Ebionite rejection of these chapters in the second century, on which the supposition is founded is in opposition to all reason, as has been shown over and over again. On the other hand, the divine origin of Jesus rests on grounds that are conclusive, even if Matthew and Luke had not been written.

The Mosaic shadow under consideration has powerful additional weight. What other meaning could there be to the intimation that the shaping of the stones of the altar by human tool would defile the altar and render it unfit as a means of acceptable approach ?

When the tabernacle was finished and consecrated, according to the summary of service contained in the last chapter of Exodus, it was placed at the disposal of all Israel for use in their individual capacity according as need should arise. The opening chapters of Leviticus supply the particulars for their guidance in various cases. One feature strikes the mind in connection with them all : the prominence given to " free-will " as their acceptable characteristic. " If any man of you bring an offering to the Lord . . . he shall offer it of *his own voluntary will*" (Lev. i. 2-3). " If ye offer a sacrifice of peace-offerings to the Lord, ye shall offer it *at your own will*" (xiv. 5). " When ye will offer a sacrifice

of thanksgiving unto the Lord, offer it *at your own will*" (xxii. 29). Hence also the expression "free-will offerings" of frequent occurrence (Lev. xxii. 21, 23 : xxiii. 38).

This touches a far-reaching principle—a principle that lies at the root of the problem of evil. Men have wondered in all generations why things should have gone so far wrong among men in view of the goodness and omnipotence of God. It is probably true that nothing has done so much to create unbelief as the inability to solve this difficulty. It is sufficient in one way to suspend judgment. This is not perfectly satisfactory, but there is a certain relief in it. A reflecting man will say to himself: "Things have not always been as they are upon the earth, and they certainly will not always be as they are. My days are too short and my experience too limited to enable me to judge rightly of this problem. There is probably a solution I have not dreamt of." But though there is a certain easement in this line of thought that may save a man from the absurd alternative of atheism, it is far short of the peace that comes with discernment of the true explanation. This explanation has been supplied in the Scriptures. The metaphysician may go behind it, or sap and mine underneath it and perform the juggler's feat of appearing to obscure the obvious, and to establish the uncertain. But the position practically remains untouched. He may reason the superficial into a state of doubt as to whether the sun exists ; but the luminary comes all the same every morning, and the seasons follow its course, and the metaphysician himself is gladdened by its pouring rays. So he may ingeniously impeach the Bible account of the existence of evil, but he cannot disestablish it, or affect the course of events. He cannot argue evil away, and he cannot give a reasonable explanation of it. He stands convicted as a philosophic trifler. Wisdom turned to foolishness is no new phenomenon. Facts are what wise men deal with

The fact of evil is staggering, but it is a fact and must have a rational meaning, seeing the universe, as the deepest thinkers all acknowledge, is conducted on the principle of reason. We are on the track of its discovery when we touch this phrase "free-will," "his own voluntary will." Apart from the phrase, the thing exists. There is in man the power of deciding how he shall act. His liberty of decision is governed by circumstances, truly : (he cannot stay in a sinking ship unless he choose to drown). Still, he has the power of adjusting himself to circumstances. He can do or

not do. He can choose or refuse. He is under no constraint. The reasons before his mind may constrain his choice : but his choice is his choice because of the reasons and not because of any compulsion brought to bear. When the outbreak of fire in the house makes him run into the street, his running into the street is his own act. Nobody forces him. He is a free agent. This is the primary fact in the case which sophistry cannot alter, though it may raise a fog before the eyes of the sophisticated. The common-sense of universal mankind, including our friends the sophists, recognizes the fact in all the practical relations of life.

Now, it will be found that this fact (so distinctly recognised by the law of Moses) gives the clue to the mighty problem of evil. To see how, we must take the Creator and not the created point of view. We must consider what are the aims of God in the development of the earth and its inhabitants. It must be evident that the feelings of man can afford no clue. Man's feelings are limited to his own little self, and generated by the infinitesimal horizon of his individual view. Yet it is down here where the flounderings take place. Ascending to the divine point of view, we get away from the flounderings. We have it revealed that God has made man "for His (God's) own pleasure." That God should have pleasure astounds our philosophic friend. We may "leave him alone." The reverse state of things would be far more astounding. Where has man got what little capacity for pleasure he possesses? David's enquiry, "He that hath formed the eye, shall he not see?" is quite to the point.

Now, how and in what can man give God pleasure? Not by bodily strength, as it is written, "God delighteth not in the strength of a horse : he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man." It is possible for us to conceive that mere mechanical energy would not afford pleasure to God : it does not afford pleasure to man, who is made in His image : why should it to God? What does afford Him pleasure? "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him : in them that hope in his mercy." "Will the Lord be pleased with ten thousands of rams?" "To obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams." "The Lord taketh pleasure in the righteous." "To this man will I look that is humble and contrite in heart, and trembleth at my word." "My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The secret of the Lord's pleasure, as expressed in these cases, lies in the thing meant by the Mosaic phrase : "his own voluntary

will." "Obedience," free and uncompelled—love and worship constrained only by discernment of what is "due" on the part of created intelligent beings, is the thing in which he delights. Does not reason admire this? We are in His image. What higher enjoyment is possible to man than the spontaneous appreciation of those who are enlightened? Should we enjoy the deferential genuflexions of wax figures worked by machinery? Could we find pleasure even in the subservience of human beings who were mesmerised into it by animal magnetism or coerced into it by authority? In these considerations, we get a glimpse of the reasons why God's highest pleasure should be derivable from the free worship of independent intelligence. To make it acceptable, He has to bestow the independence.

And here is where the door has been opened for evil, and where have come in the "long ages of delay" that defer but cannot prevent the final triumph. The power to act independently with which it was necessary we should be endowed, brings along with it the power to act wrongly, the power to act disobediently, and, therefore, the power to bring about that prevalence of evil which God appoints as the corollary of sin. This power has been so used. It is a matter of history. It is no matter of theory that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now." We can take any country—any nation, any man to witness that man is subject to vanity everywhere—that the healthiest and wealthiest are no exception, though they have certain momentary mitigations. The fact of the matter is unquestionable. The history of the matter may be varied by different imaginations, but the truth of the matter is one.

Unbelievers guess: the Bible reveals. The Bible being true, we listen, "by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin." By another, both will depart out of the world. The thing is in process, "Christ the first-fruits: afterwards, they that are Christ's at his coming." The process is slow because the result requires time—the voluntary subordination of human wills to God (in the midst of and in spite of the evil) by means of His testimony acting upon the understanding. The result finally reached in the redemption of an obedient multitude will obliterate and justify the evil through which it will have been attained. At last, the song will be true—

"In Christ the tribes of Adam boast  
More blessings than their father lost."

This revealed employment of man's "own voluntary will" in the achievement of the divine object in the creation of the earth and man, is as much in harmony with every revealed principle in the case as it is in conflict with the gloomy tenets of Calvinism. If God purpose to fill the earth with His glory, He employs means to accomplish that purpose. The means and the purpose are not incompatible. If He foresee the result of the means, His foresight does not displace the operation of the means. If He allow man to fall, it is that man may know that he cannot stand without God. If He humble man in a deep acquaintance with evil, it is that He may exalt man without danger of usurpation or ingratitude. If evil reigns for a season, it is that the good which will extinguish it may be appreciated, and that its dependence on the power of God may be discerned and joyfully recognised in the songs of everlasting joy that will yet fill the earth with His praise.

As for the myriads of sinners that fit across the stage of transient being during the process and disappear, they are a needful accessory to the work, and their employment thus is no offence to reason. Human sentiment may be offended by such an apparently useless use of flesh and blood ; but it is only the objection of children who object to the slaughter of animals for the supply of the table. If men were immortal souls, there would be a difficulty, especially with an endless hell in the background—worse than all Papal Inquisitions (and they were diabolical enough). It would be something more than a difficulty : it would be a maddening enormity. But recognising man at his intrinsic value (or rather, valuelessness) both as manifest to experience and testified in the Scriptures, any difficulty exists only in human imagination. Man is a mere passing form of divine power, and when out of harmony with God, he is no more than the vegetation or the summer insects, which are also but forms of His power. "All nations before Him (in this relation) are as nothing : they are counted unto Him less than nothing and vanity" (Is. xl. 17). When they vanish in death, they are as a dream, "whom Thou rememberest no more" (Ps. lxxxviii. 5). Hence, in the bright morning of God's perfected work on earth, when the stirring of resurrected obedient men of all ages fills the earth as with the holiday joy of children, the absence of the ungodly will not only be no drawback, but a contributive element of well-being : and their recollected existence in dark ages past will be no burden on the spirits of the chosen in view of their clean disappearance from creation. "Evil doers shall be cut off,

but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be, yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace. . . . Wait on the Lord and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land : when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it " (Psa. xxxvii. 9-11, 34).

The place Mosaicly assigned to man's " own voluntary will " has also an illuminative bearing on the question of responsibility and judgment. These two things (that a man should be held accountable according to his knowledge and that he should receive " the due reward of his deeds ") are as distinctly affirmed in the teaching of the apostles and prophets as they are ignored or denied in the current thoughts of men. There is no need to prove this, as the work has often been done in other publications. What is called for is the discernment of their logical relation to the requirements of man's " own voluntary will " in the act of divine subjection. It is sufficient to suggest the thought, for it to be seen in its full force. How could a man be held responsible if he did not possess the power of compliance with the divine will? And on what principle of justice could the Lord propose to " reward every man according to his deeds " if those deeds were beyond the control of his own volition?

True it is that a man in a pure state of nature has no developed will that he can control. He is as much the slave of blind impulse as an animal. But there is no question as to man in this state : the Scriptures declare and experience proves that such men are " as the beasts that perish " (Psa. xlix. 20). Men are not accountable when they are thus blind and beyond the reach of law (Jno. ix. 41 ; Rom. v. 13). The law of responsibility comes into operation only where men are sufficiently enlightened to know (Jno. iii. 19 ; Jas. iv. 17). That such should be held responsible is a recognition of " voluntary will " as the basis of human character. Whoever would have questioned such a palpably manifest truth if it had not been for the bewildering effects of the Greek dogma of the immortality of the soul, and the resultant speculations of metaphysical theologians, who have reasoned themselves and their disciples into the most absurd hypotheses of human action, and involved, not only the Bible but all human life, present and future, in an impenetrable cloud. The fatalism of the Turk and the gloom of the Calvinist are the practical fruits of the nonsensical speculations of

the schoolmen dignified by the name of philosophy. The natural recoil from such an intellectual nightmare is seen in the scientific libertinism of the present day, which in its exclusive study of the microscopic raw material of life forgets the huge life-ocean in which all the small phenomena subsist, and the practical results at which all life manipulations are aimed by the Supreme Intelligence of the Universe, as illustrated in the history of divine intervention in the affairs of men.

All this may appear much of a digression from the theme of "individual approaches" to the tabernacle of the congregation. It is not really a digression. The subject lies at the root of all such approaches, and is placed in the fore-front of them in the statement (Lev. i. 3) that the man offering sacrifice "shall offer it of his own voluntary will." On this foundation, we may proceed with profit to consider the various forms of individual approach invited





### CHAPTER XXIII.—THE MALE ELEMENT IN SACRIFICE.

THE form of individual approach was prescribed : it was not left to taste or inclination. A man disposed to bring an offering would be in the mood to ask, "What shall I offer?" just as a person inclined to make a present would ask, "What shall I give?" A person wishing to make a present would desire to offer what would be acceptable. In the case of a human being, it would not matter much, because a gift of any kind would be likely to be in some degree acceptable : but in the case of a human being approaching God, it is different — the relation of the parties being so different. The difference is in some degree illustrated by the difference between a common neighbour and a royal personage. Anything might do to give to the former, but only what court etiquette would allow would be permissible for the latter. If so with a human dignitary, how much more with God, the Creator, the Holy, and the sinned against ?

"If any man of you would bring an offering to the Lord, ye shall bring"—thus and so : not anything that might occur to the offerer, but that which is required. Cain brought of the fruits of the ground : Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock : God accepted the latter, but not the former (Gen. iv. 3-5). It is probable that Abel's offering was a conformity to revealed requirement, while Cain's would be in accordance with his own ideas of what was suitable. If it was "by faith" that "Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain" (Heb. xi. 4), we have to remember that faith acts upon revealed requirements.

The Israelite desiring to make an offering to the Lord was to bring it "of the cattle, of the herd, and of the flock" (Lev. i. 2). It must be a living creature put to death in the act of offering, with the blood poured out at the altar foot. The explanation was given afterwards : "It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul"—"for the life of the flesh is in the blood : and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for

your souls" (Lev. xvii. 11). The pouring out of the blood was the pouring out of the life, and therefore an acknowledgment on the part of the offerer that he was worthy to die. It was a typical declaration of that righteousness of God which was proclaimed in Christ in the one great offering as the basis of forgiveness (Rom. iii. 25-26).

"If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer A MALE WITHOUT BLEMISH" (Lev. i. 3). The sex-feature is prominent in all the appointments of the law. The numbering of Israel applied to males only (Num. i.). So with the law of the first-born (Ex. xiii. 12), "every male shall be the Lord's." So with the three annual feasts: "three times a year shall all your males appear before the Lord" (Ex. xxiii. 17; Deut. xvi. 16). The seal of the covenant was imprinted in the flesh of the males only (Gen. xvii. 10). On the other hand, the female, in cases of vow, was to be assessed at a smaller value than the male (Lev. xxvii. 4-7), and in the case of the birth of a daughter, the mother was to be a longer time in purification (Lev. xii. 7). A female animal could not be used for sacrifice except for peace-offering (Lev. iii. 1, 6); or for the sin of one of the common people (iv. 28, 32; v. 6).

As all these things have an allegorical significance, we naturally desire to penetrate the meaning. Where shall we find it? We are probably not far away from it when we read "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection . . . for Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression (1 Tim. ii. 11-14). "The man is the image and the glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman (taken out) of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man" (1 Cor. xi. 7-9). Here are historical facts and moral responsibilities at the beginning of human history that in-weave themselves with the whole work of God with the race. Of course, the modern school, with their "new woman" racing hither and thither and posing in attitudes and relations for which she is unfitted by nature, will rebel against these divine appointments, Mosaically recorded. They might as well fight against gravitation. Woman was secondary in the purpose for which she was formed, and she was influential in deflecting man from the path of obedience which he probably would have observed if left to himself. If God has chosen to

preserve the memorial of these facts in the constitution of things He has established among men, who can make demur?

Man has the first place all the way through, especially in the one great institution that brings man back to God in reconciliation. It was to be in a man and not in a woman that the righteousness of God was to be declared for the putting away of sin by forgiveness. It was to be by the obedience of one man that justification was to be provided for believing and obedient sinners, and not by the obedience of one man and woman, although it was by the disobedience of one man and woman that death entered the world—not that the law was laid down to Eve:—it was to Adam the command was addressed: “Thou shalt not eat”: but Eve considered herself included (Gen. iii. 2), and was, in fact, included as one flesh with Adam (ii. 23). So in the case of the last Adam—the remover of sin: his bride, the Lamb’s wife, shares the victory achieved by him when it has been decided at the judgment-seat who constitute such.

In both cases, it is the male that is the subject of direct operation. Though there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus, it is by a man and not by a woman that life has come, though she is instrumentally contributory: for as she was the beguiler of Adam, to the death and ruin of both of them, so she is made his rescuer, in being made use of in a virgin descendant of the House of David to bring the Saviour into the world. Male and female are thus co-ordinate in the scheme without interfering with the headship appointed in the beginning. As Paul beautifully expresses it in his letter to the Corinthians: “Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman nor the woman without the man in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman, but all things of God” (xi. 11). There is congruity in all the ways of God when the relations established by His law are observed. Man is the head, but only for nurture and protection and honour of the woman. Woman is man’s equal fellow-heir of the salvation that is offered in Christ, but not to usurp the position that belongs to man both by natural constitution and divine appointment. Man is for strength, judgment, and achievement. Woman is for grace, sympathy, and ministrations. Between them, they form a beautiful unit—“heirs together of the grace of life.”

Modern theories are the mere thoughts of a naturalism that rejects the law of God, and as such can find no sympathy with

those who stand in the faith of Christ. Though inspired by naturalism, they are contrary to nature—which is an intelligible anomaly. Naturalism is the system of sentiment and opinion formulated by the brain of man unenlightened by the knowledge of divine ways. Nature is the constitution imparted to creation by divine wisdom and power in the beginning. Divine law is in harmony with the latter, but is at the antipodes of the other. We have to realise that there is such a thing as folly in the thoughts of man—due to the fact that man is by nature ignorant of all things and has to learn. Wisdom belongs to the mind of God alone. Recognising this, we are prepared to look round and ask—which is which?

Human folly on the subject of sex has extended even to the subject of God. It has recently revived the idea of “the divine feminine” (*Scientific Religion*, Laurence Oliphant). The idea is that there is in God a female element of which woman is the expression; and that as this element is in God fused with the masculine element and forming a harmonious unity, so it ought to be and was originally with man before woman was “taken out of” him: the thought is that he was man and woman in one person, and that *he* became harsh as the result of abstraction of the feminine, and *she* became effeminate through the abstraction of the masculine! What shall we say? That such an idea is the offspring of speculative presumption. There are things quite too high for the human intellect; and the constitution of the God-head is certainly one of them, and for the matter of that, so is the constitutional differentiation of the sexes, or of species. What in the abstract constitutes the difference between one creature and another? Facts only we can note. Their origin or subsistence in the metaphysical sense is beyond the human intellect.

One fact is plain to natural observation—that all creation is one stuff in different order—(in harmony with Bible revelation that all things are of one spirit, which is one God, with detailed aspects revealed). The natural fact is obvious in the case of a zoological collection, which might be started with the very young of each species. There might be 500 creatures—great and small, and of every variety—from the elephant to the dormouse: from the hippopotamus to the tadpole: from the albatross to the humming bird: from the whale to the stickleback. Let the specimens be all at the infant stage of each species, and let a few human babies be included. They are all fed from without with the

same food (in the main) and the same water. If they are not fed, they die, and you will have a collection of dead little things that will soon disappear in dust. But you feed them, and they grow, and at the end of a certain length of time, you have big creatures of all sorts—the elephant weighing tons, the lions and tigers hundredweights, the birds and monkeys pounds. Where has all this living stuff come from? It is the straw and the oats and the butcher's meat and the water that you have brought from the outside, turned into hippopotamus, giraffe, crocodile, as the case may be. These food stuffs have turned into different creatures according to the mouths into which you have placed them to be ground up. What you put into the mouth of a lion has turned into lion: what you put into the mouth of a monkey has turned into monkey: what you put into the mouth of an emu has turned into emu, and so on. Go back to the beginning of the process, and you had a mountain of food-stuff and a congregation of tiny mites of creatures (which a little way back were no creatures at all). At the end of the process, your mountain of food-stuff is gone, and you have this variety of creatures, great and small.

This may seem irrelevant to the subject. It is by no means so. The same stuff differently organised makes different creatures. Woman is different from man only on this same principle: the same stuff in a different order. A boy-baby and a girl-baby brought up together in the same house and fed on the same food will, by-and-bye, be full-grown man and woman—both made out of the same stuff, and yet differing by reason of the differing constitution imparted by the organic law at the bottom of things. The same soil, rain, and sunshine in the garden will produce roses and cabbages side by side—for the same reason. They are the same stuff—the same material—the same forces differently ordered or arranged by the organic stamp, bent, or bias, appertaining respectively to each.

The comparisons may seem degrading, but they belong to truth. When men have accounted for the organic impress stamped on seed of all kinds in man and beast, they touch the root of the phenomenon, and will touch God. But they are held off. We cannot by searching find out God. We see He is there, but only as a mystery. He has to reveal Himself, and He has done so. All we have to do is to accept the revelation, and not go speculating about divine feminines to account for woman, like the heathen who invented a god of war to account for war; a god of love to

account for love! and so on—professing themselves wise, thus becoming fools. We might as well, like the Egyptians, speculate about the divine feline to account for cats; the divine ape-ine to account for monkeys, &c.

God is one, and He has no peer: as He says, “There is no god with me: I lift up my hand to heaven and say, I live for ever.” He has no divine feminine with Him.

Jehovah dwells alone,  
No equal can He see—  
The unchangeable, the Mighty God,  
To all eternity.

But He is all we could wish Him to be. What of loveliness we may conceive as appertaining to the feminine, dwells in Him: for He created the feminine. The fountain of it is in Himself. It is His invention. He is love and pity infinite, but also wisdom unerring; constructiveness, superb: and executiveness, terrible to the point of being “a consuming fire”; vast and sublime in all His ways and all His thoughts: as much above the thoughts and ways of man as heaven is above the earth. “He is a great King”: not a queen—but more lovely than any queen we ever imagined. He is the perfect masculine of which man in his best form is a poor reflex;—and no reflex at all, when he is harsh, and churlish, and rude, and selfish. Because God, as the eternal masculine, is head, therefore, man, the image of His glory, is head in the human sphere; and a man and not a woman, the Saviour; and, therefore, a male and not a female animal, to be chosen from the herd as his type.

The offerer, bringing “a burnt sacrifice of the herd—a male *without blemish*” (in typification of the perfect obedience of Christ) was to “put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering”—at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation, with the assurance that it should “be accepted for him to make atonement for him” (Lev. i. 4). Putting his hand on the animal’s head was an act of identification. As we read in another case: “Aaron shall lay *both his hands upon the head of the live goat*, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, *putting them upon the head of the goat*, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness” (Lev. xvi. 21). For the offerer, therefore, to “put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering” was to transfer himself to the sacrifice, as it were, and to acknowledge himself justly dealt with in whatever

should befall the animal. He was then to "kill the bullock," and the priests were to sprinkle the blood upon the altar, and to cut up the body and place the severed pieces on the altar for consumption.

Paul says (Heb. x. 4) : "The blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin," but "it was a figure for the time then present" of the "one offering" that could and did, even "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (x. 10) memorialized in the breaking of bread : "my body given for you" : "my blood shed for the remission of the sins of many." We identify ourselves with "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" when we are "baptised into his death." We confess our sins, and offer ourselves to God in him, and are forgiven for his sake, in whose crucifixion "sin was condemned in the flesh" : in the shedding of whose blood, "the righteousness of God was declared." The testimony of the apostolic word is that it was so (Rom. viii. 3 : 25-26) ; and the fact that Jesus was the seed of David according to the flesh shows us how it could be so. Here we should rest in "faith in his blood." There is a danger of men reasoning themselves out of the verities of the Gospel by using their own thoughts as natural men against the appointments of God.

The same routine was to be observed in the case of a sheep or goat (Lev. i. 10). It was to be a male without blemish—fit type of the man without sin. The inwards and legs were to be washed with water before offering, which points to preparation for sacrifice. The Lord was prepared for sacrifice during the 33½ years of his mortal life. The washing with water we saw in the type of Aaron to be the type of the cleansing operation of the Spirit—in power and in doctrine. Applied to the inwards, it signified the purification of the heart, or "inner man" : applied to the legs, the making clean of the life or "walk and conversation."

That the Lord should be the subject of such a process is foreign to the thoughts of such as have derived their ideas from the idealisms of Romish and Protestant theology : but it is the teaching of the word both in type and antitype—in psalms and prophecy—as we have already seen. The Lord Jesus was human nature taken hold of by the Spirit, and morally washed both in the act of his begettal and in the moral operation in his mental development afterwards, while physically Adam's nature unchanged. Thus washed as to mind, while the heir of death as to nature, he was fitted, in the arrangements of God, to perform that wonderful achievement of destroying through death, that having the power

of death, and delivering them (believing in him) who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. ii. 14). If men have a difficulty in understanding this, it is not a wonder, considering that it is a divine arrangement with divine aims—both of which are liable to be unintelligible to the mere mind of the flesh.

If the burnt sacrifice was to be of feathered creatures, a turtle dove or young pigeon might be brought (Lev. i. 14)—fitting type in their harmlessness, of the Son of God—"holy, harmless, and undefiled"—which a vulture or an eagle or an owl would not have been. Death (the appointed necessity in the case) was to be inflicted instantaneously in the wringing off of the head—a violent wrench, but succeeded in a moment by the healing balm of unconsciousness. (The Lord's sufferings were intense, but short-lived.) The creature's blood was to be wrung out by the side of the altar (the indispensable element of every sacrifice). "The blood is the life": "without the shedding of blood, no remission of sin," because "the wages of sin is death," and "all have sinned," except the sacrificial man, the Son of God, who is touched only indirectly—by descent from Adam, as to nature: by the mode of his death, as to law: and touched so, that he might die for us.

Angel or beast or un-Adamic man could not "die for us," because the dying was not to be a punishing the innocent in the room of the guilty, but an establishing of the divine supremacy in righteousness as the basis of favour in forgiveness in the case of all such as see and believe and submit. The idea may be subtle but not invisible to spiritual discernment. If only few understand it, it is only because the majority judge of it as a transaction between man and man, instead of the high etiquette of heaven in receiving sinners unto life eternal.

"Crop and feathers" were to be cast aside among the ashes as the mere adjuncts of life before sacrifice—temporary and not needed in sacrifice—such as the Lord's clothing distributed among Pagan soldiers, or his occupation as a carpenter, or his flesh-relation to the family of Mary—cast all aside when the moment came to lay down his life. All these belong to "the place of the ashes" in the widest sense.

The body was to be cloven but not parted asunder—in token that the Lord's sacrifice was only to be carried as far as the spiritual requirements of the case required: crucifixion, but not bodily destruction: wounds, but not mutilation: blood shedding, but no

bone-breaking : death, but no disappearance in a dishonoured grave, as would have been the case had the Lord's body been cast in the ordinary course into the local Gehenna as that of a condemned criminal.

The whole process of the Lord's death and burial was so guarded as (while giving to mankind every security as to the fact of his death, and every evidence of a complete conformity to the law of sacrifice, as a shedding of blood for the remission of sins), to fence off all needless humiliation or outrage. A short three days in a new and honourable tomb, and then the body that had been impaled revived in healing life, without having experienced dismemberment or disintegration, or the humiliation of decomposition. Changed by the Spirit, it ascended to the Father, "a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord."





#### CHAPTER XXIV.—MEAT-OFFERINGS AND PEACE-OFFERINGS.

IT was one of many pleasing features of the system of divine service established by the law of Moses that a man could give to God a portion of what he (the man) required for his own peculiar use : that is, if he felt moved to do so by a sense of gratitude or desire to do special honour to God. Some things were compulsory, but this was not : it was left to the spontaneous action of love, while yet enjoined as a thing expedient : “ Honour the Lord with thy substance, and the first-fruits of all thine increase.” Room was made for meat offerings : that is, food-offerings—offerings of “ fine flour,” or “ cakes of fine flour,” whether “ baken in the oven ” or pan, or fried in a frying-pan (Lev. ii. 1, 4, 5, and 7).

There is something very beautiful in this idea of a man making God a partaker of the man's own plenty. How agreeable to social feeling for friend to send to friend a portion from one's own table : what closer act of communion could there be ? How pleasing that a man should be able to do this with God. He might truly feel as David expressed himself in a larger matter, “ Of thine own have we given unto thee.” Still, in a sense, God parts with His property in a thing when He gives it to a man : and, therefore, He puts it into the man's power to indulge the pure pleasure of making a gift to God. Such a gift offered in an enlightened spirit would be a source of the highest pleasure it is possible for a created being to enjoy. It is like having God a guest at your own table. But how could such a thing be ? It would seem in the nature of things impossible. Man could not have imagined how it could be done unless God had revealed the way. He did so in the Mosaic type of meat - offerings, in the ordinances of which we learn some excellent lessons for our own case.

1.—Every meat-offering was to be brought to the altar by the priest (verse 8). Not otherwise could the Israelite offer an acceptable gift to God. Not otherwise could he take God into his domestic fellowship by food-offering. This was easy to understand

in the literal and typical. It would be easy to understand in the antitypical if it were not for the obscuring fogs of human thought and sentiment. Christ is both priest and altar: man has no standing apart from him. A man cannot offer acceptable gifts to God except through and in him. Christ is THE WAY, as he proclaimed, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." There is no other way of approach to God. A man is not fit to approach on his own merit. He is an unjustified sinner till clothed with the name of Christ in the belief and obedience of the truth. He is not acceptable till then. He is like a person under displeasure at court. He is not fit to offer gifts. Let men give themselves first in acceptable reconciliation, and then their gifts will be acceptable on the altar. They are not acceptable away from the altar: and they cannot be offered on the altar (Christ) unless the priest (Christ) put them there; and this he will only do for those who become members of his household by incorporation with his name.

2. Every meat-offering had to be almost drowned in oil; which, as we have seen, is the type of joy. "Serve the Lord with gladness," "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." A gift given to God with regret, or with only half a heart, lacks an important condition of acceptability. Joy belongs to God. "Strength and gladness are in his presence." The constant summons to His people is to "Rejoice." "Be glad in the Lord, ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye upright in heart." His purpose is to impart everlasting joy to His redeemed. If He puts them to grief now, it is only that they may be prepared. "He doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men." He does not intend sorrow to "sullen o'er the sombre sky" for ever, even now. He has no pleasure in penances and asceticisms. "Is this the fast that I have chosen," saith He, "a day for a man to afflict his soul, to bow down his head like a bulrush, to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen—to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free?" (Isaiah lviii. 5). It is only where the wickedness of neglecting Him prevails — when "there is no truth nor mercy nor knowledge of God in the land"—that the Lord God calls for "fasting, with weeping and mourning," telling the sinners to "be afflicted and mourn and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness." To those who serve Him

in love, He is a sun and shield—a fortress and a high tower—the rock of their salvation—in whom they are called upon to rejoice. Their meat-offerings were liable to be sad if not soaked in oil. Good things He “hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them who believe and know the truth” (1 Tim. iv. 3). “He giveth them all things richly to enjoy” (1 Tim. vi. 17). Therefore, they have nothing in common with the gloomy religion of the cloister and the cell. They are God’s free and glad men who rejoice in His bounty and render back to Him, through Christ, free-will offerings soaked in oil.

3. Every meat-offering was to be garnished with frankincense. This has passed into universal recognition as the type of praise and commendation. Every gift must be offered with praise. Men like praise, and so does God; but there is this difference: men have no claim to praise because they have received from God whatever they have: whereas God is entitled to praise because all excellence expressed or manifest in any way in heaven or earth is but the reflection or incorporation of that which is innate with Him. God has given us the capacity to enjoy praise in subordinate relations; He never intended it to exclude praise that belongs only to Him. Where it does so, men are an offence to Him. “Of Him and through Him and to Him are all things.” It is, therefore, no mawkish cringe, but the attitude of true reason to say, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory.” It is no mere pietism that Paul utters, but the inculcation of robust good sense when he says, “Let no man glory in men: but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” The words are words of pure and undiluted reason that say, “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom: let not the mighty man glory in his might: let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth ME” (Jer. ix. 23). The day of pure goodness upon earth will never be till the earth is filled with His glory (His praise) as the waters cover the sea—a covering so complete as only to correspond with the mystic scene which John witnessed in Patmos: “and every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb, for ever.”

4. Every meat-offering had to be “seasoned with salt” (Lev. ii. 13). “Thou shalt not suffer the salt of the covenant of

thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering. With all thine offerings, thou shalt offer salt." This was part of the literal directions with which it would be the pleasure of every faithful Israelite to comply. The meaning of it is not far out of the way. Salt arrests decomposition, and preserves for use and for savoury use. It therefore stands for the opposite of corruption in nature and nauseousness of taste. It would represent sound, wholesome savoury principle. Jesus uses it in this sense: "Have salt in yourselves," but adds he, in depreciation of a mere formal godliness, "if the salt have lost its saltness, it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be trodden under foot of men." To require salt in all meat-offerings was therefore an intimation that their acceptability depends upon their being offered with a hearty, pleasant-tasting, zestful, loving intelligence. A listless, savourless, formal, dead compliance with custom is of no pleasure to God or man.

In this we may see the force of the expression, "the salt of the covenant of thy God." In the type, the literal salt was so designated: but why? It is one of the shadows. The substance is to be found in the state of mind, which is one of the conditions which God exacts as a ground of covenant with man. The saltiness of a moral zest, a quick, enlightened earnestness, is a very condition of the covenant. The whole ground is covered by the precept: "My son, give me thine heart," expanded in the words, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and again in the exhortation, "Be not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding": "Seek wisdom, seek understanding": "When wisdom is pleasant to thy soul, then shalt thou find favour." The principle in its latter application finds expression in the strong words of Christ on the subject of loving him to the extent of hating our own lives. It is a reasonable requirement of the divine service that men be hearty in it as the result of a love that springs from discernment. Its perfected form in the day of the true "immortals" will show us a community animated to its finger-tips with the glow of this moral and intellectual beauty.

5. "No meat-offering which ye shall offer unto the Lord shall be made with *leaven*." Why leaven—the principle of fermentation—should be employed to represent evil, we are not informed. That it is so employed is beyond question, as Paul's expression shows: "The leaven of *malice and wickedness*" (1 Cor. v. 8). It is probably because it is a self-propagating

thing, and tends by the process of gaseous cellularization to change and deteriorate the constitution of the substance it acts upon. A thing that is leavened is inflated and on the road to corruption. Leaven, therefore, offers a considerable analogy to the operations of "malice and wickedness," which are of spontaneous generation, so far as the workings of the brain are concerned: and which, if once allowed a lodgment, spread and spread till the whole mind or a whole community is clouded by their influence.

At all events, here is the express intimation by type, that an act of liberality to God is of no acceptability in His eyes if it is at all inspired by a wicked mind. It might seem as if such an inspiration could not attach to such an act. Both experience and Scripture indication are decisive in the opposite direction. I have known—any of us may have known—acts of ostensibly religious service performed in the spirit of acrimony and jealousy and strife. As "men abhorred the offering of the Lord" under the iniquitous administration of Eli's sons, so the ordinances of apostolic assembly have been made to stink in the hands of carnal emulation. The Scriptures speak of "the sacrifice of the wicked being (in any case) an abomination to the Lord, how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind!" The presence of leaven in the meat-offering deals, therefore, with a case by no means hypothetical. Its prohibition is the typical enforcement of the numerously otherwise asserted principle that God accepts gifts and approaches, only when tendered in the meek spirit of a righteous obedience. Even their being offered on the altar, with a plentiful soaking of oil, did not secure acceptance if leaven was in the flour of the offering; of which we see the parallel in the thought that even being in Christ with gladness is not enough for acceptability with God if malice find lodgment in the heart.

6. Honey also was forbidden in the meat-offerings (Lev. ii. 11). What can this mean? Honey is sweet to human taste, and stands even in the ordinary intercourse of men for all that is of self-gratifying character. That it should be banished from the altar along with leaven stands in striking contrast to the appointment of bitter herbs as an ingredient in the passover sacrifice. It is probably the obverse of the same idea. Self-denial is an indispensable part of divine submission, so self-gratification is a prohibited element. But this has to be applied with qualifications. It is the extreme application of this principle

that has led to the sterile asceticisms of ecclesiastical practice. There are enjoyments permitted. How could it be otherwise? You cannot breathe or walk in the sunshine, or eat or drink or sleep without enjoyment if you are in health. "The tender mercy of the Lord is over all His works." He designs nothing but pure joy at the last.

But there are enjoyments forbidden: there are mortifications enjoined. Here is where the exclusion of the honey comes in. The law of the Lord is the regulator on all points. For want of this discrimination, many an honest soul is in a state of slavish fear and restraint which is wholly without cause. I have known such, in fear to enjoy their meals, in forgetfulness of the fact that the bounties of the table are "created," as Paul says, "to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." Pleasure-seeking, in the gratification of "the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life," appears to be the antitypical honey which is out of place on the altar of the Lord. These may be summarised in the phrase "self-complacency"—which is odious even in human intercourse, and, therefore, much more out of place in the service of God. It is this phase of self-contemplation and self-enjoyment that appears to be identified with the figurative use of honey in the Proverbs: "It is not good to *eat much honey*: so for men to *search their own glory* is not glory" (xxv. 27). This would suggest that the thing condemned in the typical prohibition of honey from the meat-offering was self-glory. It is certain that for a man to come in this spirit to God will ensure repulse. The one thing required by His glorious majesty and called for in true reason, is the mental attitude more than once defined by Him in the words: "Humble and contrite of heart and that trembleth at my word."

When all the conditions were perfect, the meat-offering was to be handed to the priest. What became of it then? Part of it was to be burnt on the altar for a memorial of the offerer, and what was left was to be appropriated by the priest (Lev. ii. 9-10). But the whole of it was reckoned "most holy," and accepted for the offerer. The priest and the altar represented the two departments of the divine service: the visible and the invisible: the human and the divine—for when a thing was burnt on the altar, it had no further use or existence: while what remained for the priest was not only visible, but contributive to the service in its

human element. To both departments, all acts of divine service are related. There are words and gifts and services given to man for God's sake. Both are holy and acceptable and necessary. The men who in the sublimity of a divine abstractedness think it meritorious to forget or despise man, have forgotten that God has conjoined the two in acceptable worship. Love the Lord thy God, but forget not that He requires of thee to love and serve thy neighbour also.

If a man chose, in the abundance of his gratitude, to bring an oblation of the first-cut corn, at the time that the single sheaf of first-fruits was to be waved in the sanctuary at the feast of the first-fruits, his oblation was to be accepted, but, like the sheaf, was not to be burnt—(verse 12)—only waved. Was this because the earliest first-fruits represented Christ, as we have seen, who was to be an exception to all “the redeemed of the Lord” in that he was not at all to see corruption, but, with the exception of the brief rest in Joseph's tomb till the morning of the third day, was to be ever before the Lord in active service, from the moment of his introduction into the world? This is a probable meaning.

A man might offer a meat-offering made from the first-cut corn; this might be burnt like the other meat-offerings (verse 16). But it was to consist of “green ears of corn dried by the fire, beaten out of the full ear,” which was a product of the first fruits and not the first-fruits in sheaf form. If the waved sheaf of first-fruits represented Christ, we cannot but recognise in these green ears beaten out of the sheaf state and ripened by fire that they might be suitable for offering, the apostolic community coming after him and out of him, ripened in the fire of persecution, for offering as “the sacrifice and service of faith”—as Paul expresses it. There must have been a reason for the distinction between the two; and this is a strong and natural distinction.

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#### THE PEACE-OFFERING.

The meat-offering was the communion of friendship with God—as when friend gives a gift to friend out of pure love. But the peace-offering by its very name imported the idea of making peace, and, therefore, of removing cause of dispeace. The cause would be on the offerer's side wholly, for there is never cause of dispeace from God when men walk in harmony with His requirements. A man might feel cause of dispeace without being guilty of any overt

act of trespass. He might not feel bad enough, as we might say, to bring a sin-offering or a trespass-offering, which would be for some particular act of nonconformity with the law ; yet he might feel a sense of general shortcoming sufficient to make him fear the divine disapproval : or he might feel special cause for thanksgiving which he had not fully met. He might in such case bring a peace-offering. His offering in such a case must be more than a mere present. It is only man that can be propitiated with a gift. We cannot give anything to God in this sense—in the sense of enriching Him. We must give Him that which pleases Him ; and in the case of fault, it is not giving Him something that can conciliate Him : It is abasement even unto death. Hence, a peace-offering had to be a living creature for sacrifice : the recognition of God's greatness and prerogative : the acknowledgment that the continued life of the owner was by favour and not of right.

The peace-offering might be of the cattle, sheep, or goats, and, as regards the two first, it might be male *or female* (Lev. iii. 1, 6, 12), in which latter point, there is a distinction between the peace-offering and the sin-offering, and all the leading offerings instituted ; in these, "a male without blemish" was the requirement : but here "*male or female.*" We have already considered the meaning of the male element in sacrifice : how are we to understand the admissibility of the female element in the peace-offerings ? It certainly shows that woman is not excluded from the work of salvation, though she was not to figure in the first degree. It was a man that was to be the saviour, yet the man was to be by the woman. She was to contribute her part. If woman was the means of man's downfall in Eden, she was the means of his redemption in Bethlehem. See her bending over the manger. This was evidently the relation of ideas before the mind of Paul when he said : "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. *Notwithstanding*, she shall be saved in child-bearing (or 'by the child-bearing,' as it is in the original) if they continue," &c. If she was not to be the Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world, she was to provide him. "The seed" was to be "her seed." In this way, she was admitted to a close fellowship in the work of redemption. Therefore, the female animal was allowed a place in the subordinate sacrifices, though not eligible for those sacrifices that directly typified the sin-bearing Man of Sorrow.

Whether a bullock, sheep, or goat, the peace-offering was to be brought by the offerer himself, and not sent by deputy: "His own hands shall bring the offering" (Lev. vii. 30). What can this typify but the hearty humble energy of personal service as contrasted with the modern effeminacies of sentimental pride that can send a cheque from the lordly seclusion of a country-seat, but cannot stoop to a personal condescension. "You know how it is," says Jesus, "with the great ones of the Gentiles: it shall not be so among you: he that is great among you let him be as the servant, even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister." Bringing the offering, he was to lay his hand on the animal's head, thus identifying himself with it, in self-condemning humility, and then he was to kill it, and the priest was to sprinkle the blood upon the altar, and cut up the creature for use as a peace-offering: that is, the fatty linings of the interior were to be laid upon the altar-fire and consumed, and the leading joints (the breast and the right shoulder) were to be taken possession of by the officiating priest: "He among the sons of Aaron that offereth the blood of the peace-offerings and the fat shall have the right shoulder for his part. For the wave breast and the heave shoulder have I taken of the children of Israel from off the sacrifices of their peace-offerings and have given them unto Aaron, the priest, and unto his sons by a statute for ever" (Lev. vii. 33-34).

The meanings traced in former articles enable us to discern the significance of these details. The poured-out blood was the ceremonial of confession to be observed even in thanksgiving-approaches—of which we enjoy the antitype when we draw nigh to God with confession on our lips and the crucified Christ in our hearts—on whom God laid the iniquities of us all, that with his stripes we might be healed. The fat is described as "the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour"—(iii. 16)—that part upon which the altar-fire feeds. If blood means life, it is evident that fat means the strength and goodness of life. When used figuratively, it is always with the sense of prosperity and good condition, *e.g.*, "All that are *fat upon earth* shall worship," "Thou art waxen fat: thou art grown thick: thou art covered with fatness." Consequently, a man giving his time, his love, his service, his substance, gives the fat of his life. This is "the food of the peace-offering," and ascends as a sweet savour to God. This is almost the exact language that Paul uses concerning the

munificence of the brethren in the supply of his wants : " I have received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God " (Philip. iv. 18). Christ not only gave his life for us, but for our sakes " impoverished himself "—(a more correct translation than " became poor ")—that is, voluntarily submitted to circumstances of poverty and humility when he might not only have had " twelve legions of angels," but " all the kingdoms of the world." He offered the fat as well as the blood. As his followers, we are invited to do the same, though we necessarily follow at a long distance off. The young man looked, but did not follow. He was " grieved, having great possessions."

And what about the house of Aaron having the chief part of the peace-offerings for their own use? The clergy make a very obvious application of this, but their application is the Judaising application—not a spiritual interpretation at all, but a mere parallelism—a mere transfer of the temporal privileges of the Mosaic priesthood which is supposed to have succeeded them. They make a type teach itself, which is absurd. The antitypical Aaron and his house is Christ and his house. The offerings signified by the slain animals yield no joints of mutton, but something sweeter to the divine taste of the immortal sons of God—the offered lives and wealth and homage of rejoicing obedient millions. This does not exclude the restoration of sacrifice in the age to come as a detail in the machinery of national reconciliation : but it vaults to a higher and more glorious meaning, at which a Judaised clergy only laugh : " Woe unto you that laugh now."





## CHAPTER XXV.—BURNT-OFFERINGS, SIN-OFFERINGS, AND TRESPASS-OFFERINGS.

THESE were compulsory offerings as distinguished from the offerings considered in the last chapter—which were more or less voluntary. That there should be these two classes of offering is an adaptation to spiritual needs. There are appointments of God that are imperative—not at all left to human choice—to be omitted on pain of death. In the observance of these, every enlightened man delights. But it is a great addition to his delight that he can go beyond the actual prescriptions of law, and indulge the sense of his admiring and grateful allegiance by any extravagance of love (as Judas considered Mary's costly ointment of spikenard) with the certainty that it will be accepted. It was the sentiment illustrated in David's case, when, as he sat at his ease in the magnificent palace erected for him by Hiram, he conceived the idea of a more opulent provision for the machinery of the divine service. "Behold I dwell in a house of cedar and the ark of God dwelleth in curtains." He was not permitted to build a temple, but it was said to him, "It was well that it was in thine heart."

There is ample field for every liberal soul who may conceive liberal things in the service of God. By liberal things he shall stand. There are not many to whom liberality occurs in this direction. But the celestial phenomenon is not absolutely unknown. Surprising instances are permitted to break the monotony of carnal stagnation, which even Paul lamented when he said, "All seek their own and not the things which are Jesus Christ's." The rule has not been cancelled which he formulated, thus: "He that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully, and he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly." A man seems a fool who spends on God. Final developments will show a light on this subject that all men will be able to see.

The diversity of offerings is a little perplexing at first; and it is some time before we discover the difference between them. They all seem indiscriminately *sacrifices*—animals to be slain and consumed in the fire of the altar. By-and-bye, we naturally ask,

what are burnt-offerings as distinguished from sin-offerings and trespass-offerings? and why should there be a trespass-offering in addition to a sin-offering, seeing that trespass is sin? The light gradually dawns. We find they represent gradations of the same subject. All were for atonement, but atonement for different degrees of sin, as we might express it. There was a form of sin for which there was no atonement. "The soul that doeth aught presumptuously . . . reproacheth the Lord: that soul shall be cut off from among his people, because he hath despised the word of the Lord and hath broken his commandment: that soul shall utterly be cut off: his iniquity shall be upon him" (that is, shall not be purged by sacrifice) (Num. xv. 30-31). But this was not a common case. The common case was sin not of presumption: sin of natural state, sin of ignorance, and sin of weakness: the first, the constitutional uncleanness that has come into the world by sin, which is "no more I but sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. vii. 20): the second, where men do wrong without knowing it, as in "sin of ignorance": and third, acts of known disobedience, but not deliberate or intentional, but the result of infirmity deplored. For these three phases of sin, the burnt-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering appear to have been provided, differing in methods and accessories according to the respective cases.

1. THE BURNT-OFFERING.—The burnt-offering was burnt wholly on the altar (Lev. i. 8-9). It was left to smoulder all night into ashes, and the ashes were removed in the morning. It was called the burnt-offering "because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning" (vi. 9). It was an act of worship on the part of a mortal being, apart from guilt of specific offence. Thus Noah, saved from destruction by the flood, "took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl and offered *burnt-offerings* on the altar" (Gen. viii. 20). Thus also the test of Abraham's faith was to offer Isaac "for a *burnt-offering*" (Gen. xxii. 2). That burnt-offering should be required in the absence of particular offence shows that our unclean state as the death-doomed children of Adam itself unfits us for approach to the Deity apart from the recognition and acknowledgment of which the burnt-offering was the form required and supplied. It was "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel," as well as "because of their transgressions in all their sins," that atonement was required for even the tabernacle of the congregation (Lev. xvi. 16).

The type involved in complete burning is self-manifest : it is *consumption of sin-nature*. This is the great promise and prophecy and requirement of every form of the truth : the destruction of the body of sin (Rom. vi. 6). It was destroyed in Christ's crucifixion—the "one great offering" : we ceremonially share it in our baptism : "crucified with Christ," "baptised unto his death." We morally participate in it in putting the old man to death in "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts : " and the hope before us is the prospect of becoming subject to such a physical change as will consume mortal nature and change it into the glorious nature of the Spirit. "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye !"

The whole process of consumption is the work of the Spirit, whether we consider the sending forth of Christ to condemn sin in the flesh, or our association with his death in baptism or our repudiation of the old man as the rule of life, or our change at the judgment seat into the incorruptible and glorious nature of the Son of God. When the work is finished, flesh and blood, with all its weakness and its woe, will have ceased from the earth, and given place to a glad and holy race of men immortal and "equal to the angels." It was a beautiful requirement of the wisdom of God in the beginning of things that He should require an act of worship that typified the repudiation of sinful nature as the basis of divine fellowship and acceptability. Those who deny Christ's participation thereof, deny its removal by his sacrifice, and therefore deny the fundamental testimony of the gospel, that he is "the Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world." They think they honour him by saying his flesh-nature was a clean nature. In reality, they deny his qualification for the work he was sent to do. They mistake holiness of character for holiness of nature, and by a wrong use of truth, destroy it.

The removal of the ashes in the morning out of the camp, has an evident allusion to the change effected in the dawn of the perfect day, when the unconsumed remnants of sin flesh—that is, the men who are not changed by the Spirit, or consumed by the altar fire—will be "put away like dross." The body of the burnt-offering as the type of Christ might not seem to leave room for the idea of "ashes" if we think only of Christ personal : but when we extend our view to the whole race as federally involved in him, we can see how the treatment of the body of the burnt-offering would typify

the purpose of God with regard to the race, and therefore leave a place for the ashes to be removed in the morning.

**SIN-OFFERINGS.**—A sin-offering differed from the burnt-offering in several particulars. It was called for when “a soul sinned through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things that ought not to be done” (Lev. iv. 2). If a priest sinned in the same way : or if it was the case of the whole congregation sinning ignorantly, then when the sin was discovered, they were to “bring a young bullock without blemish unto the Lord for a sin-offering.”

The question has been asked, Why should a sin of ignorance require atonement ? I have indeed known of a stout revolt against the whole doctrine of sins of ignorance, and a disposition to reject Moses on the ground of them. This is not reasonable. If it had been a case of punishing a man for unconscious transgression, there might be some difficulty experienced. But it is not a case of that sort, but of the reverse sort, namely, of providing a way of escape from a false position. A false position is a false position, whether known or not. Reason must recognise this : if the will of God be that certain things be not done, then the man who does them does things that are displeasing, whether he know it or not. His ignorance does not make a displeasing thing pleasing, though it will modify the light in which he may be regarded as an unintentional offender. A presumptuous doing of it—a doing of it in the full knowledge of what he is doing, and with the full intention that his act shall be an act of enmity as hurtful as he can make it, ensures condign punishment, as we have seen. But a doing of it in ignorance that he is doing wrong is mercifully treated : provision is made for rectification or justification. A sin-offering is required. The sin is not ignored, for sin there has been, though ignorant sin, for sin is the breaking of the law of God in any matter.

But even a sin-offering is not exacted till knowledge makes the sinner aware of his sin. It is “when the sin which he hath sinned *come to his knowledge*” that a sin-offering is to be brought (Lev. iv. 23). Then “the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin : and *it shall be forgiven him*” (verse 26). A superficial view would say there is nothing to forgive in such a case. But the fact is the offence exists though the man did not intend it, and is therefore righteously the subject of disapprobation. Even a man dealing with men, feels and recognises this in matters

of trespass. A neighbour may infringe your rights unintentionally. If on knowing of it, he makes reparation, all is well : justice is not felt on either side to be violated in the requirement of the reparation. But if reparation is refused, then a sin of ignorance becomes one of contumacy, and the subject of penalty.

It will be found on reflection to be a fitting and a beautiful thing that God should hold sin to be sin, even though done in ignorance : for otherwise His law would be at the mercy of human whim, and human ignorance would become the standard of action. Yet were He to deal with ignorant sin as He deals with knowing sin, the moral discernments with which He has endowed us would be violated. That He should hold the sin to be sin, yet that He should hold the sinner responsible only when his sin comes to his knowledge, and then offer forgiveness by atonement, is all in harmony with the perfect justice and wisdom and goodness that belong to the divine character. It is an illustration of the doctrine proclaimed and illustrated on many another page of the Bible outside the Law of Moses : that "times of ignorance, God winks at" (Acts xvii. 30) ; that where there is blindness, there is no accountability (Jno. ix. 41) ; that only where there is knowledge does the ground of condemnation exist (Jas. iv. 17 ; Jno. iii. 19 ; Luke xii. 47) ; that where there is great privilege, there is great responsibility (Jno. xv. 22-25) ; that, in a word, to whom much is given, of them is much required (Luke xii. 48).

When sins of ignorance became known, whether in the case of a priest, or the whole congregation, a young bullock was to be brought as a sin-offering (Lev. iv. 2, 3, 13).\* The bullock was not to be consumed on the altar like the burnt-offering. Yet it was to be consumed, though in another way. When it had been killed by the offerer, and a portion of its blood had been taken by the priest into the tabernacle, and sprinkled by the priest's finger seven times before the veil, and put by touch on the four horns of the incense altar, the rest of the blood was to be poured out at the bottom of the brazen altar, and the fat of the animal was to be burnt on the altar ; and then the body was to be carried out of the camp to a place of ashes, and there burnt on a fire of wood (Lev. iv. 4-12).

In this it differed, not only from the burnt-offering, but from the ordinary treatment of a sin-offering. The law of the ordinary

\* In the case of a ruler the offering was a male kid of the goats, and in that of one of the people a female kid.

sin-offering was (Lev. vi. 25-30) that it should be eaten by the priests, and that the blood should be sprinkled on the altar, but not offered in the tabernacle. If the blood was offered in the tabernacle, then the body was not to be eaten, but taken out of the camp to be burnt (Lev. vi. 30). This curious distinction between two classes of sin-offering must have had a meaning. We are not told what it was, but we may discover it in the difference between the two classes of sin for which they were respectively offered. The offerings not to be eaten but burnt, and whose blood was to be presented in the tabernacle, were those offered for *sins of ignorance*; while those to be eaten, were for sin in general. The bringing of the blood into the tabernacle and the burning of the bodies, would seem to express intenser repudiation than the eating of the flesh. And yet the intenser repudiation was for the class of sin that men are liable to consider the most venial—sins of ignorance.

What is the explanation of this? Is it so that unconscious sin is more hateful to God than that which is known and confessed? It would not be difficult to think so. When a man knows his faults, disowns them and struggles against them, his friends bear with him more easily than if he offends regularly in a line of things of which he is not aware. In his ignorance, he supposes himself perfectly acceptable, while all the time it may be he is making it the hardest work in the world to endure him. We are probably not far wrong in supposing that this is how it is with our imperfect selves towards God, and that there is a special meaning in the declaration that He "hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." How often may we grieve Him by our want of perfect loyalty: by our forgetfulness of Him: by our failure in meekness and gentleness, and mercy; by the weakness of our love, the poverty of our worship, the feebleness of our service—while all the time, perhaps, we think the Laodicean thought that we are spiritually "rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing," and highly acceptable in His sight.

The Laodiceans had obeyed the gospel, and were "looking for the mercy of the Lord unto eternal life." The Laodiceans, having so good an opinion of themselves, would no doubt be zealous against all gross and open sin, and sincerely penitent if they fell into such. And yet as regards the richer forms of spiritual fruitfulness, we have the Lord's authority for it that they were

“wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked.” It is easy for us to imagine how much more difficult it would be for the Lord to condone their deficiencies (or sins of ignorance) than the sins they confessed and disowned. This may enable us to understand why, in the Mosaic type, sins of ignorance should be the subject of a more energetic purgation than those in which the humbled confessor voluntarily recognised his offence.

The practical application has much in it, both of fear and comfort. Sins of ignorance were not forgiven till known and repudiated in sacrifice. Here arises the necessity for what Paul recommends when he says, “Examine yourselves,” and “prove your own selves”; and John, “purify yourselves”; and James, “cleanse your hearts.” If we go on in ignorance of what is acceptable to God in our deportment, how can we expect to obtain the forgiveness that comes only on confession. On the other hand, how comforting to know that when we have discovered and confessed our shortcomings, and come to God with Christ, the crucified, in our hands and hearts, “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity,” even sins of ignorance also—so trying to divine holiness. There is ground for even a higher degree of comfort than this. If the Lord prayed for his murderers, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do,” what may not those hope for from the divine clemency who love and fear him when they read the beautiful words of Psa. ciii. : “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame : he remembereth that we are dust. . . . As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our iniquities from us ?”

We are taken one step higher in the words of Rom. viii. 26 : “The Spirit itself helpeth our infirmities : for we know not what to pray for as we ought : but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God” (that is, by Christ, verse 34). Here is a mixture of human helplessness and distress, and divine provision and recognition, that appeals to every enlightened man’s experience of what he needs in the imperfect state through which he is passing in this age of faith and weakness. It is all in harmony with the compassionate foreshadowings, yet holy requirements, of the Mosaic service.

The eating of the flesh of the sin-offering by the priests in the second-class of sin-offerings, would appear to typify the reception and assimilation of the truth, concerning the heinousness of sin and the doctrine of its putting away through Christ : for we are even now, as Peter declares, "an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. ii. 5). We eat the antitypical flesh of the sacrifices in receiving the truth of the sacrifice of Christ, who gave his flesh for the life of the world (Jno. vi. 51), and who asks, that in this sense, we eat his flesh and drink his blood as the condition of eternal life (verse 53). Here is where the various false theories of the sacrifice of Christ are so dangerous : they put a man's heart out of harmony with God's aims in the greatest of His works upon earth.

The flesh of the sin-offering was declared to be "most holy," so that "whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy." This, at first sight, appears singular in view of the fact that sin is defiling, and that the sin-offering was considered to have upon it the sins it was offered for, as in the case of the "two kids of the goats for a sin-offering" (xvi. 5). "Aaron shall lay both hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, *putting them upon the head of the goat . . .* and the goat shall *bear upon him all their iniquities* to a land not inhabited." How should an offering bearing sin have the power of imparting holiness to "whatsoever touched the flesh thereof" ? The difficulty is at an end when we remember why it is that a sin-offering was appointed at all : because "God is holy" and "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." His holiness made all His appointments holy, even though uncleanness was incidental to the process of bringing that holiness to bear, as, for example, the defilement of all the furniture of the holy tabernacle through contact with the uncleanness of the children of Israel (Lev. xvi. 16, 33). All was holiness to the Lord : even the nation was "an holy people to the Lord thy God" (Deut. vii. 6), notwithstanding their uncleanness and their sin. Sin was in their midst only as a thing to be repudiated. So the sin-offering was a holy ordinance in being for the removal of sin because of the Lord's holiness, and therefore holy in the midst of the uncleanness incidental to sin. The antitype in Christ, "the one great offering," "who put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" is clear. Though made of like nature with ourselves, as his sacrificial mission required, though subject to

death because of its entrance into the world by sin, as all men are—he was the Lord's "Holy One"—separated and dedicated from the very beginning for this very work of taking it away—without iniquity himself, as prefigured by the spotlessness of the sacrificial animals, yet bearing in himself the hereditary effects of sin, that he might remove them by death and resurrection for all who should take his name and be approved by him. Preached as the crucified and resurrected Jesus—the Lamb of God bearing away the sin of the world—he is the flesh of the sin-offering most holy, by the eating or contact with which, in the affectionate understanding thereof, we become holy in him.

3. THE TRESPASS OFFERING.—The ceremonial adjuncts of this were the same as for the sin-offering: "As the sin-offering is, so is the trespass-offering: *there is one law for them*" (Lev. vii. 7). Why, then, should there be a trespass-offering as distinct from a sin-offering? Because, while all trespass is sin, all sin is not trespass. There is what Paul calls "sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. vii. 17). There is sin of forgetfulness; sin of "unadvised" but unintentional words, in "the multitude of which," in an ordinary way, as Solomon says, "there wanteth not sin": sin of omission; sin of thought—all of which cause a righteous man to exclaim with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?"—but which do not constitute trespass. Trespass is an overt and hurtful act, in disobedience of express statute, as when a man lies or steals.

The enumeration of the offences for which trespass-offerings were to be provided shows this: the concealing of known and unrepented sin in others; the contraction of uncleanness; the utterance of an unlawful oath; the embezzlement of things committed in trust; treachery, violence, misrepresentation, false swearing, &c. (Lev. v. 1, 3: vi. 1, 5). The fact that provision was made for such offences, when truly repented of, is an illustration of what Christ teaches: "All manner of sin shall be forgiven unto men, except the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit." Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is rebellion against the authority of God, and is naturally in a different category from sins of weakness that are not conceived in the spirit of presumptuous disobedience. Even human law distinguishes between treason and breaches of recognised law: and "shall mortal man be more just than God?" Treason is a capital offence, while breaches of common law may be condoned by restitution or apology.

The combined effect of all these sacrificial provisions of the law, is, to give ground of hope to all men who fear God and submit to His appointments. They may be erring and shortcoming, and a trouble to themselves because of their many imperfections: but if they are "humble and contrite of heart," and make confession of their sins in the name of Jesus, in whom all these sacrifices centre as the end and substance foreshadowed, they may trust to be forgiven. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord who should stand. But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared" (Psa. cxxx. 3-4). May it not, then, be said to many a fearful one, "Lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame should be turned out of the way?" (Heb. xii. 12-13).





## CHAPTER XXVI.—MOTHERHOOD.

OVER and above all the lessons connected with the different classes of sacrifices already glanced at, there were special purifications, because special impurities, in detail, which may reward consideration. A peculiar one was connected with child-birth. A woman having given birth to a son was to be "unclean seven days" (Lev. xii. 2), and on the eighth day, the child was to be circumcised. At the end of thirty-three days, the mother was to offer certain sacrifices, and then she was to be eligible for contact with holy things and attendance at the tabernacle, from which she was cut off during that period.

We must look at this in the two characters that belonged to it. It was a literal regulation of Israel's natural life, and it was one of the many types finding their ultimate significance in Christ.

As a literal ordinance of family life, it presents more than one easily seen feature of beauty. It screened the mother in an acceptable and wholesome seclusion, in a way permitting of a more thorough recovery from the supremest ordeal of her life, than if she merely trusted to her own feelings as to how far and how soon she might venture on the resumed intimacies of friendship. It formally recognised the natural uncleanness attaching to the whole experience, and therefore tended to rescue the children of the covenant from the degradation and effeminacy that result in some races from the acceptance of uncleanness as a normal and pleasing condition.

Further, it stamped the mere function of propagation with a mark of the inferiority that inherently belongs to it. In the perfect state to which God invites us, there is "neither marrying nor giving in marriage." Christ, the first born of that state, was an unmarried man, even during his mortal experience. It is an inferior and inferiorising function that leads to the increase of man upon the earth—essential to the work of God in its place—still outside the perfection and individuality of being, illustrated to us by the angels, to whom we are promised equality. It is the one function that runs riot in the world to its utter debasement. It has a place, but it is an obscure place, and an inferior place, and a

temporary place, and will at last be abolished. That the fruits of it in child-birth should be attained as a cause of uncleanness to be atoned for, was one of the many excellencies of a law designed to produce a holy people.

It has not been without its effects. Between the scrupulosities of child-bed and the care in diet prescribed by another part of the law, the Jews to this day remain the superiors of all other races in type and condition. A royal people they will be yet, when the Lord returns in favour to them, and brings them back to all the conditions which the law contains.

But it is the typical significance of the ordinance that more particularly concerns us now. One significance strikes us at once: seven days' uncleanness and then circumcision; what can this be but the history of the world in miniature from the divine point of view: seven days of a thousand years each, the earth unclean; and on the eighth day, the flesh cut off, and the covenant sealed in truth for ever. But there are details not so easy to work out.

The woman was to "continue in the blood of her purifying three-and-thirty days," during which she was to touch no hallowed thing nor come near the sanctuary. On the thirty-fourth day, she was to offer a lamb of the first year for a *burnt-offering*, and a young pigeon or a turtle-dove for a sin-offering; and she was to stand "cleansed from the issue of her blood." Was this an intimation that he upon whom the Lord laid the iniquities of us all, and therefore, as representing us all, should be in the unclean state for thirty-three whole years, and in the thirty-fourth, be cleansed by the offering up of himself, in the first year of his new state, as both the offered lamb and the offering priest? We might say "perhaps," if it were not for the fact that in the case of the child being a daughter, the mother was to be unclean *fourteen* days instead of seven, and to continue in the blood of her purifying "three score and six days," instead of thirty-and-three (just double the number required in the case of a male child).

Here is a difference palpably made between male and female, pointing rather to moral relations than to chronological fore-shadowings. It is in keeping with what we have already seen of the position of woman in the whole work of God with man, in the consideration of "the male element in sacrifice." Still, it may not exclude the chronology observed in the case of *the man*.

Brother Harvey, of London, has sent us some good remarks on the subject, from which we make the following extracts :

“ In the man-child, I apprehend, we have a type of Christ himself, personally born of a woman, and consequently a partaker of our condemned nature ; and in the female child, a type of all the redeemed born of the flesh, first of the ‘ bride of Christ,’ the ‘ Lamb’s woman,’ and then of the whole host who will be cleansed from the defilement of the flesh-nature and attain to immortality in virtue of the death and resurrection to eternal life of Christ. In the man-child born of a woman and circumcised on the eighth day, we have one made of our own identical nature, yet *not* born of the will of man, or of the will of the flesh in any sense, but of God, for God was the Father of Christ by His Spirit operating upon his mother, who probably did not know what had occurred within her for a considerable time. By this means of paternity, Christ escaped the hereditary moral and mental bias of the race, and received such a divine intellectual impress as made him strong in spirit or mind, and of quick understanding in the fear and word of the Lord. He was therefore enabled to overcome all the promptings and desires of his unclean nature derived from his mother, and maintained his moral perfection without blemish and undefiled. Such being the case, he required no justification or cleansing pertaining to the conscience as we do : he needed only a cleansing or justification by spirit of his physical nature—sin’s flesh—which he bore. This cleansing took place, as we see in the type, at the end of thirty-three days, or years. Luke tells us that at his baptism, he ‘ began to be about thirty years of age.’ His ministry lasted about three-and-a-half years, so that Christ, when he offered himself to the Father, through the Eternal Spirit, as a sacrifice for the sin of the world, was between thirty-three and thirty-four years of age. It was after thirty days (or years) that the sacrifice was offered. It is argued by some that Christ was justified at his baptism from the condemnation ruling upon his flesh-nature before he could go on probation, but the type emphatically teaches that he was not justified or cleansed from his physical uncleanness until the end of his life, or after the thirty-third day. Christ required no justification morally, and the only other justification which the Scriptures teach he did require, was

justification by spirit from the condemnation of mortality resting upon his flesh-nature, and this could not be effected until he had made reconciliation for iniquity in death and resurrection. If Christ were justified at his baptism, then the offering for the cleansing of the mother should have been made on the thirtieth, and not on the thirty-fourth day.

“With regard to the cleansing of a mother after the birth of a maid-child, it will be seen that she was legally unclean for fourteen days on account of her infirmity, and then had to continue sixty-six days in the blood of her purification before she could bring her sacrifice and be cleansed. What does this mean? Some have thought that the double number of days of uncleanness in connection with the birth of a woman-child indicates that woman, in consequence of Eve having been the first in the transgression in Eden, has a double portion of natural evil. Experience does not bear out this idea, but rather the reverse. There is, indeed, no difference between man and woman in God’s sight in this respect. All are equally defiled by sin, men and women both alike: if anything, I would rather say that man is the worse because the stronger. The woman-child represents, I apprehend, primarily, the ‘bride of Christ,’ the ‘Lamb’s woman’; and secondarily, the whole multitude of redeemed from among men at the end of the seventh thousand year, when the flesh-nature will be done away with, either by a return to dust, or by being changed to spirit, when none but immortal ones will remain on earth. This will be effected on the ground of the sacrifice for sin offered by Christ on the thirty-third day or year of his life. We are forgiven and shall be saved for Christ’s sake. He required no forgiveness. Hence the difference between the man-child and woman-child. Christ was undefiled in mind, absolutely pure, therefore he required no cleansing as pertaining to the conscience at baptism, for there never was a moment in his life when God was displeased with him; he always did and said what pleased his Father. He only required cleansing in nature, which was done, as said, after resurrection, but all others have to be cleansed both in mind and body before they can live for ever in God’s presence. The mental and moral cleansing takes place at baptism, when we are immersed into *the death of Christ*, which took place after the thirty-third year of his life. The double number of

days in the cleansing for the woman-child represents, I take it, the double cleansing process all believers must be the subjects of before they can attain to eternal life, but both the moral and physical purification is in virtue of the one sacrifice. There could not have been represented two sacrifices, one on the thirty-third day and one on the sixty-sixth day, in connection with the cleansing of the woman-child, because Christ was only offered up *once for all*: therefore two sacrificial cleansings would have been out of harmony with the truth: it is therefore shown, as I conceive, in the double number of days.

“It will be observed that only the burnt-offering and the sin-offering were presented. There is no mention of trespass-offering or peace-offering. The burnt-offering represented God's estimate of Christ's perfectly voluntary obedience even unto death; he was, as it were, wholly burnt up and devoted to God upon the altar—a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour—the sin-offering represented and ritually prophesied that aspect of the death of Christ by which he atoned for sin. Christ himself did no wrong, and was never alienated from God, but always did that which pleased Him, both prior to and after his baptism. Thus was foreshadowed in this beautiful type, the cleansing of the human nature of Christ by his own death, and of our own cleansing on account of the same, by the favour of God through faith.

“There is possibly another element in the ‘sixty-six’ days required for the cleansing of the woman-child. In this number, I think we have the basis of ‘the number of the Beast,’ *six hundred three score and six* (Rev. xiii. 18). The Papal system, of which this is the numerical symbol, is also spoken of as a woman, ‘that woman Jezebel,’ the adulteress, who is identical with the woman upon the scarlet beast. This unfaithful woman professes to be *the bride* of Christ, but is in truth nothing but a spiritual strumpet, committing fornication with the kings of the earth. It is an institution of an essentially fleshy nature, born of the will of the flesh and of the will of man, not of the will of God, and is defiled in every member of its body, both morally and physically. I can't see how to make it plain, but the matter is worth thinking about.”

Whether all these details are involved in the veiled significance of the type, we cannot err in the interpretation of its main features, literal and typical: 1. Neither mother nor child was eligible for approach to the sanctuary till circumcision, lapse of time, and sacrifice, had opened the way: *the teaching*, that God is holy and man unclean: that God will be sanctified in them that approach to Him: *ergo*, that in its natural state, human nature is disqualified for divine relations, but may attain to this qualification by conformity to the divine appointments that have been made for the purpose. 2. That the whole human race considered as the woman in the transgression and separated by uncleanness, "shall be clean" in the upshot of things, when the provision made to that end shall be fully applied, in the justification of a sufficient number to inherit the earth under the last Adam, as his anti-typical help-meet, with fulness of love and joy, everlasting.





## CHAPTER XXVII.—DISEASE.

THE law deals with leprosy and other diseases of disorganization in a manner suggestive of their intended inclusion in the scheme of typology which has its fulfilment in things pertaining to Christ. These features of the law are not referred to by the apostles in a way that would enable us to identify their meanings in the explicit way that is possible with some of its significances. But, just as in the Apocalypse, everything is not explained, yet enough is explained to enable us to understand that which is not explained, so in the law, though all details are not expounded by the apostles, the details they do expound furnish a clue sufficiently clear to enable us to work out many things not expounded.

When we say diseases of disorganisation, we mean diseases affecting structure rather than what might be called hygienic condition. Degeneracy of parts, such as takes place in leprosy and running issues, is made the subject of priestly recognition and of sacrificial purification when mere diseases (such as fevers, agues, distempers, choleraic affections, &c.) are passed over without note or provision, though mentioned once or twice as current experiences, in the addresses of Moses—which suggests that the treatment of leprosy was spiritual rather than hygienic in its object; while, like all the physical appointments of the law of Moses, it was of good hygienic tendency.

That leprosy and issue, as distinct from ordinary infirmity, should be treated with a spiritual meaning seems appropriate in view of the infectious and destructive nature of these diseases as compared with ordinary human ailments. Man, as the propagation of Adam's condemned earthy nature, is by nature a mortal and afflicted being: but there are degrees in the afflictedness. There is such a thing as a healthy mortal, and there is such a thing as a diseased mortal. The law of Moses deals with both—both literally and typically. For the healthy mortal, it prescribes circumcision and sacrifice; for the unhealthy, separation and special treatment. It is the spiritual or typical meaning we are

concerned with at present. We have discerned this in its treatment of the healthy : the healthy, though mortally healthy, are recognised as "all under sin," to use Paul's expression (Rom. iii. 9), because the descendants of the sinner of Eden, and the individual transgressors of the divine law, and are therefore held at arm's length, as we might say, unless they humble themselves and confess and approach in the way appointed, and then they are received for blessing and ultimate healing. Their mere mortality is no bar when the divine conditions of reconciliation are complied with. But here are diseased mortals whose cases not only receive special treatment physically, but whose connection with special sacrifice appointed, shows they have a special significance typically.

The distinction is a natural one physically, and it seems a natural one spiritually, for there is a great difference between *human frailty* by natural constitution, against which a man may be struggling in the way of righteousness ; and *human wickedness* which a man may be following from taste and preference and wilful bent. The one, we may take it, is represented by healthy human nature under the ordinances of the law, and the other by diseased human nature in the same relation. The divine view of the two cases, as expressed in type, is not unuseful to us, who, though "not under the law but under grace," must be desirous "that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 4).

There were different forms of leprous affection, some curable and others not. The priests were taught how to distinguish between them, and to adopt their measures accordingly (Lev. xiii.). In general, those forms of leprosy that were "in sight deeper than the skin," and affected the colour of the hair, were bad cases (verse 3). Those that were apparently in the skin only, were to be shut up for seven days, to see how they got on ; and if, at the end of seven days, the plague spot was no larger, the case was one for cure and healing. The great test of uncleanness was the spreading or not spreading—the affecting or not affecting of other parts. A whole chapter of 59 verses (Lev. xiii.) gives minute descriptions and directions for the guidance of the priests on those points. A man with "the plague in his head" was pronounced utterly unclean. A hopeless leper was to be put out of the camp (verse 46) ; a hopelessly infected garment was to be burnt (verse 52) ; a house to which plague returned after affected stones had been removed, and the rest of the house scraped, was to be "broken down" (verse 45).

We can scarcely err in understanding this to mean (what is otherwise testified) that wickedness is only fatal when persisted in : that "if the sinner forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return unto the Lord, he will have mercy upon him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 7) ; and that if the wicked will "turn from all the sins that he hath committed and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live ; he shall not die : all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned to him" (Ezek. xviii. 21-22).

If this seem inconsistent with what John says—"Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him : and he cannot sin because he is born of God"—1 John iii. 9—it is only because the particular sense of John's word is lost sight of through not attending to the contention of those he was confuting. "These things," he says, "I write concerning *them that seduce you.*" These men, in the language of Jude, "turned the grace of our God into lasciviousness" : that is, made the fact of justification by grace through faith a reason for "*continuing in sin* that grace might abound" (Rom. vi. 1). In contradistinction to those, John maintains that the man who holds the hope of seeing and being like Christ at his coming, "*purifieth himself*" as he (Christ) is pure" (verse 3)—lives not in sin as other men do : cannot do so, for the seed of the word which brings forth fruit in harmony with itself, is in him and remains in him. It is morally impossible for a man believing the truth to live in rebellion against its demands. Such a man, begotten by the truth and changed by the truth, will necessarily love the truth and all things connected with the truth—the God of the truth, the sons of the truth, and the principles, obligations, and commandments of the truth. Such a man "cannot" live as the world lives, which is controlled in all ranks by "the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life." The universal law of affinities will make him stand apart from a system so alien to all that he loves, admires, and hopes for. He cannot sin in the sense contended for by "the evil men and seducers" whom John was writing against.

But this cannot mean that the faithful servants and lovers of God have no faults to bemoan, no shortcomings to confess, no sins to ask the forgiveness of—Paul's wretchedness at the law of sin in his members, preventing him from doing what he would, and compelling him to do things that he would not (Rom. vii. 18-23)—

Peter's denial of the Lord and his dissimulation in the presence of the Jewish brethren (Gal. ii. 12-14)—the post-baptismal sins which the Corinthian brethren were to forgive (2 Cor. ii. 7), and which "many" were called on to repent (2 Cor. xii. 2), are all evidence to the contrary. But though burdened with what Paul calls "sin that dwelleth in me," they were not servants of sin but the servants of righteousness—sinners forgiven—lepers healed.

There were professors of the truth in Peter's day, of whom he says, "they cannot cease from sin," "their conscience is seared as with a hot iron." This is a different class. These were the incurable lepers who were apostolically directed to be dealt with as the Mosaic type prescribes. Moses says, "Put them out of the camp." Paul says, "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person." "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" "Keep no company with any man called a brother who is a fornicator, a covetous man, an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner." But doubtless the final fulfilment of the type will not be seen till it is proclaimed concerning the New Jerusalem: "*There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life*" (Rev. xxi. 27).

There was a possibility of the leprous man getting cured of his malady. What then? Was he to resume his place in the congregation forthwith? Not so: a special process of atonement was provided for his case, as if to mark off with a special sense of reprobation the class of sin signified by leprosy, and to magnify the grace that extends reconciliation to such a class of offenders. It was more elaborate than all other individual atonements, and had some features not to be found in any other.

Two birds were to be brought, alive and clean, with accompaniments of cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop. One of the birds was to be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. The living bird was then to be dipped in the blood of the slain one, along with the adjuncts of cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop. The leper was also to be sprinkled with the blood of the slain bird, and the living bird was then to be let free into the open field. The leper was then to wash all his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe his body in water, after which he was allowed to return into the camp, but not to take up his abode in his own tent. The process of re-instatement was only half accomplished. For *seven days* he remained in semi-exile in the midst of the camp.

Then, on the *eighth day*, he was to bring two he-lambs, one ewe-lamb, a liberal meal-offering of fine flour, mixed with oil, and a log of oil (or if poor, he could omit two of the lambs and two-thirds of the meal-offering). The priest was to offer the he-lamb for a trespass-offering, putting of the blood of it on the tip of the leper's right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and the great toe of his right foot. The priest was then to put some of the oil in his left hand, and with his right finger sprinkle of it seven times before the Lord, and then touch with it the right ear, right thumb, and right great toe of the leper, on the spots that had been touched with the blood. The rest of the oil he was to pour on the leper's head. Then he was to offer one of the ewe-lambs as a sin-offering, and the other as a burnt-offering, on the altar—after which, the leper was pronounced clean, and at liberty to return to his own house.

These are the things to which Jesus referred when he said to the cleansed leper, "show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them" (Matt. viii. 4).

The meaning of this elaborate ceremonial has become, in some measure, manifest in previous chapters. Sin-offering, trespass-offering, burnt-offering, have frequently come under our consideration. The allegory of the two birds is an extra feature. We are not told what it means. It differs from other sacrificial types, though having the same underlying implication—that God must be exalted before a sinner can be saved. It is the only instance (with the exception of the two goats) in which a creature is introduced to represent the redeemed purely and simply. All sacrifices typify the redeemer who redeems by death, but here is a creature that does not die, and is only associated with death, having the blood of the slain bird put upon it.

The general meaning is evident—*redemption*. No other meaning can conceivably attach to the ceremony of a living bird being dipped in the blood of a dead bird, and being set free, especially in view of its connection with a healed leper about to be re-admitted into fellowship with the congregation.

But the mind seeks the connection between the process and the result. Orthodox preaching finds it in a moment: the first bird is the crucified Christ, and the second bird the poor sin-imprisoned soul, which soars to heaven on the magic touch of the first bird's blood. There is a certain rough-and-ready completeness in this view that obtains for it an easy reception. But the simple

way of a thing is not always the right way, as instanced in the case of those who would get rid of all difficulty in connection with the death of Christ by saying that "Christ died because he was killed."

The objection to the orthodox view begins when we discover there is no soul such as it imagines, and no going to heaven for souls of any kind, and that death was not possible to the Christ of their theology, and that blood can have no relation to the condition of the supposed immortal soul of their belief. The difficulty increases when we discern that there is no conceivable principle in their system, upon which the death of a righteous man in the place of a wicked man, could be imagined an acceptable offering to a righteous God ; neither any principle upon which the resurrection of said righteous man should be necessary to complete the redemption effected by his death.

Turning from the confusion inseparable from a false view of the nature of man, and a false view of the divine dealing with sin, we find a key in the teaching of the apostles, which we have often had to look at in the course of these chapters, and need not now repeat beyond the brief definition, that the death of Christ was the representative condemnation of sin in the flesh (Rom. viii. 3), for the declaration of the righteousness of God (Rom. iii. 25), in the person of a righteous man possessing the very nature of the race condemned in Eden, with which condemnation, repentant sinners might identify themselves (Rom. vi. 4-6), with a view to their obtaining the forgiveness of their sins (Acts xiii. 38), through the intercession of this very man raised, because of his righteousness, for the justification of all who should come unto God by him (Rom. viii. 33-34 ; Heb. vii. 25).

This indubitable and most important view of the matter contains the key to all the Mosaic parables. We have been able to use the key successfully hitherto. How does it apply to the mystery of the two birds ? It points to both birds as referring to Christ (and only to sinners in so far as they afterwards come unto him). Both were *clean* birds. Cleanness as foreshadowing character could only apply to Christ. Both were the natural denizens of the air, which earth-cleaving man is not, but which might in a sense be affirmable of him who said, "I am from above. . . . I came down from heaven to do the will of Him that sent me." This heavenly bird of the air was killed in *an earthen vessel*—the very flesh and blood of the fallen human race ; *over running water*

—that is, in juxta-position with the Spirit of God, which inhabited him—which begat him, and fashioned him all his life long, as “righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, and redemption” for us “of God.” In the living bird, we have the *same kind of bird*, and therefore not the type of a sinner, but of the man represented by the first bird in the second phase of his redeeming work : resurrection, proclamation, and intercession. Why should the living bird be dipped in the blood of the dead bird on this view of matters? To represent the truth declared by Paul when he says that “by his own blood, he obtained eternal redemption” (Heb. ix. 12), and that it was through the blood of the everlasting covenant—his own shed blood—that he was brought again from the dead.

This is only a difficulty with those who do not realise the position occupied by Jesus while yet a mortal man. He was *the Sin Bearer* in every way in which such an expression can be understood—an expression which excludes by its very form all suggestion of his having been himself a sinner : a sinner could not be a sin-bearer in the sense of a taker-away of sin, for this required spotlessness—sinlessness—that resurrection might come after death had put the sin away. At the same time, it is an expression that involves this other idea, that there was something for him to be cleansed from. Three facts tell us what : he possessed our mortal nature, which is an heir of death because of sin : he came under the personal curse of the law in the mode of his death (Gal. iii. 13). God had laid on him the iniquities of us all in the sense that He was going to deal with him as a representative of all, that He might forgive us for his sake, “that he might be just and the justifier” at the same time (Rom. iii. 26).

That the second bird should be dipped in the blood of the first bird is, therefore, in harmony with what has since been revealed concerning Christ as the anti-typical sacrifice. He was cleansed by his own death from the stain of death to which he was subject in common with us, as a descendant of the first sinner, and as the appointed sufferer from it that he might take it away. When he rose, he was “the living bird let loose in the open field”—“made higher than the heavens,” “set far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come” (Heb. vii. 26 ; Eph. i. 21).

The cedar wood, the scarlet, and the hyssop associated with the living bird in its contact with the blood of the slain bird, typify the cleansing work which the risen Christ would perform among men through the apostles in the preaching of him as "the Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance and remission of sins"—the high priest to make intercession for us—the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved (Acts v. 31; Heb. ii. 17; Acts iv. 12).

Proximately, no doubt, the priests would understand the liberated bird to represent the restored leper. But there was a wider significance to the Mosaic parable which they did not discern. "The body (or substance) is of Christ." Saved sinners are represented by the liberated bird in so far as they are saved in Christ and in Christ alone, who is made "sanctification and redemption" for all who shall at the last be found acceptably in him.

Not only a leper, but any man having a running issue out of his flesh, was to be regarded as unclean till he was cured—unclean in himself and defiling to others (Lev. xv.). All contact with him in any way was forbidden. Everything he used or touched was to be considered as defiling, whether saddle, crockery ware, chair, or bed (verses 4-12); and any one touching any of these, was to be considered unclean for the whole day, and compelled to wash, both himself and clothing.

The advantage of such a law as a hygienic protection, is self-manifest, but it is the spiritual significance we are in search of. There are moral lepers and men whose mouths are a fountain of uncleanness—men comparable only to running sores in the community. "Avoid them," says Paul: "turn away"—"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them." Their company—their very touch—is defiling. Men of God may be thrown into contact with them, as the Mosaic type contemplates: but they have a resort for cleansing, which is also figured in the type: they bathe themselves in the water of the living word, and wait with a sense of contracted uncleanness till the next day, when sleep and prayer will bring a return of the purity that is native to the mind in which God dwells.

It is a singular circumstance that the natural infirmity of woman should have the same ceremonial contaminations attached to it (Lev. xv. 19-27). We naturally wonder why this natural infirmity should be classed with diseases calling for sacrificial

purification. As a mere process of nature—the mere humiliation of innocence—it might be supposed exempt from the typical reprobations associated with loathsome disease. But a higher view reveals itself when we remember that the reproductive function on the part of woman was embraced in the sentence of woe which her part in the transgression brought upon her (Gen. iii. 16).

Woman was primarily intended as a social and intellectual companion of man, and not as a breeder of species. It is part of the curse that this temporary function should have become so prominent—so afflictive to her, and so potent a cause of evil among men. From a subordinate faculty hidden away out of sight in modesty and purity, and destined to disappear altogether in the purposed perfection of the race upon earth, it has become the most powerful and degrading force among men, leading to “the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Pet. i. 4), even in decent society establishing “marrying and giving in marriage” as the one serious and characteristic business of life. It is, therefore, not so unnatural as at first sight it may appear, that this periodical weakness of woman, should be marked off by the law as one of the fruits of sin, calling for the tender treatment of holiness, and requiring the atonement of sacrifice for the re-instatement of the helpless sufferer.

It is noteworthy that this ordinance does for woman what circumcision does for man, as regards the repudiation of the flesh in the basis of acceptance. Both are the helpless subjects of vanity in the matter. Both are humbled and both are restored under the provisions of the law. If the woman after seven days of separation was invited to bring a sin-offering and a burnt offering, so the man, after the first seven days of his life, was circumcised, and at his presentation to the Lord, had to have similar offerings made on his behalf. As “there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus,” so there is neither male nor female as regards ground of boast before the Lord. Both have sinned : both are mortal, unclean and erring : and both are eligible for reconciliation under the institutions of the Lord, if both, like Zacharias and Elizabeth, “walk in all the commandments of the Lord blameless” (Luke i. 6).





## CHAPTER XXVIII.—DEATH.

IT is remarkable that death, merely as death, should be marked off for special reprobation as a cause of defilement, and a special purification provided. To touch a corpse was to be unclean seven days (Num. xix. 11). And if a man died in a tent, everything in the tent and every person entering the tent was contaminated for a like period. Every man touching even the bone of a man, or a grave, was to be unclean seven days: and if he neglected to perform the required purification, he continued unclean indefinitely, and rendered himself liable to be cut off from his people, in having “defiled the sanctuary of the Lord” (verses 13, 20).

“The cleansing consisted of being sprinkled by a clean person with a specially-prepared “water of separation” on the third day, after which, on the seventh day, the unclean person was to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water. If he omitted the sprinkling on the third day, the washing on the seventh day would be of no avail. For a tent and all the articles in it defiled by the occurrence of death, the law was that a clean person was to take hyssop and dip it in the water of separation, and sprinkle it upon the tent and all its contents.

And what was the water of separation? It was composed of the ashes of a slain heifer, concerning which, significant particulars are supplied. The Israelites were to bring to the high priest “a red heifer without spot, wherein was no blemish, and upon which never came yoke” (verse 2). The high priest was to lead the animal out of the camp, and an assistant was to slay it before his face. The priest was then to take of the blood with his finger and sprinkle it towards the tabernacle of the congregation seven times. The assistant was then to burn the body of the heifer—the priest casting cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet into the midst of the burning fire. Afterwards, a clean person—not the priest or his assistant—was to gather up the ashes of the heifer and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, to be kept for use as “a purification for sin.” When required, some of the ashes were

to be mixed in a vessel containing water taken from running water (verse 17).

The whole process was for cleansing, and *yet it defiled those who took part in it*. The priest was to be "unclean until the even" (verse 7), and was to "wash his clothes and bathe his flesh in water." His assistant was affected in the same way (verse 8). And so was the "clean" man who should gather up the ashes and store them up in a clean place as a purification for sin (verse 10).

There is a significance in all these details that ought to be fatal to the loose ideas entertained in some Gentile quarters as to the death of Christ, to the effect that it was not necessary and not required, except as the mere act of martyrdom or crowning act of a life of obedience. For we must never forget that all these ceremonies of the law were allegorical of the work of Christ. But before considering the details, let us ponder the general fact that the ashes of a slain heifer are provided as an indispensable purification from the taint acquired by contact with *death* in any shape or form, or in however indirect or distant a manner: the neglect of which ensured that "cutting off from the people" which the law so stringently provided in so many cases. Why should death merely as death be apparently treated with such abhorrence, and be made the subject of such stringent measures of purification?

This touches a subject high, deep, and wide. It calls attention to the origin of death in relation to man, and to the nature of life in relation to God. Both these subjects are liable to be skimmed over in this merely naturalistic age. Men find death a universal law of the animal world, so far as they have experience of that world upon earth: and they are apt to regard it as the inseparable corollary of life—the necessary and other half of the phenomenon of vitality. They see animals, great and small, born, grow, decay, and die: and they see man do the same. Therefore they write it down as a "law of nature," for which they do not require to seek a special origin, and to which, therefore, it is impossible they can attach the odious character suggested by these provisions of the Mosaic law regarding it. But it is evident there is a fallacy in this way of looking at the subject.

Though all life is by constitution transient in its form upon earth at present, it does not follow that human mortality is exactly in the same channel. It might seem to follow if we had nothing but the constitution of nature to consider: if we had no attested

revelation, we might be shut up to such a dispiriting thought, though even then, we could not but be impressed with the thought that man, the lord of creation, occupies a peculiar if inexplicable position among all the forms of life upon the earth. But in the presence of an attested revelation, we are bound to adjust revealed truth to natural fact. Moses and Christ cover the whole ground. We cannot in their presence shut our eyes to the revelation that so far as man is concerned, death is *the result of sin*, and not the necessary quality of the nature with which he was endowed in the first instance. This truth enables us to understand the peculiar detestation of death expressed by the ordinances we are considering. The presence of death—the touch of death—means the presence of sin, and sin is the awful thing that fools make a mock at: the crime of insubordination against the wish, will, or law of the Eternal Author and Proprietor of Creation.

If the ceremonial repudiation of death in the law of Moses have this pungent meaning, it naturally brings the question of life into view, and opens celestial realms. What is life? There is no more insoluble problem than this among students of nature. It is a *something inscrutable*. It was thought for a moment it had been found when protoplasm was discovered: but the idea was soon abandoned, for it was found that protoplasm was but a material used by the invisible energy of life in the building up of its forms, and that the development of life was impossible in sterilized materials. Life is only noted now as a fact of the incomprehensible order. Here revelation steps in—not that it makes the incomprehensible plain, for that is impossible: but that it reveals to us its proximate origin. Revelation not only tells us that “God is light and in Him is no darkness at all,” but that “with Him is the fountain of life” (Psa. xxxvi. 9), that He is the living God who giveth life unto all (Acts xvii. 25): that His Spirit creates life (Psa. civ. 30): that in Him we are embraced as a unity which fills heaven and earth (Jer. xxiii. 24); and from whose presence it is impossible we can go (Psa. cxxxix. 7; Heb. iv. 13). He dwells in light and is light and power, but by His Spirit, of which His person is the corporeal nucleus, He fills immensity—“Our Father, which art *in heaven*,” and yet who is everywhere present in the effluence of His Spirit, perceiving and influencing and controlling. He says, “I lift up my hand to heaven and say, I live for ever” (Deut. xxxii. 40), and yet “Can any hide himself

from me that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth?" (Jer. xxiii. 24).

This revelation of God supplies a conception of Him that is useful in the present connection. It exhibits Him in relation to life what the sun is with reference to the light of our solar system—with this difference, that He is life essential, inherent and inextinguishable, whereas the sun is but a gigantic mass of materials giving off light by electrical combustion—in fact, a huge electric light placed in space by the Creative Power. The Creative Power is ONE—"beside whom there is no God" (Isaiah)—illimitable in the subtle extension of the Spirit, yet a creative Being located "in Light," "dwelling" in heaven, yet having a simultaneous presence through boundless immensity. He is life in this aspect of totality. Life in other creatures is derived from him. He "giveth" it, as Paul expresses it.

Being, in essence, the life of the universe, and incorporating that life in divers forms for His own pleasure, we may understand how death, as the negation of His own work and the penalty of treason against Himself, should come under the peculiar reprobation manifest in the Mosaic ordinance, that contact with death made a man defiled with a defilement calling for instant cleansing.

From this ceremonial shadow, we easily go to the substance. The ashes of a *slain heifer* applied to a man defiled by death, was a *curing of death by death*. This is precisely what has happened in the antitype: Christ, "*through death*, destroyed that having the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. ii. 14). How could he do this if he had not in himself the power of death to destroy by dying? He *has* destroyed death. But in whom? In himself alone as yet. Believers will obtain the benefit by incorporation with him at the resurrection: but, at the present time, the victory is his alone. The fact is plain to everyone. Some who admire Christ are horror-struck at the idea of his having been a partaker of the Adamic condemned nature—a nature defiled by death because of sin. Their horror is due wholly to too great a confinement of view. They fix their attention on the idea of "defilement," without remembering that the defilement was undertaken expressly with a view to removal.

We must have God's revealed object in view. The power of death was there that it might be destroyed. If it was not there, it could not be destroyed. This is the mischief of what may be truly called the Papal view. By denying that Jesus came in the

very dying flesh of Adam, it changes the character of the death of Christ into a martyrdom or a punishing of the innocent for the guilty: instead of being what it is revealed to have been—a declaration of the righteousness of God that he might be just, while the justifier of those who have faith in it for the forgiveness of their sins (Rom. iii. 24-26).

The mischief of this lies in its mental effects. Reconciliation with God with a view to worship and everlasting communion, is based on a right discernment of His ways. A wrong idea of God's objects would unfit a man to be an acceptable worshipper, for God finds pleasure in our worship in proportion as we recognise our mutual relations. This is in fact the difference between one class of mankind and another, as revealed in all that has been written. A man who comes to Him with the idea that he has a right to be heard and to be saved, because his sins have been compounded for substitutionally in the death of Christ, as one man may satisfy the debts of another, is not in the frame of mind that is acceptable to Him. We must recognise that "grace reigns *through righteousness*" (Rom. v. 21), and that we are forgiven, not because another has been punished for our sins, but because we recognise this righteousness in the operation that put the Lord to death for the declaration of that righteousness and in the condemnation of sin in the flesh" (Rom. iii. 25 : viii. 3).

The subject may be difficult to understand, but this is only because it concerns the ways of God, which are as much higher than man's, as the heavens are higher than the earth (Isaiah lv. 8-9). God is ready to pardon, but not to put aside the ways of His righteousness. He aims at His own exaltation as well as our benefit, in the conferring of salvation: and therefore He adopts a method that humbles us in the dust while affording scope for His favour towards us without departure from justice and wisdom. It is a method that while inviting us to take of the water of life freely, puts us under everlasting obligation to Christ, through whom alone we can have access to Him or entrance into everlasting life. They are no empty words that the saints employ when they sing, "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. . . . Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and wisdom and riches and honour and glory and blessing."

It is because these principles are involved that John laid such stress on the necessity for believing that Jesus Christ had "come in the flesh." He directed the brethren to refuse association with

any man who denied this (2 Jno. verses 7-10 ; 1 Jno. iv. 3). True it is that the interdict related in the apostolic age to a class who maintained that the life and suffering of Christ were apparent only, not real ; but the objection that lies against that doctrine lies equally against the doctrine that it was a life and death in immaculate flesh, for in relation to the nature of man, that would have been as much only a seeming life and death as the other, and as effectually hides the real aims of the life and death of Christ in the flesh. It is *God's objects in the case* that constitute the essence of the matter, and these are as much hidden by the death of an immaculate Christ as the seeming death of a seeming Christ ; for if he were what the immaculatists maintain, there could be no condemnation of sin in the flesh, and no declaration of the righteousness of God, in his death.

As before mentioned, it is the interference with our mental adjustment to the divine harmony that is the great evil of wrong views on this matter.

It might be compared to the case of a man approaching us for association on the assumption formed by wrong reports he had heard, that we were open to a bribe, and that he could buy himself into our friendship. No man of character would accept approach on such an assumption, however friendly the man might be. How much less is the God of all grace willing to receive into friendship and life everlasting those who do not understand the principle of His whole procedure toward man—the exaltation of God and the subjection of man.

The details of the preparation of the ashes of the red heifer for the purification of death-tainted Israelites, are full of light on the question. The colour (*red*) tells us of sin-effects of some sort : and these were suffered by the Lord in being born of a condemned woman, and inheriting her weak and dying nature : its physical perfection (“*without spot or blemish*”) foreshadowed the spotless character of the Lord — without which, the deliverance to be wrought could not have been granted :—“*Upon which never came yoke,*” tells us of the Lord's total dedication to what, even at twelve years of age, he termed “*My Father's business.*” The beast was to be given to the high priest for offering, but another was to slay it (Num. xix. 3). Who was the antitypical high priest, we know : “*Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, offered up himself*” (Heb. ix. 11, 14). But the killing was done by the Romans as the instruments of the Jews. The high priest was to

“sprinkle the blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times,” which was fulfilled in the case of the “greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building,” into which he entered by or with his own blood: “into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. ix. 11, 24), and as for “*seven times*”: perfection: “one sacrifice for sins for ever” (Heb. x. 12). The body of the beast, with addition of *cedar wood*, the “sweet smelling savour” of righteousness: *hyssop*, cleansing power for others: and *scarlet*, the sins of his people laid upon him: was *burnt* in change into spirit nature. *The ashes* (that which is left) were to be gathered for purification, and stored in a clean place outside the camp. Christ raised, transformed, and taken away, was preserved in the testimony of these things, which was stored outside the Mosaic economy in the Church of the living God, for purification from death of all who believe.

*A man that was clean was to gather up the ashes*: the testimony concerning Christ was promulgated by Peter and his fellow-apostles, to whom Jesus said, “Ye are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you.” That is, justified men: it was not godless men who were used in the preaching of the gospel. Yet, notwithstanding the qualifying cleanness, the man gathering the ashes was to be “unclean until the even”—which is the state of all the servants of Christ, until the end of this defiled and Gentile day. They will wash and be clean on the change to the incorruptible. Because the whole operation was intended to purify from the taint of death (as any one may see in reading the whole of Num. xix.), on the principle of taking away death by death—therefore uncleanness attached to everything accessory to the process until the process was complete. The high priest himself partook of the uncleanness (see verse 7), as well as the man who should gather up the ashes (verse 10).

Now these things were shadows, of which we see the perfect object projecting them when we see Christ as a partaker of condemned human nature for its emancipation and purification on the principles and with the objects already fully indicated. Away from this, all is confusion.

The Mosaic imputation of uncleanness to any one touching a grave or a dead man, may enable us to understand why Jesus, having lain in the grave nearly three days, forbade Mary to touch him, because of his non-cleansing as yet (Jno. xx. 17). Though the Lord’s death had freed him from the law, Mary was still in

subjection to it, and therefore it became him who "magnified the law and made it honourable," to recognise its ordinances on the actions of those on whom it still had claims.

The object of the various ordinances for cleansing in the cases of defilement is thus stated in Lev. xv. 31: "Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness *that they die not in their uncleanness when they defile my tabernacle that is among them.*" This is calculated to convey, and was doubtless intended to convey (as one of the schoolmaster lessons of the law of Moses), an extreme sense of the holiness of God, and of His condescension in stooping to have any dealings with unclean man, and His kindness in providing conditions under which He would consent to accept human approaches. It is a solemn and imperative truth forced home upon us in many ways in the course of the divine revelation—from the fixing of the engraved plate "HOLINESS to the LORD" on Aaron's forehead, to the Apocalyptic declaration *that there shall not enter into the holy city anything that defileth.* How constant the declaration in the law, "I, the Lord your God, am holy" (Lev. xx. 26): how impressive the covering of the faces and feet of the seraphim in the presence of His glory. How emphatic the teaching of the appointments before us, that there would be death to those who defile the divine holiness.

How much needed is the lesson in a day like ours, when men are drifting further and further away from all reverence in divine directions. How much needed even among many who have been called to holiness, but of whom few seem adequately to realise the holiness of the calling to which they have been called. Paul gives the matter a pointed practical application in 1 Cor. iii. 17: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy." He had said "Ye are the temple of God," and again: "which temple ye are." It is this that gives point to the statement. And again: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit . . . therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. vi. 19-20). And again: "Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them" (2 Cor. vi. 16).

The lesson of the Mosaic shadow is plain in this bearing. Unholiness of body or spirit will evoke death: but the antitypical sacrifice brought in the hands in daily prayer, will ensure forgiveness if holiness is followed: "without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14). How far removed from the righteousness of God, and acceptability with Him, is the unbelieving and disobedient world, of all hues and complexions, who practice unholiness and irreverence with fearlessness, and even with presumptuous hope that they will be saved without any reference to God's appointments.



## CHAPTER XXIX.—MEATS.

IN view of the detestation in which death was legally held by the entire institution of the law of Moses, it is not wonderful that the Israelites should have been forbidden to eat "that which died of itself or that which was torn with beasts" (Lev. xvii. 15), or that the same imputation of uncleanness should arise in such a case, and the same necessity exist for purification. To eat that which had died of itself was contact with death in a more intimate form than by touching a dead body or entering a death-defiled tent.

It might be supposed that eating flesh-meat in any case would be the contracting of this defilement seeing that creatures must be dead before they can be eaten. It would have been so if the law of Moses had been a merely hygienic system like vegetarianism, or any other attempt to found human feeding on the natural effects of certain foods on the human system. But the law of Moses was not a hygienic system, though all its principles were in harmony with the best hygienic principles: it was a system of spiritual significances adapted to serve the double purpose of physical well-being and spiritual education. Therefore, while forbidding the eating of the flesh of animals that had died a natural death or been slain by other animals, it could consistently allow the eating of flesh properly killed: because although the physical state of the flesh might be the same in both cases, the allegorical bearings were not the same.

Flesh dying of itself would be flesh diseased, and flesh rent for the sustenance of beasts of prey would be flesh dying in animal wantonness or in accident—neither of which could prefigure the sinless Lamb of God laying down his life in obedience to the commandment of the Father. So far as physical considerations were concerned, the meat in question was fit enough to be eaten. Hence, the Israelites were at liberty to "give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates that he may eat it: or sell it unto an alien" (Deut. xiv. 21). As for themselves, they were "an holy people unto the Lord thy God," and therefore bound by all that was involved in the law given to them.

But we come now to another class of eating, or rather to other rules affecting the eating of the children of Israel. They were not only to abstain from "that which dieth of itself or is torn of beasts," but they were to abstain from the flesh of particular creatures even if properly slain; and this is not on the principle of "liking" them or not liking them, but on the principle of certain peculiarities characterising the creatures: "Every beast that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, that shall ye eat. . . . These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas and in the rivers, them shall ye eat. And all that have not fins and scales in the seas and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters and of any living thing which is in the waters, they shall be abomination unto you. Ye shall not eat of their flesh. . . . All fowls that creep, going upon all four, shall be abomination to you. Every creeping thing that flieth is unclean unto you. . . . Whatsoever goeth upon the belly and whatsoever goeth upon all four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye shall not eat, for they are an abomination" (Lev. xi. and Deut. xiv.)

In accordance with these principles of classification, lists were drawn out of creatures that might be eaten, and creatures that might not be eaten. *Among the former* were the ox, the sheep, the goat, the hart, the roebuck, the fallow deer, the wild goat, the pygarg, the wild ox and the chamois. *Among the latter*,—the camel, the coney, the hare, the pig, and many kinds of birds that could not be brought into the classification.

That these distinctions were what might be called artificial, is evident from Paul's remarks on meats, in Rom. xiv.: "I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself, but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." The words of Jesus were to the same effect: "Not that which goeth into a man, but that which cometh out of a man (evil thoughts, adulteries, &c.) *that* defileth the man."

Yet for the time being, while the law was in force, the distinctions between clean meats and defiling meats was real, and constituted part of the "righteousness which is of the law," touching which Paul was blameless. The question which the mind is concerned to probe is,—what spiritual principle was allegorically involved in the distinction made between clean and unclean beasts? We are aided somewhat in this quest by the

vision which was thrice shown to Peter to prepare him for a divinely-purposed message apparently inconsistent with the previous commandment of the law to stand apart from the Gentiles. By this vision, we see the unclean beasts stood for persons. The features of the vision are familiar to all who are familiar with the Scriptures. Still, they seem to need repeating in this connection :

“A certain vessel descended unto him as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners and let down unto the earth, wherein were *all manner* of four-footed beasts of the earth and wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him—Rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord ; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice came again to him the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” Peter doubted at first what this vision should mean ; but when afterwards, by the Spirit’s direction, he stood in the presence of a company of Gentiles in the house of Cornelius, to whom he was sent to open the door of faith, he understood. He said, “God hath shown me that I should not call any *man* common or unclean ” (Acts x. 28).

The beasts, then, stood for men, and the peculiarities constituting them clean and unclean respectively, were but typical of qualities in men that make them suitable or otherwise for divine use. That those peculiarities should be associated with and resultant on certain states of flesh rendering them fit or unfit for use as human food, is an added excellence to the type, but the type is the main thing for us to consider.

The physical qualities of the flesh rejected as food are very secondary. A good digestion can assimilate almost any edible substance to the requirements of nutrition. It was the divine law in the case that was the material element. Now that the objects of the law have been accomplished in Christ, the law has been taken away. It was nailed to his cross (Col. ii. 14). It “stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings and carnal ordinances, imposed till the time of the reformation ” and “could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience ” (Heb. ix. 10). But the lessons taught by the law remain.

And let it also be said, the discernments of wisdom, as bearing on natural things, remain. It does not follow because distinctions between clean and unclean beasts have been done away as a ground of acceptance to God, that therefore a wise man will eat

anything or drink anything without regard to their physical effects. It still remains a command to abhor that which is evil, and to cleave to that which is good and lovely and of excellent report. There are some things that are of excellent report with all men : such as bread, water, the fruits of the field, the rain of heaven, and a thousand things besides. But there are other things and other habits that are not of excellent report, because of bad effects on the best faculties of men—that weaken and lower and debase the best powers of men, and that are always found in association with evil. Such are opium, tobacco, spirits, and the alcoholic drinks in common use among the people. They are in high favour with the children of the devil everywhere. They are not to be found with those who follow after righteousness, temperance, chasteness, holiness, in preparation for eternal association with Him who is Holiness itself. While all extremes and crotchets are to be avoided, there is a middle ground of wisdom and excellence that affords a natural meeting place for the sons of God.

There are extremes of liberty from the law of Moses that degenerate to hurtful licence : and there are extremes of fastidiousness as to meats and drinks that are hurtful to the true aims of the Gospel. The good sense fostered by the apostolic epistles is not likely to be found at either end, but in the wholesome middle ground, where all things that may be lawful are not necessarily practised as expedient, because of dangers in various directions. While “no man is to judge another with respect to meat or drink or an holy day or the new moon or the sabbath days” (Col. ii. 16), we are to judge ourselves very severely under the law of Christ, which enjoins that we “neither eat flesh nor drink wine” if a brother is thereby stumbled, made weak or drawn into danger (Rom. xiv. 21).

It is the spiritual import of the law that is important for us to discern. What then was the import of those peculiarities upon which the cleanness or uncleanness of the animals was founded? What sort of men are they who correspond to the type of cud-chewing and hoof-parting animals? We are in the presence of at least the shadow of an answer when we hear the modern phrase “chewing the cud of reflection.” The literal act of chewing the cud is part of the process of preparing the food for assimilation by the animal tissues. The food without assimilation is useless for purposes of nutrition. Digestion is the grand requisite. For gross organisations, no great thoroughness is necessary in the process :

a short alimentary canal is sufficient for the carnivorous races. The lion and the tiger bolt their food and it is converted quickly. But in the higher races, where a finer result is aimed at, in producing food for man in the flesh of the ox and sheep, there is a greater elaborateness in the structure provided for the conversion of grass and turnips into beef and mutton. The chewing of the cud belongs to the greater elaborateness of structure : the thorough preparation of food for conversion into life is the essential idea of this act.

It is not difficult to go from the typical to the spiritual in this matter. There is spiritual food and there is spiritual life that results from the eating and assimilation of that food. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them," said Jeremiah. "The entrance of thy word giveth light," wrote the Psalmist. "He that eateth me shall live by me," said Christ ; "the words that I speak unto you are spirit and life." Men, then, who are given to turning over in their minds the divine knowledge conveyed in the words of truth are men who spiritually chew the cud. They are spiritually ruminant animals. They are the clean among men. As Jesus said, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

There is nothing mystical about this. It is the obvious fact that a man with the word of God stored in his mind, is a clean man by comparison with the man in whom the mere mind of the flesh prevails. He is clean in thought, clean in action, clean in all his ways—in a word, holy. His holiness is not the result of natural organization, but of the presence in that organization of the truth which sanctifies. The truth is the sanctifying power, and this not merely as a thing once learnt, but a thing constantly read and thought about.

The sheep nibbles the grass all the day long. Men of God are in harmony with the command which says "Be thou in the fear of God all the day long." The sheep is constantly growing as a sheep. If it ceased its activities as a living animal, it would die. In the antitype, the process of spiritual life is constantly going on. There is no arrest or suspension. The word of God is read and pondered every day : God is thanked every day, "in sincerity and truth," both at meal tables, and by bedside night and morning. God is before the mind every day, as "a factor" in all life's calculations. The truth is much more than a knowledge of the fact that man is mortal and that Christ is the Saviour and that the

Kingdom is coming. It is a knowledge of God as the possessor of heaven and earth and the weigher of actions. This knowledge cannot be retained except by the constant reading and reflection typified by the chewing of the cud by the clean animals—reckoned clean because they did so.

Israel were to eat such animals. Men figuratively eat one another in taking in what they say and do. They assimilate to each other by the act : men become like one another by intercourse. Here is where it becomes wisdom to choose your company, and not consort with fools because they are agreeable. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise." The men who chew the cud, not only benefit one another, but are pleasing to God. "He taketh not pleasure in fools." "The Lord taketh pleasure in His people." "The Lord hath chosen the man that is godly for himself." This is the testimony of the word, and it is in harmony with reason. Creation is for God's pleasure, little as we may realise the idea of the Creator having pleasure. "For thy pleasure they (all things) are and were created." But there are things in which He takes no particular pleasure. "The Lord taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man, or in the strength of a horse." Mere mechanical energy or artistic beauty is but an element in the scheme of things. Enlightened intelligence in harmony with Himself is the apex of the scheme. This is the centre of the circle. Apart from this, other things and qualities are but as the disjointed parts of a machine. This intelligence is the result of observation and reflection of which God has made the human brain capable. Knowledge and understanding directed to Himself are the conditions in the human mind that afford Him pleasure. The majority of men have no pleasure in this knowledge. "They say unto God, Depart from us : we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." They prefer sensation on the basis of the instincts which they forget are God's invention with a right place when He is head. "They hate knowledge, and do not choose the fear of the Lord." They are not given to reflection : they are given to sociality, conviviality, emulation, excitement. They do not chew the cud : they belong to the unclean animals. It is a great revelation that God approves of those only who know Him and delight in His memory and His service and His praise. It is a revelation that comes to us in many ways, and in none more forcibly than in the command to Israel that only those animals that chewed the cud were to be eaten, and that all others were to be unclean and defiling.

But this was not the only qualifying characteristic. The animal must not only chew the cud, but must *divide the hoof*: "The camel because he cheweth the cud but divideth not the hoof, he is unclean unto you. The coney because he cheweth the cud but divideth not the hoof, he is unclean unto you. And the hare because he cheweth the cud but divideth not the hoof, he is unclean unto you" (Lev. ix. 4-6). The hoof is a horny enclosure of the foot in a hermetically sealed case, which, while contributory to the comfort of the animal, disqualifies it for walking on any but level ground. It cannot clamber among rocks or difficult places. It is liable to stumble on uneven ground: whereas, when the hoof is divided, and each half is parted into claws (Deut. xiv. 6), the creature can easily walk on hill sides and even among rocky places—as in the case of the goat or sheep. *Surefootedness* is the result of dividing the hoof and parting the clefts.

It does not seem difficult to see why this should be selected as a typical characteristic of acceptable men. "He that walketh wisely walketh surely." "Walk in wisdom towards them that are without." "Walk as becometh the gospel." This "walking" is the practical direction of our affairs. A man who failed in this would be a very unsatisfactory kind of man, however much he might be given to *ruminating* on the word of God. A man all theory and no action—first class at describing what ought to be done, but with no gift at practising what he preached—would be the poor sort of creature signified by that which only chewed the cud but did not divide the hoof.

The other state of the case would be equally abortive—that is, where there might be excellent capacity for execution, but no understanding of what the will of God required. This case is also provided against in the type: "The swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase" (Deut. xiv. 8).

It is a little singular that this should be the particular animal that jars on Jewish susceptibility and appeals to Gentile gastronomy. The law of God made many creatures unclean besides the pig, and condemned many things besides the eating of swine's flesh. Yet we hear little of these others, and see no concern for the will of God in a hundred other matters of which He has spoken, which is proof that it is not regard for the will of God, but zeal for a human crotchet that is at the bottom of this pork and anti-

pork controversy. Concern for the will of God would show itself in everything that God has expressed His mind about.

Still, it is dramatically interesting that a creature that symbolises indifference to the will of God in combination with executive efficiency in matters in general, should be the creature that, above all others, God's nation is known for detesting, and that the Gentiles should be distinguished for championing—not that either of them wittingly play their part with reference to the significance involved. The Jew opposes the use of pork more than other things forbidden because the Gentile contends more for that than for other forbidden animals. But the fact remains that the one creature of all the unclean creatures that is the bone of contention between Jew and Gentile, is the one that represents the moral combination that is the most odious to God: neglect and indifference to His will in association with cleverness and efficiency in human directions. It is rather interesting and pretty that it should be so, though the nature of the situation is not discerned among the parties to the strife.

The hygienic (that is, the merely human) bearing of the controversy is the least important. It is an affair of digestive capacity merely. For those who can turn pork into flesh and blood without too great a stress on the gastric powers, pork is as good as any other form of food. But in the artificial life of modern times, few have the robustness of stomach needful to cope with its fibrous density, and to chemically quench its febrile tendencies. Therefore for most people, it is best left alone. But this is a question of individual judgment and experience, and not of divine law.

Divine law would leave no liberty whatever. A thing forbidden would be a thing unlawful to touch, even if "good for food and pleasant to the eyes, and much to be desired to make one wise." But pork is not forbidden. It was forbidden to the Jews, but the law that forbade it has been done away (2 Cor. iii. 7-11, 14: Col. ii. 14-17; Gal. iv. 21-31: v. 1-4; Heb ix. 9-12). The rule now in vogue among the friends of Christ is the one formulated by Paul: "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (1 Tim. iv. 4). He says this in contrast to those who should arise among the brethren "commanding to abstain from meats."

But things signified by the distinction established by the law between things clean and unclean, remain unchangeable parts of

eternal truth—that those men only are acceptable to God who are given to feeding and reflecting on His truth, and to directing their ways in harmony with His commandments.

The classification of fowls and fishes as clean and unclean was necessarily based upon different features from those selected in the case of animals: but the lesson involved, though more dimly discernible, appears to be the same.

The birds forbidden are all those that are birds of prey and feed on carrion, such as the eagle, the vulture, the raven, the owl, the swan, &c., which would naturally stand as the types of men of low tastes and predaceous instincts.

The fishes forbidden are also those from which human appetite would naturally shrink; all those approaching the reptilious type, in lacking fins and scales, and having therefore a heavy, greasy texture of flesh. Scales and fins appear to sustain the same analogy to chewing the cud and dividing the hoof: the scales rendering the creature more accessible to the watery element of life around it than when clad in an impervious skin; and the fins giving greater power of guidance in "the paths of the seas" than where motion has to be obtained by contortion of the body.

Among insects, all mere creepers, or having more feet than four, were forbidden as food. "Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon all four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them shall ye not eat, for they are an abomination. Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby. For I am the Lord your God. Ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves and ye shall be holy, for I am holy. I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. Ye shall therefore be holy for I am holy. This is the law of the beasts and of the fowl and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth—to make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten" (Lev. xi. 42-47).

All that is odious and unwholesome among the creatures is forbidden; all that is beautiful, innocent, and good for food, is allowed. We have only to apply this in the amplest way to see with new force the spiritual comeliness that is required at the hands of those whom God will take into His eternal fellowship.



## CHAPTER XXX.—NAZARITESHIP.

WE have already considered the provision made for the special expression of gratitude in the form of free-will and thank-offerings. But there was a higher form of this privilege. It was made possible for a man to give himself entirely to God for a stated time, or to dedicate anything belonging to him perpetually. All Israel belonged to God, as Moses so frequently declared (Deut. vii. 6 : xiv. 2). But opportunity was provided for individual consecration to God, on the part of such as might feel moved in that direction under special circumstances. Man or woman was at liberty to vow a vow of separation for a certain time : that is, they might resolve to dedicate themselves exclusively to God for a specified time.

This was the case of the Nazarite, which may repay special consideration, as regards the rules laid down for their guidance, both in their literal bearing and their typical significance.

The Nazarite, or separated one, was not to drink wine during the time of separation, nor to eat anything yielded by the vine, whether grapes or raisins, or vinegar, or husk, or kernel. Nor was he or she to touch strong drink of any kind (Num. vi. 3). There must have been a reason for this. A similar injunction was laid on the high priest while they ministered in the tabernacle ; and we get a slight clue to its reason in their case : " Do not drink wine or strong drink, thou (Aaron) nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die : it shall be a statute for ever, throughout your generations, and *that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean*" (Lev. x. 9). It is the nature of strong drink to dull the mental eye, and to render the mind insusceptible to spiritual considerations. It does this by the artificial and sensuous glow which it kindles in the faculties. It is this feeling of electrical elation resulting from the over-stimulus of the nerve-fibre that gives drink its charm with all men who are prone to the use of it. That it should be forbidden to the high priest in the act of officiation, and to the Nazarite during the days of his separation,

is proof that the things done under its inspiration are not acceptable to God. It may not be impossible to understand this.

Which of us cares for a cordiality that is plainly due to the fumes of the whisky-bottle or wine-cup? The love we appreciate is the love that is due to the pure action of healthy reason. Could anything more abhorrent be imagined than a jocose high priest? Or a high priest artificially strung up with strong drink for the performance of his duty? "Doth not nature itself teach us" that the pure and unbiassed discernments of reason, acting on the commandments of God, could alone be acceptable in such a relation of things? We may here understand why Jesus, the great anti-typical Nazarite, refused, before crucifixion, to drink of the "vinegar, mingled with gall" (Matt. xxvii. 34), which would have dulled pain, and enabled him to go through the ordeal of pain, with an endurance not derived from faith, but from mere physical stupefaction.

The bearing of this interdict of wine or strong drink on the Nazarite cannot be obscure. The essence of a Nazarite's separation was the mental attitude of such an one to God. The separation was a separation "unto the Lord." Such a man's or woman's separation would be a merely nominal affair if they were at liberty to relieve the tedium of their separation by exhilarating potations, or by the use of any substance calculated to elate by mere physical action. Their minds could not in such a state be fixed on God, but would be floated in the turbid sensationalism of artificially stimulated faculties—pleasant, it may be, to the person, but not to God, who delights to be the object of intelligent, humble and thankful contemplation.

What may be the typical significance of this institution of the law? We have to be careful in the application, because wine is used with such a variety of significations. It is used to represent the fruit of obedience which God desired at the hands of the house of Israel (Isaiah v. 1-4; Matt. xxi. 33-41). It is used to represent the blessedness which God will dispense from Zion to all nations in Abraham (Isa. xxv. 6). It is used to represent the blood of Christ shed in righteousness and in sorrow (Matt. xxvi. 28-29). It is used to represent the false principles ministered to all nations by the False Church of the Seven Hills (Rev. xviii. 3). It could not possibly represent either of the first three in the case of the Nazarite. God could not mean to signify by type that there must be no obedience in the Nazarite's life, or no foretaste of the coming

blessedness, or no self-sacrifice for righteousness sake. Neither could He mean the doctrines of Rome in the historic sense, which had not yet become historic.

Is there any other sense? There is another sense that blends with the fourth of those already enumerated. We may discern it in the Bible description of wine as "wine that *maketh glad the heart of man.*" The gladness that comes from this source is gladness without a reason—a mere chemical ecstasy—a gladness resulting from the quickening of the action of the heart by artificial stimulant. There are various ways of inducing this kind of gladness. There are theological ways which we may take as illustrated in the exertions of "revival meetings." A man who is the slave of sin goes into one of these whirlpools of excitement, in which the air is electrically surcharged by the currents given off by hundreds of excited nervous systems. The preacher of the moment is the operator. The sinner comes into the "circuit." He has been cuffed and kicked in the cold world outside: here he gets melted in the gratification of finding himself declared an object of love: an experience so different from his wont that it gradually thaws him. He is told he has only to believe that Christ died for him, and he will become as precious to God as the angels. The shouting and the praying lashes the electrical atmosphere into waves and pulsations that at last overwhelm him, and he surrenders, and is led in tears of self-pity to the penitent bench, where he reaches the climax of an ecstasy which is generated by the action of animal magnetism stimulated by contributory nerves in the room, and wrought into action through the power of a thought in which there is barely an element of truth.

The application of this to the matter before us would seem to be this—that there must be no working up into mere animal excitements in those who wish to be acceptable to God. The dancing dervish and the inebriated sectary of every description are alike odious to God—as all rhapsodical self-centred friendships would be to man. The separation of the Nazarite, in being dissociated from the possible action of wine and strong drink, must be a separation founded on quiet reason, producing gratitude for benefactions calmly discerned; and holiness, from beauty and obligation intellectually perceived; and praise, from total dependence on the wisdom and power of God recognised. All men now called by the gospel to separation, are antitypical Nazarites. "Come out from among them and be ye separate" (Be ye Nazarites) "and I will receive

you." Their Nazariteship is uncontaminated with the wine of sectarianism, with its howlings and shoutings and spiritual inebriations in general. They are quiet, calm, though fervent men of enlightened reason, like Christ, the great Nazarite-in-Chief. They do not think to be heard for their much speaking in prayer (Matt. vi. 7-8). They do not cry out and shout and cut themselves in the excess of superstitious devotion, like the priests of Baal, but are like Elijah in his few, quiet, effectual words of truth (1 Kings xviii. 26-38). They do not cover the altar of the Lord with weeping and crying out—thinking to make up for their iniquitous practices by the excess of pietistic genuflexions (Mal. ii. 13-14). In understanding, they are not children: in understanding, they are men (1 Cor. xiv. 20). They are to be distinguished from theatrical religionists of all kinds, as the true is always to be discerned from the false: the natural from the artificial: the sincere from the hypocritical and the superstitious. They are Nazarites—unexcited by spiritual wine—uninflamed with strong drink, but radiant only with the calm brightness of rational and devout consecration to God.

Next, "no razor shall come upon his head until the days be fulfilled in which he separateth himself unto the Lord: he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow" (Num. vi. 5). It is possible we see the explanation of this in the reason given for cutting off the hair in the case of God's expostulation with Jerusalem: "Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation in high places; for *the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath*" (Jer. vii. 29). To cut off the hair is the reverse of an act of self-exaltation: it takes away from a man's dignity: it is the natural token of personal abasement, and this token was exacted because of transgression. But in the case of a man separating himself to the Lord—not transgression, but the reverse—obedience—consecration—was the normal state. Therefore, uncut hair was a suitable adjunct of Nazariteship. There are times and connections when, "if a man have long hair, it is a shame to him" (1 Cor. xi. 14): but in the case of the Nazarite, it was otherwise. It was both the token of consecration, and the condition of God's succouring presence with the wearer, as Samson found, when he revealed the secret of his strength to Delilah (Judges xvi. 17-21).

The anti-typical significance may be discerned in those spiritual characteristics that are enjoined upon those who have

become, in Christ, "an holy people to the Lord." It does not belong to them to be always in the hair-tearing remorse of the wicked. "Let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works" (Heb. vi. 1). "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" (Rom. vi. 2). The answer of a good conscience will impart to them that "spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," which Paul speaks of. "What communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial?" Uncut hair speaks of faithfulness intact.

"He shall come at no dead body," that is, in the ordinary relations of life. "He shall not make himself unclean for his father or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die, because the consecration of his God is upon his head. All the days of his separation, he is holy unto the Lord" (Num. vi. 6-8). The Nazarite would therefore be inconveniently placed sometimes in his domestic relations. Funerals of relatives happening during the time of his separation could have none of his attention: and he would appear in the light of a person without natural affection. It would not really be so; the Nazarite would be none the less a lover of his friends, because he could not take part in the usual demonstrations of sorrow: it would merely be the case of one love being over-ridden by another and a greater. Duty to God sometimes interferes with what we would do for man. The duty to God in this case was the duty of separation from the defilement connected with death. It does not seem possible to miss the meaning of this, in its typical bearing.

Jesus, the great Nazarite, made light of natural relationship in spiritual connections. A young man whom he called to follow him, wished to go and first say farewell to those that were at home. Christ's answer has appeared rough to those who cannot judge by any higher rule than the flesh: "No man, having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke ix. 62). To another, he said, "Follow me: but he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." Christ's rejoinder was of the same character as in the other case: "Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." Jesus would not have us unmindful of natural duties, but he asserts the superior claims of those that have to do with God. He affirms a stronger connection and a higher relation in the case of those who are related in God, than those who are connected in

flesh. "Who are my mother and my brethren? and stretching forth his hand towards his disciples, he said: Behold my mother and my brethren, for whosoever shall *do the will of my Father* who is in heaven, the same is *my brother and sister and mother.*" This declaration had all the greater point from the circumstances that drew it forth, namely: the circumstance of his mother and his brothers, calling for him to take him home. One of the crowd said to him, "Thy mother and thy brothers without seek for thee." The words quoted were his rejoinder.

Why should Jesus have thus made light of the ties of natural friendship? Because of what natural friends are, in the light of the Nazarite law. They are defiled by death. They are mere fellow-buds on the Adamic tree, which is a tree of death. Those who are truly sanctified by the truth are delivered from this defilement. Though physically the same as their relatives, it is only for a time they will remain so. In their mental relations, they stand new men in Christ, "chosen of God and precious:" "elect according to the fore-knowledge through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth"; and this alteration in their mental relations will lead to a complete alteration in their physical state in due time, when that takes place which Paul variously calls "the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 23), the swallowing up of mortality in life (2 Cor. v. 4), the putting on of immortality by "this mortal" (1 Cor. xv. 54), the changing of this vile body by the Lord that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body (Phil. iii. 21). Because therefore of the great difference between those who have come to belong to God by the belief and obedience of the truth, and those who are mere sons of Adam unwashed from their sins, it is not for the former to have close dealings with the latter. The anti-typical application of the Nazarite law forbids it. They are not to be defiled by the dead. They are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. They are not, as the children of light, to have communion with darkness. They are not to love the world, nor the things that are in the world, for all that is in the world, being pursued in disobedience to God, is displeasing to God; and becomes the mere "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." The children of this world are inspired by the flesh in all their ideas; and "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." All these things are testified (2 Cor. vi. 15; Jno. ii. 15; Rom. viii. 8), and nowhere more forcibly than in this object-lesson

of the Nazarite holding aloof from all contact with the dead during the days of his separation.

But it might happen that some person might "die very suddenly by the Nazarite" (Num. vi. 9), and thus the Nazarite would involuntarily contract the defilement which he had been taking pains to avoid. What then? The Nazarite was reckoned in that case as having "sinned by the dead" (verse 11), and he was required to "offer two turtles or two young pigeons" at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. If such a thing happened before the period of his Nazariteship had run out, it was to be considered that all the days that had gone before were "lost" (Num. vi. 12), and that the days of his separation had to be begun over again.

Several important things are suggested by this. It shows the extreme scrupulosity of the divine law when a Nazarite could "sin by the dead" without intention on his part. We may be affected by this in the antitype. One "dying suddenly by us" would be one who had been alive—consequently a brother falling away from the faith. The type points to the possibility of our being defiled by such an one. Yet the occurrence must be "by us"—near us—in contact with us—before it can have a defiling effect. That is, there must be intimacy and toleration and perhaps more, a co-operation amounting to saying "God speed," and so a "partaking of their evil deeds" (2 Jno. 11). Personal friendship often interferes with a clear and healthful discrimination of duty in divine matters, and so the guilt of an offender against God may cleave to us. Eli, though disapproving of the wrong ways of his sons, sinned in "restraining them not" (1 Sam. iii. 13). Jesus told the brethren at Thyatira that though they were not behind-hand in "works, charity, service, faith and patience," he had this against them, that "thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants." There is such a thing as being "partakers of other men's sins" (1 Tim. v. 22). We may "sin by the dead" while not sinning in our own action. The line to pursue is indicated by Jude: "Of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (verse 23).

If there were no remedy for the defilement arising from "one dying suddenly by us," the occurrence would be fatal: but here the type comes to our aid. Though the preceding days of separation are "lost" by defilement (in harmony with what is written in

Ezekiel, that "when the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness . . . all the righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned"), there can be renewal and resumption, except in the cases reserved in Heb. x. 26, where we are informed that in case of wilful sin after enlightenment, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." The defiled Nazarite was to bring a sin-offering and a burnt-offering to make atonement, after which, he might resume the days of his separation, repeating those that had been lost.

What is this, but the typical inculcation of confession and supplication in the name of Christ—the antitypical sin-offering and burnt-offering. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." We must not forget God's kind disposition towards even the wicked, as when He says: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon" (Is. lv. 7). If God is ready thus to favourably receive unrighteous men (saying, "Have I any pleasure at all in the death of the wicked?"), what may not those hope for who walk in His fear all the day long, but it may be, stumble occasionally out of the right way? The question is answered in the beautiful declaration of *Psa. ciii.*: "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him: and as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." It might be thought that the scrupulosities of the law were inconsistent with these wide-sweeping declarations of God's kindness: but this feeling disappears when we remember the constant provision for sacrifice and forgiveness. And when we discern in those sacrifices (taken in connection with the sacrifice of Christ, which they all foreshadowed) the maintenance of God's supremacy as the foundation of His grace, we can but exclaim with Paul: "Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out . . . for of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever" (*Rom. xi. 33*).

On the completion of the days of his separation, the Nazarite was to offer at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, through the priest, one he-lamb for a burnt-offering, and a ewe lamb for a sin-offering, and a ram for a peace-offering—all without

blemish ; and also a basket containing cakes and wafers of unleavened bread, with their appropriate meat-offering and drink-offering. He was then to shave off his hair and put it in the fire on the altar, under the peace-offering being consumed. The priest was then to take the shoulder of the ram and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and put them in the hands of the Nazarite, and then wave them for him before the Lord—after which, the Nazarite was free from his vow of separation, and at liberty to drink wine (Num. vi. 13-20).

If we had not already given a full consideration to the subject of burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, peace-offerings, &c., there would be more in this enumeration of the closing ceremonies of Nazariteship than could be dealt with in the rest of this chapter. It is sufficient in the light of that consideration, to give them the application they seem to have to the matter in hand.

In their literal bearing, they were a convenient and impressive termination to the special time of consecration which godly Israelites might desire now and then to impose upon themselves. But that use is now past, and we have but the typical significance to apply. Taking the whole period of the Nazariteship's separation to stand, in parable, for the life of probation to which the Gospel calls men, we may discern without difficulty the meaning of a ceremonial that proclaims the essentiality of sacrifice to the final acceptability of the most faithfully kept time of separation. Though the grace of God proposes the acceptance and glorification of faithful men—faithful in their separation from the evil world in which they "pass the time of their sojourning" (and will not accept those who are otherwise than faithful in this), yet it is not on account of their own righteousness that the stupendous gift of immortality is bestowed. It is on account of their deferential and grateful and humble submission to what has been accomplished in Christ. If God dealt with them on their own ground merely, they could not be saved, for they are all, without exception, "under sin" in the first case : sinners by extraction and character. It is the act of grace to forgive, and while this act of grace takes the shape of "counting" certain things for righteousness imparting a "right to the tree of life," it never for a moment abates its character as an act of grace. It is true to the last (and for ever) that "*by grace* are ye saved THROUGH FAITH" (and the obedience thereof). The *saving* contains forgiving as its essential feature. Without forgiving, saving could not be ;

—and this forgiving is “for Christ’s sake”—Christ, the obedient ; Christ, the crucified : Christ, the risen : Christ, the intercessor. We are “justified by faith,” and so have “peace with God” (Rom. v. 1). “It is of faith *that it might be by grace*” (iv. 16) : “not of works lest any man should boast” (Eph. ii. 8).

Consequently, when the days of separation are all over for God’s Nazarites—when the days of their successful conflict with evil are done, and the time has come at the Lord’s return to “give every man his own reward, according to his own labour” (1 Cor. iii. 8), it will still be as forgiven men—not as faultless men—that they will enter into life—forgiven because of their submission to the divine institutions appointed with that view. They will all be eligible to take part in the song which proclaims the chosen saved through “Him who hath washed them from their sins in his own blood.” Their recognition of this fact will not cease with their attainment of the immortal nature. Rather will they recognise it with a distinctness and rapture unknown in the days of their flesh. They will then see with a clearness not possible in the dim days of mortal faculty, that they owe it all to Christ—in his life, death, and resurrection—that they have their immortal place under God’s glorious sun. They will be ready to say with David : “Not unto us, O Lord ; not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.”

This is doubtless the typical counterpart of the ordinance that required the faithful Nazarite on the completion of the days of his separation, to bring all the sacrifices that prefigured Christ ; present and wave a representative part through the priest ; burn his hair (surrender mortal nature for the transformation that waits by Spirit) ; and then go forth to drink freely of that wine which in flesh-nature tends to disorder, but in Spirit-nature will be drunk as a harmless exhilarant, and as the symbol of the feast of gladness that God will yet spread for men upon the earth.





## CHAPTER XXXI.—GIFTS TO GOD.

HERE are moments in every spiritual man's life when gratitude yearns for special vent of utterance—times when he feels strongly what David said on a certain occasion, "I will not offer unto the Lord my God that which hath cost me nothing." Words in a sense cost him nothing : he longs to do something more than offer praise. It is not that he supposes God can be enriched by anything he can give, or that he can put God under obligation, or that he can establish a claim to His favour by anything he can do : for such a man earnestly recognises above all things what David also said when he handed over incomputable treasure of gold and silver to the divine service : "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee : all this store that we have prepared cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own" (1 Chron. xxix. 14-16). Yet he feels an intensity of gratitude that can only find satisfactory expression in deeds of self-deprivation—above and beyond the free-will and thank-offerings of sacrifice provided for in the routine service of the tabernacle.

For such times, the law made suitable provision. A man might make "a singular vow" concerning anything not already under divine claim (Lev. xxvii. 2). He might "sanctify to God" anything under his control : himself ; an animal (clean or unclean) ; a house ; a field ; or part of a field. All these particulars are set forth in Lev. xxvii. He might not consecrate the first-born of any beast, because that was already the Lord's, nor for the same reason could he consecrate "the tithe of the land, whether seed or fruit." Any object lawfully consecrated to God might be purchased back again on payment of a sum to be fixed according to what might be called the tariff of the tabernacle. In that case, the money paid was reckoned as the thing that had been consecrated. This was a convenient arrangement both for the man making the vow, and the priests into whose hands the consecrated things might come for administration. It might often happen that a thing given to God might be essential to the proper working of a man's affairs ; or that it might not be capable of being turned to any use

in the hands of the priests. A commutation in money relieved the transaction in such cases from its embarrassments, while at the same time preserving the principle of the inviolability of vows.

The same merciful adjustability was shown in carrying out the assessment of value made by the priests in cases of commutation. If it happened in the redemption of a man's own person that the priest put a higher value on him than the man could pay, the priest was directed to reduce the assessment in harmony with what he might ascertain to be the man's ability to pay. If the consecrated thing was "a beast, whereof men bring an offering to the Lord," it was to be neither altered, changed, nor redeemed. In case of any attempt to substitute the consecrated thing by an inferior animal, both the consecrated thing and the exchange were to be impounded. But an unclean beast, or a house, could be redeemed by paying a fifth over and above the valuation put upon them by the priest; or if it was a field or part of a field dedicated after the year of jubilee: if not redeemed before the next jubilee, or if sold to another man, then at the next jubilee, it went into the hands of the priests, as a field holy to the Lord for ever. But if redeemed, it was to be resumed by the original possessor at the year of jubilee. Persons sanctifying or separating themselves to the Lord could be redeemed by a money payment fixed by age, according to the following scale:—

	[Male]	[Female]
From 1 month to 5 years	5 shekels	3 shekels
„ 5 years to 20 years	20 „	10 „
„ 20 years to 60 years	50 „	30 „
„ 60 years and over	15 „	10 „

But there were circumstances in which the law of redemption was suspended. "No devoted thing that a man shall *devote unto the Lord* of all that he hath, both *man and beast*, and of the field of his possession shall be *sold or redeemed*: every *devoted thing is most holy* unto the Lord. None devoted which shall be *devoted of men* shall be redeemed: *it shall surely be put to death*" (Lev. xxvii. 29).

This at first sight appears to be inconsistent with the liberty of redemption provided in the other cases. The inconsistency disappears when the difference between the two words—"sanctify" or consecrate and "devoted"—is realised. They are different terms in the Hebrew—KODESH (sanctify), meaning *to separate or set apart*; and CHARAM (devote), *to hand over without reservation*. It would seem as if a man, in the ardour of his loyalty, was at

liberty, if he chose, to surrender the option of redemption, in the act of giving a thing to God. This appears to be the difference between sanctifying and devoting a thing to God. A separated thing might be redeemed, but a devoted thing was God's for ever. Samuel was an illustration of the two combined (1 Sam. i. 26-28). He was "lent to the Lord," and therefore could not be taken back, but he was not a "devoted thing," and therefore the law requiring death was not applicable. In the case of Jephthah's daughter, it was a case of utter devotion (Jud. xi. 31), and came under the law of Lev. xxvii. 29, as Jephthah recognised in the verse referred to.

It is a matter provoking enquiry, why there should be this difference between things "sanctified" and things "devoted." Why should death be required in the latter place and not in the former? It is permissible to seek a reason in a system of things which, besides being "a rule of national and individual life" was "an enigmatical enunciation of divine principles and purposes." Perhaps we see the reason in the difference between life in mortal flesh and life in the incorruptible nature of the spirit. It is possible to sanctify mortal life to God, but this is a merely preparatory, tentative, probationary thing, and never, in its blemished and ineffectual character, could be a finality. It may even be taken back by the offerer in a practical apostasy. The only service that can be truly fit and final is the service rendered in the power, perfection, and glory of the spirit nature. This is a life of pure devotedness to God, both as regards entirety, acceptability, and undistractedness by other occupations. But to reach such a life, the devoted man must die to this present life—either by the process of consumption by spirit power at the appearing of Christ if alive, or by death, resurrection, and change in the same way and at the same time.

There are several dim hints, in apostolic allusions, at this difference. Thus Paul says concerning Christ, "In that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, *he liveth unto God*" (Rom. vi. 10). And again, "Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by *the power of God*" (2 Cor. xiii. 4). And again Peter (1 Pet. iii. 18 : iv. 1-2), "Christ hath once suffered for sins . . . being put to death in the flesh but *quickened by the Spirit*. . . . Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, for he that hath suffered in the flesh *hath ceased from sin*, that

he should no longer live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." Again Paul (Rom. vi. 7), "He that is dead is *freed from sin*." In the Apocalyptic exhibition of the final perfection, there is the same suggestion of a true service being only possible in the spirit state: "A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. . . . And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and *his servants shall serve him*. And they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there. . . . Therefore are they before the throne of God and *serve him day and night in his temple*: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them" (Rev. xxii. 1-5 : vii. 15).

For what other reason should things devoted to God be put to death under a typical system except to intimate that God can only be fitly served in the state that comes after "this mortal," and that all our present sanctifications are but preparatory and provisional?

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On the face of it, it might seem as if the special consecrations sanctioned and almost invited under the law we have been considering, inferred that, apart from these "singular vows," Israel were at liberty to live purely secular lives like the Gentile communities of modern "civilisation," and that only persons under these "singular vows" were holy or religious persons. How far this was from being the case is well known to those who know the Scriptures. Israel as a whole was "an holy people unto the Lord their God" (Deut. vii. 6). How often is this urged in the course of the law as a reason for the various observances prescribed. "Thou art an holy people. Be ye holy for I am holy" (Lev. xi. 44-45). The life of every Israelite was "holy to the Lord" from the first moment of his existence. He was introduced to the national covenant with God by circumcision on the eighth day. He was presented to the Lord on the day of his mother's ceremonial cleansing. He was to be instructed daily from his earliest childhood in the history of their origin, and in the divine commandments and institutions, upon their conformity to which the continuance of God's favour depended. He required no special dedication to come under the obligation of holiness. He was to keep himself aloof from all the practices of the surrounding nations,

and to make no alliances with them for fear of infection with their principles and their ways, which would lead Israel away from God. The unclean practices that were rife among the Egyptians and among the Canaanites whom they displaced in the land were not to be known or spoken of among them. Lev. xviii. specifies these abominations, commencing at verse 6, and concludes with this strong admonition: "Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations were defiled which I cast out before you, and the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it."

The individual sanctifications, therefore, which we have been considering in connection with "singular vows" were in the nature of special holinesses, supplemental to the general holiness of the nation: like the introduction of special plants into an already well-kept garden. The nation was a typical nation in this respect—a prophecy of things to come, as well as a teacher for the time then present. God's purpose is that human life upon earth should be a thing of holiness and therefore of beauty and joy in all lands. The Gospel is the glad tidings that He will bring this about. He has been working towards this result in all He has done hitherto. There has been no waste time, though there has been much apparent failure and confusion—comparable to the disorder caused by clearing the foundations for a house, or burning down the bush to bring the land into cultivation. There has been steady progress all the time towards the day now near at hand when "every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness to the Lord," and when the very "bells of the horses" shall be inscribed with the words that appeared only in the golden plate of Aaron's mitre: "Holiness to the Lord." Israel under Moses was an important step towards the goal: Israel under Christ will show us the goal reached, and all the earth invited to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness": "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. . . . Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved. He shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad: let the sea roar and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful and all that is therein. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord, for he cometh to judge the earth; he shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with his truth" (Ps. xcvi. 8-13).

The Law of Moses provided even for sanitation in a way that was the most effectual of all sanitary methods from what is called the hygienic point of view, and at the same time, as a type, yielded some interesting suggestions concerning the perfect state that is coming. The uncleanness and stench of military camps are well known in times of war. This was provided against during Israel's journey in the wilderness by the direction contained in Deut. xxiii. 13—which was probably acted on when they settled in their land. The system of earth-closets is considered in our day the best method of disposing of nightsoil. The principle of the earth-closet (covering up at once with a layer of mother earth) is the principle of the Mosaic enactment. The earth, by its chemical action, soon absorbs the rejected elements, and turns into an earth-enriching manure that which by a bungling treatment easily becomes a source of disease. It is far better than the modern systems of disposing of sewage. If it cannot be carried out under modern conditions in great cities, it is because the modern system of banishing the people from the land and huddling them together in masses at great centres does not admit of it. Men are beginning to see that this system itself is as much a mistake as the systems of sewage, and that the best conditions for mortal population are those prescribed by the Law of Moses.

While they have begun to see this, they have not begun to discover how the system is to be altered. This is beyond their power. God will alter it in the day when He fulfils His promise to set up a Kingdom that will break in pieces all others, and stand for ever, as the everlasting refuge of man for the glory of God. Then "the isles shall wait for his law." They will say, "He will teach us of his ways and we shall walk in his paths." But His name must be hallowed and His will done before the blessedness can come. This will result from the judgments which will teach the world righteousness. A clean, holy, happy earth will then outspread itself to view everywhere to the joy of righteous men.

But what suggestion of the perfect day is there in the Mosaic method of sanitation? What type can we see in this? The comment associated with the injunction may help us: "Therefore shall thy camp be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee." While this was a word of practical direction for the time then present for Israel, we cannot err in seeing a typical significance in so striking an element of a law which was "a shadow of good things to come." We read in the Apocalypse (xx. 9) of "the camp

of the saints"—the camp of the holy ones—in the happy day. This is a camp in which no unclean thing is seen: "There shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth." While this applies to the moral characteristics of those admitted, it is true physically as well. All who "enter therein" are incorruptible in nature. They require no longer to say "He shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body," because this has been done. They can now exult historically that though "sown in dishonour" they have been "raised in glory: sown in weakness, raised in power: sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body." A corruptible and unclean body is no longer their experience. All that has been buried away in the earthy experience of the past. By the weapon which they used—"the sword of the Spirit"—is the change which has caused "this corruptible to put on incorruption."

The relation of the spirit-body to food is a matter upon which we must have experience before we can have knowledge. We know that spirit-beings can eat, as shown by the angels and the Lord Jesus after resurrection (Gen. xix. 1-3; Luke xxiv. 39-43), but we know nothing of how the food is utilised when taken into the spirit-organisation. Nevertheless, we may safely draw certain conclusions. There will be no corruption or corruptibility in the process of digestion, because of the power of the organisation. It is a law of physiology now that the assimilation of food is proportionate to the power of the organisation. Weak bodily machinery performs the process very imperfectly and passes much nutritive aliment unappropriated. In healthy, powerful organisations, the proportion of rejected matter is much smaller. We should be justified in reasoning how small it must be in an immortal organisation, upon the analogy of this natural principle. But may we not go a step further: nay, *must* we not go a step further, and say, there will be no residuum at all in the gastronomic operations of the spirit-body, but that every atom will be consumed in the spirit-combustion at work in the body of every glorified saint? All substances are spirit at the base, and it is probable—shall we not say inevitable—that a spirit-body has the power of assimilating spirit to spirit without natural residue? If so, there is this pleasing thought before us in the prospect of immortality, that while food may not be—cannot be—necessary for the sustenance of life in the spirit-body as it is in the natural body, yet pleasure and refreshment will be found in the partaking of food and its re-conversion into spirit without any remnant of corruption

such as belongs to the present body of our dishonour? Here is a glorious anti-type to the Mosaic prohibition of all defilement in the camp in which God walked in Israel's midst.

Wizards were not to be tolerated. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Ex. xxii. 18). A similar stringent law was established against "any one that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer" (Deut. xviii. 10-11). The reason given is, "For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord" (Deut. xviii. 12). We are not told why they were an abomination, but we need be at no loss to understand. God is a jealous God (Ex. xx. 5).

He says, "My glory will I not give to another" (Isaiah xlii. 8). This is reasonable, though it is made to appear otherwise by captious minds. Suppose any of the critics were principal in an establishment, how would he like to see visitors and customers referring and deferring to some subordinate as if he were the head? They would undoubtedly resent it. Honour, deference, and praise should be reserved for those to whom they are due. This is recognised in the relation of man to man. How much more should it be as between man and God. Man has nothing but what he has received. God is the origin of all that we have, or can have, or be. Well may we join with David in saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory"; in the language of the hymn:—

"Not unto us who are but dust,  
But unto thee is glory due."

Why should we thank and praise people for what they have had nothing to do with bestowing? What should we think of a town's meeting passing a vote of thanks to the tallow chandler for a fine season, or to the grocer for the absence of rinderpest? Or, taking it on a lower plane, would you thank your servant for a legacy left by your uncle, or the greengrocer for the reduction of the income tax? The incongruousness of such a thing would be discerned by every one. The incongruousness is as great in giving to others the glory due to God alone. It is far greater. It is not only a violation of truth, and fact, and good sense: it is an interference with the well-being of man and the pleasure of God. It is good for man to worship God: it is degrading and demoralising for him to be diverted from it. And it grieves God to be deprived of His due by the folly of man.

All this is according to sense, fitness, and truth. There is no maudlin sentimentality about it, but the simple placing of facts which may enable us to see why wizardship and divination of all kinds should come under such reprobation in the Mosaic law. Diviners, necromancers, consulters with familiar spirits, wizards, witches, and the whole class of professors of supernatural powers of insight were (and are to this day under changed names) mere pretenders to a power they did not possess. Most of them possessed some degree of *a* power and perhaps imagined it divine power, but it was merely natural power in an extra degree. The whole vital mechanism of man is charged with an electric energy of which the nerves are the conducting wires. By this, he lives and performs the wonderful functions of his brain and being. When used for the normal purposes for which it was intended, all is well, but often it is directed to abnormal purposes, and made the instrument of purposes for which it was never intended and which it cannot fulfil. It cannot be made to discern the future or to know the occult; and when it is made the ground of pretension in these directions, it becomes a mere imposture—odious enough as the benighted misinterpretation of ignorance, but trebly so when made the ground of authority to draw Israel away from submission to divine law. “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” Israel was drawn near to Him to walk in light and truth and excellence. No marvel that God had no toleration for a class of ignorant pretenders who came into collision with His aims and intentions with them.





## CHAPTER XXXII.—MINOR THINGS.

THERE are spiritual significances in little things in the Law of Moses where they would not be suspected if we did not learn to recognise them by apostolic interpretation. Oxen, in the absence of threshing machines, were used in agricultural work to "tread out the corn." The animals so employed would, of course, help themselves freely to the provender under their feet. Penurious owners, *alias* "thrifty men" of modern parlance, would put muzzles on them to prevent this waste. The law forbid this. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."

We might have supposed that this provision began and ended in the sentiment commended by Solomon when he said, "The merciful man is merciful to his beast;" or, at the most, that it was a figurative intimation of the principle that the meanest should share in the benefits which they help to develop by their labour. That it goes beyond these meanings, while embracing them, is evident from Paul's remarks, in 1 Cor. ix., in answer to those who challenged his title to certain privileges. "Who," exclaims he, "goeth to warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof? . . . Say I these things as a man, or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the Law of Moses, 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.' Does God take care for oxen, or saith He it altogether for our sakes? *For our sakes, no doubt, this is written*, that he that ploweth should *plow in hope*, and that he that thresheth in hope should be *partaker of his hope*." The application he makes of it is this: "If we (the apostles) have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? . . . Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things (that is, the priests under the law) live of the things of the temple (that is, by the sacrifices brought by offerers), and they who wait at the altar are partakers of the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel."

Paul instantly disclaims any application of the principle in his own case, saying, "I have used none of these things, neither have

I written these things that it should be so done unto me." Nevertheless, the fact remains for the encouragement of all who set their hand to the work of God, that the very law contains promise for them, in giving enigmatic expression to the truth otherwise stated by Paul in these words : "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which ye have shown toward his name in that ye have ministered unto the saints and do minister" (Heb. vi. 10). "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye having all sufficiency in all things may abound unto every good work" (2 Cor. ix. 8). All the treading oxen will have their mouthfuls. If that holds good now, how much more in the day of recompense, when "every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour" (1 Cor. iii. 8).

It had also been written in the law : "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together" (Deut. xxii. 10). The animals were of different sizes and different motions, and to yoke them together would be an unequal yoking that would cause discomfort to each and interfere with the effective work of both. Here also, there would not seem to be anything beyond the interdict of common sense in a matter affecting only the treatment of stock in the working of the soil. But that there was more than this appears from Paul's command to the Corinthians : "Be ye not *unequally yoked* together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. vi. 14). He made no confirmatory quotation from the law in this case as he did in the other, but it is evident that the allusion is to the prohibited unequal yoking of animals in work, which we are therefore justified in regarding as a typical intimation of God's disapproval of all partnerships between men (and of course women) of such difference of principle as prevails between those who fear God and those who fear Him not. It is God's own question : "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos iii. 3). A man of the world and a man of God could not work in common, as regards principles of action and aims of life, without either the man of the world giving in to the man of God, which is improbable ; or the man of God becoming corrupted by the man of the world, which is more likely.

The principle applies in all connections where the will of one man is put in the power of another. The friends of God are "not of the world." They are commanded to "come out from among them and be separate." There are matters in which all are tied together in a common interest, such as the passengers in the

same ship or the residents in the same village or town. Saints must live with, and in many matters co-operate with sinners, so long as God tolerates the sinners; but as regards the main purposes and friendships of life, it is a safe and indeed (in the case of true saints) an inevitable rule, to refuse putting the neck in the same collar with those who are unbelieving or unloving or disobedient towards God.

There were some incidents connected with Israel's passage from Egypt to Canaan that appear merely historical and casual, and yet may yield a counterpart in the glory yet to be revealed. Even historically viewed, they are full of the deepest interest. Such, for example, was the numbering of the congregation in "the first day of the second month in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt." Moses received command to "assemble all the congregation together, to declare their pedigrees after their families by the house of their fathers." Twelve "princes of the tribes" were told off to do the work. They were "expressed by name"—not by Moses or by the vote of the people or by lot or by any process of human nomination: they were named for the work by Divine authority direct: "*The Lord spake unto Moses . . . THESE ARE THE NAMES OF THE MEN that shall stand with you, &c.*" (Num. i. 1-5). For each tribe a prince is named—omitting Levi and Joseph, for whom Manasseh and Ephraim (Joseph's sons) appear.

If, as is probable, there was an intended meaning in the category as expressed by the significance of each individual name in the order of their enumeration, we have a concealed prophecy in a dry list. This will be seen in three ways, when the meanings of the names are expressed in succession: 1, The names of the princes; 2, the names of the tribes they represented; and 3, the names of the princes and the tribes taken together.

1. *The names of the princes*—ELIZUR, God is a rock; SHELUMIEL, God is peace; NAHSHON, an oracle; NATHANIEL, God-given; ELIAB, God is Father: ELISHAMA, God hears; GAMALIEL, God recompenses; ABIDAN, father of judgment; AHIEZER, helping brother; PAGIEL, God meets; ABIASAPH, God gathers; AHIRA, evil brother—(which being strung together would yield the following declaration: *God, the rock, is peace by the oracle He gives. He is Father and prayer-hearer, and will be a Recompenser in judgment through a helping brother when He meets and gathers His people for the suppression of the brother of evil.*)

2. *The names of the tribes represented by the princes*—REUBEN, *see a son*; SIMEON, *hearing*; JUDAH, *praise*; ISSACHAR, *hire*; ZEBULON, *dwelling*; EPHRAIM, *fruitful*; MANASSEH, *forgetting*; BENJAMIN, *the son of the right hand*; DAN, *judging*; ASHER, *happy*; GAD, *a troop or company*; NAPHTALI, *wrestling*—(which, in the same way, would yield the following sense: *Behold a Son, for the hearing of praise by a purchased people, dwelling fruitfully when toil is all forgotten, through the Son of God's right hand, judging happily in a great company after victorious wrestling*).

3. *The two lists fused, taking the princes first and then the tribes*, would yield the following sense:—GOD IS A ROCK. *See a Son, our God-given peace, through hearing the oracle of praise given for a purchased people to whom God is Father, dwelling among them and hearing fruitfully as a Recompenser, causing them to forget the evil days. He is a Father of judgment, by the Son of His right hand, a helping brother, judging when God meets the happy gathering in the great company from which the evil brother (i.e., Cain or the seed of the serpent) will be expelled by wrestling.*

Reversing the names, and taking tribe and prince in the order of their divine enumeration (instead of prince and tribe), the following sense might be expressed:—*See a Son in whom God, the Rock, hearing us, is peace, evoking praise by the oracle-purchase which he gives that he may dwell as a father fruitfully hearing us, and causing us to forget our toil in the recompense by the Son of his right hand, a father of judgment, judging through a helping brother making happy when God meets the great company of his gathering for the final wrestle against the brother of evil.*

Whether this be a right rendering of the concealed meaning of this list of names divinely supplied to Moses for the numbering of Israel, it is not a little singular that the names should be capable of yielding meanings so exactly in harmony with the great purpose which God's dealings with Israel were designed to accomplish. Those who understand the Gospel of the Kingdom and reconciliation will have no difficulty in recognising the complete adumbration of that purpose in the order of these names. And as the Law of Moses was in all things a shadow of good things to come, it is probable we are not wrong in seeking to trace these good things in so unpromising a hiding-place as a mere list of names.

The business of the men invites to the same question another way. Their business was to "assemble the congregation and declare their pedigrees, after their families by the house of their

fathers, according to the number of the names." Here was a preparation for the settlement that was about to be effected in the land of promise—a preparation pointing in the direction of order, precision, exactness of arrangement—first, the tribes carefully discriminated one from the other (no doubt they got mixed in Egypt a little); then the houses, or great branches in each tribe; then the leading families in each branch; and then the heads of households in each leading family.

As a measure of expediency, in a large body of people on the march from one country to another, something of the sort was indispensable to avoid inevitable confusion. This exact registry and enumeration of the people served a highly practical and pressing purpose; but does it yield no "pattern" for the days that are to come? Of this there can be no question. The mind naturally peers forward into the days of the Kingdom with curiosity as to the form of things, as regards practical arrangements. Will the multitude of the saved be as a mere cloud of disconnected atoms, each individual at liberty to rove and roam at his own sweet will? or will they be organised in such a way that each will have his own duties and his own place in the circle assigned to him? This Mosaic census in the wilderness supplies the answer.

We might have gleaned it on the principle hinted at by Paul when he asked the Corinthians: "Doth not nature itself teach you?" Order and mutuality of social obligations is the one thing that distinguishes human life from brute life. A herd of cattle, a drove of horses, a flock of sheep, exemplify the latter. Men living in communities, whether in tribes, villages, towns, cities, or kingdoms, show the former. The higher up we ascend in the state of man, the more complex and definite are his social relations, till you come to the aristocracy, where etiquette is as the breath of their life. That the principle extends to man's relation to God is shown by the whole Mosaic ritual, and by nothing more than in that declaration of the righteousness of God in the sacrifice of Christ, which is the basis of invited reconciliation. Is it conceivable, then, that the life of the redeemed should be a social chaos? The casual glimpses we get in various ways contradict the thought. Order and organisation are indicated in all revelations on the subject.

Consider the symbolic use of the twelve tribes of Israel to represent the whole multitude of the redeemed (Rev. vii. 4-8);

the employment of a New Jerusalem, having tribe-named gates and apostolic-named foundations to signify their municipal relation to the world (Rev. xxi. 12-14); a temple with foundations of apostle and prophet to express their relation to God (Eph. ii. 20-21; 2 Cor. vi. 16); and the human body, with its different members of differing functions, to illustrate the inter-dependent relations of the different parts of the body of Christ (1 Cor. xii. 19-27).

As, therefore, the congregation of the Israelites were organised and numbered before they entered the land of promise, we may be sure the community of God's immortalised children will be exact in number and definite in station. They are being slowly developed from age to age, each according to his foreseen and assigned place in the new and perfect system of things coming. The hour comes when, as it is expressed in the 87th Psalm, "the Lord will count when he *writes up* the people;" or as it is in Malachi iii., he will "*make up* his jewels," who are defined in the previous verses as "they that feared the Lord and spake often one to another," for whom "a book of remembrance was written before him," and saith He, "they shall be mine in that day," when, as it is testified in the next chapter, "they shall *go forth* and *grow up* as fattening calves," and "shall tread down the wicked as ashes under the soles of their feet." All this implies very definite organisation, as indeed is conclusively signified in the larger expression that God will make "new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

But the people were numbered a second time, viz., at the end of the forty years' sojourn in the wilderness (Num. xxvi. 2, 63), when they were found to be only 180 more in number than at the beginning, viz., 603,730\* men over twenty, as compared with 603,550. The reason of this almost total want of natural increase lay in the destructive calamities that befel them during the forty years on account of their rebellions, and in the steady action of the hand of God against them to weed out the whole generation that had dishonoured Him by refusing to enter the land on receiving the evil report of the spies (Deut. ii. 14-15). What counterpart can there be to this second numbering, if it be not in the second and final adjustment of human affairs that takes place at the close of the thousand years? At the

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\* Should be 601,730. There was a *decrease* of 1,820: Cp. Num. i. 46 and xxvi. 51.

beginning of that period, the world at large is delivered from the system of things "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified" (Rev. xi. 8). The world is settled upon a divine foundation; it has received the law proceeding from Zion, and in a sense has been the subject of a divine census and declaration of pedigree; but it is not a final settlement. There are murmurings against the prophet like unto Moses, as shown by the need for withholding the rain from disobedient communities (Zech. xiv. 17). At the finish, there is a grand revolt and widespread concerted effort to overthrow the government of Christ (Rev. xx. 8-9), which evokes the destructive anger of heaven. "Fire descends from God out of heaven and destroys them" *a la* Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Then ensues the final numbering of the people and settlement of pedigree for ever. All whose names are not written as the children of Abraham are destroyed; the rest live for ever, and enter upon the state finally figured by the land of promise—the inheritance of the earth, in the peace, prosperity, and perfection of immortality—no more death, and no more increase of population.

And just as the second numbering of the children of Israel showed next to no increase upon the first, so it is probable that the earth's population, when it enters the perfect state, will be about what it is when the reign of Christ begins—with this great difference, that whereas the population at the beginning of the blessed era will all be mortal (with the exception of the rulers—the saints) and taken in the mass from the generation contemporary with Christ's advent (on the principle of submission to his enjoined authority, enforced by judgment), the population at the end will consist of selected individuals, chosen by individual faith and obedience under trial during the kingdom of the thousand years, and admitted to eternal life at the close of that period. Such a population will certainly be numerous enough for the comfortable and joyful occupation of the planet in glory to God for the endless ages of perfection that lie ahead.

The tribe of Levi was not included in the numbering of the children of Israel, nor afterwards in the division of the land that took place after conquest. This was "as the Lord commanded Moses" (Num. ii. 33). In this, we may discover a useful shadowing of one feature of the constitution of the age to come. God said: "I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel:" "Thou shalt give them to Aaron and to his sons: they

are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel." "It shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations that among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance" (in the land). "I am their inheritance" (see Num. viii. and xviii.).

The separation of the tribe of Levi was made the occasion of a very solemn ceremony. What typical meaning can there be in this setting apart of a whole class for a special work and a special position in the midst of a whole nation whom the Lord had chosen as "a special people unto himself above all the nations upon the face of the earth?" We may not find it difficult to see as we look forward, when we behold in the Kingdom the brethren of the Lord Jesus gathered out of every kindred and nation and tongue, and exalted to his side as his partners and helpers in the great work of leading mankind to God. As the Levites were given to Aaron to be at his service in all things (Num. xviii. 6), so the saints are given to Christ as fellow-helpers. The very expression is used, "Behold I and the children whom God hath *given* me." "The men whom thou hast *given* me." "All that the Father hath *given* me shall come to me." As the Levites given to Aaron became priests of a subordinate order in the divine service established under him, so the saints become priests under Christ in the more glorious day when they sing, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

By another description, they are "his body": by another, his Bride: which may take us to the end of the thousand years with the question: will the body of Christ cease to be the body of Christ: will the Bride of Christ cease to be the Bride of Christ: when the endless ages begin? If the answer be obviously, No, then we have some light on the constitution of things in the glorious BEYOND when sin and death are no more upon the earth. We see a feature corresponding with the dedication of the Levites in the Mosaic shadow.

Though all will be immortal, there will be those who are of the first rank, and those who are of the second, those who form the rank and file of the population, and those who are the captains and officers, guides and shepherds, in the perfect state. We have all, at one time or other, entertained the popular conception of future glory as a sort of celestial glow-furnace in which all individuals were fused into an indiscriminate mass of happiness. This is evidently as far from the truth as almost every other popular idea of divine things.

The society of the redeemed, developed and established upon the earth as the result of the seven thousand years' work of God thereon, will be an organised and well-ordered society, with God at the head, Christ as the direct link of connection—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as "king's friend" after the type of David and Solomon's day—the twelve-throned apostles as their immediate circle: the fathers and prophets, next in rank, and so on downwards in orderly gradations to "the meanest saint" of the millennial body of kings and priests:—below them, the immortal multitude prepared for eternal life by the institutions and exercises of the thousand years—all one body of blessedness in differing form of membership but without one envious jar such as now disturbs the best-constituted human society.

If this be, as it seems to be, a correct construction of the Mosaic shadow in that feature of it that concerns the separation of the tribe of Levi, it would follow that the privilege of being called to the millennial kingdom is much greater than it appears when we think only of ruling the mortal nations of the earth. To rule the mortal populations of the earth, will be unspeakable blessedness in the efficiency of an incorruptible nature, with unstinted resource of beneficence at our command and omnipotent power behind us. But it necessarily will not be comparable to the glory of ruling a community of immortals, each one of whom will be an untiring vessel of light and sympathy and "quick understanding in the fear of the Lord."

The honour of exaltation always depends upon the character of the constituency according to it. A Parliamentary representative does not think a hundredth-part of a resolution of confidence passed by a packed meeting of rowdy electors, that he does of a vote of thanks from Parliament for some public services rendered. The head of an academy does not appreciate a testimonial from his pupils with the same ardour with which he esteems a degree conferred by the University Senators, or honourable mention by royalty. The acclamations of a grateful mortal populace will be a joy to those who find their pleasure in blessing them, but evidently it will be eclipsed by the greater glory of heading and leading and guiding a population from whom all dross and weakness have been purged by the happy change from the mortal to the immortal, which will be the portion of the faithful and chosen among the subjects of the millennial reign.

People think of the saved state as a state in which there will be nothing to do. They are apt to think of it as a kind of celestial stagnation in which there would be no scope for those exercises and ceremonies of life which we naturally associate with the idea of rulers and ruled. The truth of the matter evidently excludes such a view. Immortal life will be as endlessly varied in its exercises as the life we now know upon earth—indeed, necessarily more so from the absence of the fatigue that mars the best mortal enjoyment. Where it will differ will be in the form and nature of the activities, as royal life differs now from the life of the agricultural labourer. There will be eating and drinking, but no necessity for night-soil arrangements, by reason of the different treatment of alimentary substances taken into a spiritual body from that to which they are subjected in the chemistry of a mortal stomach. There will be no marrying and giving in marriage, by reason of the suspension of propagation, and the fusion of the whole human family into one house of love. There will be “dressing and keeping” the soil, as with Adam before he fell : but in the absence of the curse, a little labour (and that a pleasure) will be sufficient to provide abundance of all good things. There will be meetings and partings, but in no painful sense. There will be public life and private life : and therefore private possession ; for the earth is to be inherited by the meek for an everlasting possession. Possibly, the inner aristocracy of the saints may occupy an exceptional position on this point, if they are to exemplify the counterpart of the law that forbade the Levites to have inheritance in the land.

Whatever the details may be, it is evident that “eye had not seen nor ear heard, neither had it entered into the heart of man to conceive what the Lord hath prepared for them that love him,” until He revealed it by His spirit in those communications at sundry times and divers manners in which He spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets.





## CHAPTER XXXIII.—FINISHINGS.

WE are nearing the end. There remain one or two extraneous matters to gather up, with a word of parting admiration. They do not form part of the law, but they are related to it, somewhat as a frame is to a picture. They form a beautiful finish to a divine work, and incidentally illustrate some forms of divine truth.

When the tabernacle had been constructed and fully set up according to the pattern shown to Moses in the Mount, and when it had been anointed and sanctified with all its instruments and vessels for the service, a circumstance happened that added much grace to the dedication ceremonies of the day.

The twelve princes of the tribes—heads of the congregation—brought to Moses a present of six covered wagons and twelve strong oxen, to be used in the service of the tabernacle. A more useful present could not in the circumstances be imagined.

The tabernacle had to be shifted from place to place with the changes of camp while the host was on the march. Though it was a portable structure—capable of being taken to pieces—many of its parts were heavy, such as the sockets for the pillars of the courts, which would weigh about a hundred-weight each. The pillars themselves would be heavy pieces of timber, and so also would be the boards of the tabernacle. The golden candlestick also would be heavy, and the table of shewbread with its golden crown and the cherubim. The business of carrying them on the journeys would be very laborious.

The princes had evidently consulted together on the matter, and had agreed jointly to make a present of the wagons to lighten the work.

But would the present be accepted in connection with a work wholly divine? The princes may have had their doubts on this, and Moses himself may not have been clear. Whatever uncertainty may have existed was dispelled by the direction that Moses received when the princes brought their offering before the tabernacle. We read (verse 89) that “when Moses was gone into

the tabernacle of the congregation, he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of the testimony from between the two cherubim." The message as to the wagons was this: "Take the offering of the princes, that they may be to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation." Not only so, but Moses was told exactly what disposal to make of them. "Give them unto the Levites, to every man according to his service." It will be remembered that to the Levites, under the superintendence of Aaron, was assigned the work of packing up and carrying the various parts of the tabernacle while on the march, and to each particular family was allotted particular parts: to the *sons of Kohath*, the holy vessels and furniture of the tabernacle; to the *sons of Gershon*, all the curtains and hangings and pins and cords; to the *sons of Merari*, all the boards, bars, pillars, and sockets. The distribution of the wagons was according to these services: four wagons and eight oxen were given to the sons of Merari, who had to see after all the heavy parts: two wagons and four oxen were given to the sons of Gershon, who had to carry the curtains and hangings, which must have been of some bulk to enclose a court 150 feet by 75. To the sons of Kohath, none were given, "because the service of the sanctuary belonging to them was that they should bear on their shoulders"—that is, the ark, the incense altar, the table of shewbread, &c.

Two things strike us in connection with the whole episode. God accepts co-operation in forms He has not prescribed if they are in subservient harmony with His requirements. The twelve princes were in submission to Moses and in subjection to the tabernacle and the whole law connected with it. The object of their voluntary gift was to help and further a divine work appointed. Had they brought the materials for a second tabernacle, or a second camp, we cannot but suppose that the offering would not only not have been accepted, but would have been spurned as an act of presumption, like Nadab's and Abihu's offering of strange fire. But being in no rivalry to the divine work, but conceived in the spirit of helpfulness and being a wise measure, God approved and accepted it.

We see the same feature in the case of Jethro's recommendation to Moses that he should delegate his authority in small matters to subordinate officers. God approved of the suggestion of Jethro, and it became a commandment to Moses to do as Jethro

had suggested (Ex. xviii. 13-26 ; Deut. i. 9-18). From this we may draw the useful conclusion that the arrangements we are obliged to make in this latter day in the absence of divine direction, will receive the divine sanction and favour provided they are made in the sincere spirit of desiring to help the Lord's work, and are in harmony with the requirements of that work as specified in the word of Jesus and the apostles. The use of the printing press and the holding of meetings for lectures are of this nature. We may hope presently to hear that the Lord approves of them as a doing of our best in an age when His purpose requires that He should be silent.

Is there any shadowing of the work of Christ here? Here is Moses surrounded by twelve heads of the tribes, helping him in the work he has on hand, by ideas of their own, in harmony with that work and accepted because useful as well as in harmony. If we look at the twelve apostles, whether in the day of suffering or the day of glory—the day of the wilderness or the day of the land of promise—we may get a glimpse of a counterpart. In the work done by the apostles in the taking out of a people for his name, their co-operation with the Lord was not an automatic one. It was the co-operation of intelligent faithfulness which devised measures according to the exigencies of the occasion, such as when they appointed a successor to Judas, or convened a council to consider the controversy that had arisen at Antioch. So in the day when they “shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel,” we may imagine, without being guilty of any freak of speculation, that they will, out of the fulness of wise and loyal hearts, devise measures of service that will go beyond what may be actually prescribed, but will be accepted because in thorough harmony with all the objects for which Christ shall reign.

Such a thought would impart a prospective interest to the work of reigning with Christ that would be absent if we supposed that the apostles would be mere court puppets, as we might express it. We are justified in believing that there will be nothing mechanical in the operations of immortal life. The controlling presence of the spirit will not exclude individuality of thought and volition. Rather will there be that diversity in glorious unity. One spirit, acting in the diversity of individual gift and intelligence—(in harmony, but not in monotony) will be no new experience. In the apostolic age, the same phenomenon was exemplified in a lower form (1 Cor. xii. 4-11). What would be true of the apostles

in their exaltation would be true of all saints, so that we may look forward to a life full of the interest that comes even now from the application of individual judgment to the decision of problems as they arise.

In addition to the wagons and oxen, the twelve princes made each an individual offering in connection with the dedication of the altar. There is something remarkable in the way in which this was done, and in the way in which it is recorded. The princes did not come together and present their offerings as a joint offering; but each prince, commencing with the prince of Judah, came on a particular day one after the other, during twelve days, and presented his offering before the altar; and each prince presented exactly the same collection of articles and beasts: yet though each prince presented exactly the same offering, the articles composing it are minutely and exactly enumerated twelve times over, as each prince made his present on his day: and then all are summarised in a totalling of the twelve. The particulars, in which there is so much repetition, occupy a chapter of 89 verses (Numbers vii.).

There must have been a reason for this apparently superfluous repetition of apparently superfluous details. It must have been to give conspicuousness and emphasis to the principle involved. What this principle was we may see if we consider that the princes of the tribes would stand representatively for the tribes themselves, and that the altar at which they prostrated themselves was the symbol of sacrifice as the basis of sinful man's approach to God. Here is a dramatic proclamation of utter humiliation before God as the kernel principle of national existence. Its repetition twelve times on twelve different days would make the lesson more emphatic, and the identity of the offering in each case would show what Paul declares concerning all men, that "there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

The offering in each case was an elaborate one, and covered every aspect of the Mosaic parable embodied in the tabernacle: *a silver charger and a bowl* piled full of *fine flour* mingled with *oil* (the Jew and Gentile, purified and wrought into divine shape by affliction, and filled with life and joy); *one golden spoon*, full of *incense* (perfected faith finding daily exercise in praise and prayer); *one young bullock, one ram, and one lamb*, for a burnt offering (strength, desire, and obedience absorbed in the incorruptible at the resurrection); *a kid of the goats* for a sin offering (the sacrificial condemnation of sin in the flesh); *two oxen, five rams, five he-goats*,

*and five lambs* of the first year for peace offerings (all strength, executiveness, waywardness, and innocence brought into reconciliation with God and employed in His service).

That a ceremony with such significances should be twelve times repeated before the altar on the commencement of Israel's national existence, and expressly for the dedication of the altar to the daily use of the nation, is more eloquent than tongue can tell, of the nature of the national life as it ought to be, and of the great departure from the true objects of national life, that is visible in the forms of national life now upon earth. Revenue, police, drainage, and public convenience are about all that is aimed at. State-churchism is a faint survival of the Mosaic ideal, but lacking life or light or power. The true aim of life is unknown and unprovided for. But the day is coming, of which the Mosaic ritual was a prophecy, as well as a law for Israel, when God will be as much taken into account as the sun or the fresh air, and when human life everywhere will converge upon Him as much as the arrangements of Israel's camp converged upon the tabernacle. "All shall know me," saith He, "from the least even to the greatest."

Should the idea be correct, that the twelve princes will have their anti-type in the twelve apostles of the Lamb, whose names appeared in the gem-decorated foundations of the symbolical Holy City seen by John in Patmos, there may be an interesting counterpart in the inaugural ceremonies of the Kingdom, to this dedication of the altar. Christ is the true altar, and he will then be dedicated for altar use by the whole world, and it is possible that each apostle may, "each on his day," edify and delight the whole congregation of the redeemed by the conduct of special dedicatory services in which the glory of Christ will be pungently and thrillingly brought home to their immortal faculties. The submissive and obedient mortals in their thousands might share with acclamation in such a feast of fat things: for the feast is to be spread "to all people."

Not long after the dedication of the tabernacle, Moses received orders to march for the promised land. It was no light matter to marshal such an immense body of people. The tribes, when at rest, were pitched in four camps, with the tabernacle in the centre of all. Arrangements for the march were characterised by the consummate wisdom manifest in every part of the Mosaic system. At a blast from the two silver trumpets by the sons of Aaron at the door of the tabernacle, the east camp broke up and set forward.

Then the priests to whom the work had been allotted, took down the tabernacle and the pillars and the courts with their sockets, and went forward with the wagons, leaving the Kohathites behind, in charge of the holy vessels and furniture of the sanctuary. Then at a second alarm of the trumpets, the camp of Reuben, on the south, broke up and fell in behind the priests with the wagons. Then the Kohathites marched, bearing the holy vessels on their shoulders. Then the west camp, the camp of Ephraim broke up, and marched behind the Kohathites, and after them, the north camp, the camp of Dan, which formed the rear of the lengthy procession (Num. ii. iii. iv. and x.).

On arriving at a new site, the camps pitched in the same order. The host of Judah, at the head of the procession, came to a halt first, and put up their tents. The wagons behind them stopped at the same time, and the priests in charge got out the pillars and court hangings, and the boards and bars of the tabernacle, and put up the empty structure in readiness to receive the altars and holy vessels on the arrival of the Kohathites in the rear. Then the host of the Reubenites turned aside to the right, and formed their camp at the due distance; then the Kohathites came up, and found the tabernacle ready to receive the ark and the holy vessels. Then the host of Ephraim formed camp on the ground where they stood, and the host of Dan behind them, defiled to the left and went forward to their camping ground on the north of the tabernacle.

It was all done in beautiful order and without hitch. It was a most wise plan for avoiding confusion in the handling of such a mass of people. But it was also an illustration of the truth stated by Paul when he said, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace," and in this character it may be taken as a foreshadowing of the perfect order that will characterise the work of God in the age of glory. How much of the interest and impressiveness of all public functions (from the review of an army, to the performances of a trained orchestra in the presence of royalty), depends upon order. How abortive is a mere mob, even of respectable people. How great is the difference between a state ceremony and the rush of a rabble on the street. The beauty of order requires the surrender of some amount of individual liberty which may be irksome to mere mortals, especially to lawless mortals, of such an age as this, when the spirit of democratic insubordination is rampant. But to the multitude "redeemed from among men"

because of the subjection of their wills to the will of God, it will be as much a joy to respond to the organising requirements of the Spirit of God as it is for the physical body now to respond to the lightning-like volitions of the brain. The "army of heaven" is not a mob (Dan. iv. 35). The "multitude of the heavenly host" did not sing on the plains of Bethlehem without concert and leadership (Luke ii. 13). Even the simultaneous flight of a flock of migratory birds is under leadership (one of the most interesting sights in nature)—is a divine work in its way—which does not mean the sacrifice of the wills of the individual birds, but their voluntary accommodation to a collective necessity in which they find pleasure. So the movements of the saints in the perfect state to which probation is steadily taking them forward will have many glorious co-operations, in which the perfect order, which is "heaven's first law," will be the highest delight of myriads of co-operative wills. They will rejoice in the marshallings and movements of the host of the Lord as all true Israelites did in the movements of the camps during their march under Moses to the promised land.

One thing remains to be noticed, and that is, that though the Law of Moses ended in Christ, as a ground of justification unto life eternal, its national purpose is not yet wholly fulfilled. With Israel's restoration from long dispersion, it will come into force again in an amended form, as a means and medium of that happy, holy, beautiful, and acceptable national service which Israel will render in the day when Yahweh will "bind up the stroke of his people and heal the stroke of their wound." This we learn on the joint testimony of Moses and Ezekiel, and other prophets. Moses says, after foretelling Israel's disobedience, scattering and return, "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live . . . and thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and *do all his commandments* WHICH I COMMAND THEE THIS DAY" (Deut. xxx. 6-8).

By Ezekiel God says: "In my holy mountain, in the mountain of the house of Israel, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them and there will I *require your offerings and the first fruits of your oblations with all your holy things*. I will accept you with your sweet savour when I bring you out from the people and gather you out of the countries

wherein ye have been scattered, and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen (the nations).”

The visions of God go further than this by the same prophet at the close of his book. In the last nine chapters, we have a detailed description of the new settlement of the land, and the new city of service about 40 miles in circumference, and the new temple of gigantic capacity, in which, “from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, all flesh will come to worship before God” (Isaiah lxvi. 23). In this description, we recognise many features of the Law of Moses restored:—The burnt-offering, the sin-offering, the drink-offering, and the trespass-offering (xl. 39 : xliii. 18-25 : xlv. 17, 22-25 : xlvi. 4-7); the altar (verse 46); the most holy place (xli. 4); the cherubim (verse 18); the meat-offering, the priests and holy garments (xlii. 13-14); sprinkling of blood (xliii. 18-20); burning of the bullock (verse 21); offering of the fat and the blood (xliv. 15); defiling by the dead (verses 25, 26); offering of the first fruits (verse 30); observance of the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month (xlv. 21); keeping of the feasts, the new moons, and the sabbaths (verse 17); and so on.

With this agree the general allusions of the other prophets, of which a complete list of instances would be very long. Let the following illustrations suffice: “All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee: the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory” (Isaiah lx. 7). “Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts, and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them and seethe therein” (Zech. xiv. 21). “Then shall the offering of Jerusalem and Judah be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years” (Mal. iii. 4). “The daughter of my dispersed shall bring mine offering” (Zeph. iii. 10).

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The fact that the Law of Moses is suspended during the absence of Christ from the earth, and while his body is being developed by the faith and obedience of the Gospel, does not interfere with the testified purpose of God to restore it as the rule of Israel's obedience in the happy day of the return of His favour to them. In the day of Moses, it was the prophetic though unperceived adumbration of salvation by Christ, while

serving the purpose of a national system and preliminary educator of the people of God : in the day of Christ, it will be the understood typical memorial of the work accomplished in him in the day of his rejection, while serving the purpose of a means, and joyful occasion of that obedience which it will be Israel's joy to render in a day when they shall be "all righteous, inheriting the land for ever" (Isaiah lx. 21), and when the words of God will be fulfilled, which say : "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them" (Ezek. xxxvi. 26).

In all the circumstances, it is not wonderful that the last injunction of the Scriptures of the "Old Testament" should be :

**"REMEMBER YE THE LAW OF MOSES, MY SERVANT,  
 WHICH I COMMANDED UNTO HIM IN HOREB FOR  
 ALL ISRAEL, WITH THE STATUTES AND THE JUDG-  
 MENTS" (MAL. IV. 4).**

The close of the nineteenth century finds the public attitude the very reverse of this, under the influence of natural bias and the sophistical ingenuity of a hostile learning, which superficially trifles with the majestic theme under the glib technicality of "the Pentateuch." The close of the twentieth century will find it enthroned on Mount Zion in the glory of Messiah's reign, imposed upon an unwilling world by the hand of coercive judgment which will fulfil the prayer of David placed on record nearly 3,000 years ago : "Arise, O Lord : let not man prevail : let the nations be judged in thy sight. Put them in fear O Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men" (Psa. ix. 19).



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