THE

HOLY BIBLE,

In the Authorized Version;

WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTIONS

by

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JOSUA.

When we look at Palestine, as represented on a map, we are struck by the smallness of its size. Its length from north to south is not much more than that of the two English counties, Devonshire and Cornwall, from east to west. When we also examine the census of the Hebrew nation at its exodus from Egypt, and at its entrance into Canaan, we find that at neither of these periods did the total population exceed two millions and a half—about the population of London.

The Book of Joshua is a history of the entrance of this population into Canaan, and its settlement there.

If, therefore, we regard this history simply as a history, we cannot deny that the event which it describes—the march of Israel into Palestine—sinks into insignificance, when compared with many other migrations and conquests of ancient and modern times.

Let us consider also the circumstances which are said to have attended this entrance of Israel into Canaan.

The writer of the Book of Joshua affirms that it was accompanied with stupendous miracles.

The waters of the river Jordan, he says, went back to a distance of many miles, and afforded a passage across its bed to the people of Israel. They went over dryshod, and appeared before the city of Jericho, which was strongly fortified against them. The history relates, that they compassed that city in a religious procession for seven days; and that on the seventh day, at the seventh circuit, when the seven Priests, going before the Ark, blew the seven trumpets, and the people shouted with a great shout, the walls of Jericho fell flat to the ground.

Let us pursue the course of the history. After the destruction of Jericho and Ai, another city, Gibeon, is received into league by Joshua. The king of Jerusalem, Adonizedek, gathers together four other kings of the south of Canaan and attacks Gibeon. Joshua comes to the rescue, and pursues the kings to Beth-horon, and many of the Canaanites are destroyed by a storm of hailstones from heaven. What next follows? "Joshua spake to the Lord, and said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies."

The kings fled, and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah. But their hiding-place became their prison. They were drawn out of their retreat, and Joshua said unto the captains of his men of war, "Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings."

What follows?

The kings of northern Palestine, headed by Jabin, king of Hazor, having heard what had been done by Joshua to the kings of the south, muster their forces, "horses and chariots very many," and "their hosts with much people," "even as the sand that is on the sea-shore for multitude," and they come and pitch together "at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel."

The Israelites had not been trained in war; they had spent their time as a pastoral and nomad tribe in the Wilderness of Arabia. But the Lord said to Joshua, "Be not afraid because of them, for to-morrow, about this time, will I deliver them up all slain before Israel."

So it came to pass. They were routed, and their cities were taken by Joshua, and the whole land was subdued before him.

How are such things as these to be accounted for?

If the entrance of Israel into Canaan under Joshua was a mere ordinary event, if this settlement
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of about two millions and a half of people in a small strip of territory like Palestine, is to be classed with other events in this world’s history, then it must be admitted that such an amount of miraculous phenomena is incredible. There was no adequate cause for them; and we must be also prepared to allow, and even to affirm, that God works nothing without reason. Therefore, on the hypothesis now stated, we should even be ready to concur with those who say that the drying up of Jordan was due to some chance action of the wind; or, as others allege, that the history of the passage through the river, driven back at the touch of the Priests’ feet, is a mystical legend, devised to exalt the character of the Priesthood; and that the fall of the walls of Jericho was caused accidentally, by one of those shocks of earthquake which are frequent in Palestine; and that the storm at Beth-horon was only a violent hurricane, magnified into a miracle by a fervid imagination; and that the standing-still of the sun on Gibeon was only an optical delusion, or that the record of that day is only a fragment borrowed from some popular poem and lyrical lay, written in the high-flown style of eastern hyperbole.

But if this theory is accepted, then it follows also that the Book of Joshua ought to be cast aside; certainly it ought not to be publicly read in churches as the Word of God; but to be assigned to some obscure place among fabulous legends in the large library of Oriental Romance.

The question, therefore, which now meets us is this:—

Are the events which form the main subject of the Book of Joshua, namely, the entrance of Israel into Palestine, and their settlement there under his leadership, to be classed with other events of this world’s history?

To this question we would answer—No; certainly not.

The Church of Christ has ever taught that Joshua, the son of Nun, is a figure of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Church of Christ has ever taught that Joshua, or Jesus, the Saviour of Israel, as his name, given by Moses, indicates 1, was indeed a signal type of Him whose name was called Jesus by a message from heaven, because He should save His people from their sins 2.

This resemblance, or rather the identity of name, which is not so obvious to us who call the type Joshua, and the Antitype Jesus, was ever sounding in the ears of the Ancient Church, both Eastern and Western, who called both by the same name, Jesus. Joshua is called Jesus by St. Stephen 3 and St. Paul 4. The Book of Joshua is called the Book of Jesus in the Greek Version, and in the Latin Vulgate. The Acts of Joshua, as read by the Ancient Christian Church, were the Acts of Jesus; and this identity of name was a great help to them, as rescuing them from low and servile notions concerning this Sacred Book, and as raising their eyes from the human type to the Divine Antitype 5.

It is well said by an ancient Father of the Church, S. Augustine 6, who utters the consentient opinion of the Christian Church, “If we inquire who was the successor of Moses, we find that His name was Jesus; and He who said ‘My Name is in him,’ is the true Jesus, the Ruler and Leader of His people into the inheritance of life eternal according to the New Testament, of which the old was a figure. And with regard to prophetical pre-adjustment, nothing more significant could be done or even said, since the resemblance was carried out even to identity of name.”

It is also well said by our great English Expositor of the Apostles’ Creed 7, Bishop Pearson, “If we look on Joshua as Judge and Ruler of Israel, there is scarce an action (of his career) which is not clearly predictive of our Saviour.” “Joshua, far more particularly than any other Saviour of Israel, is represented as a type of our Jesus; and that typical singularity is manifest in his name. It was he alone of all who passed out of Egypt who was designed to lead the children of Israel into Canaan, which land was a type of heaven, the inheritance of the saints; Joshua, who brought the Israelites into that place of rest, is a type of Him who only can bring us into the presence of God, and there prepare our mansions for us, and assign them to us, as Joshua divided the land for an inheritance to the tribes. The hand of Moses and Aaron brought them out of Egypt; but left them in the wilderness, and could not seat them in Canaan. Joshua, the successor, only could effect that in which Moses failed. The death of Moses and the succession of Joshua prefigured the continuance of the Law till Jesus came (Acts xiii. 37. Luke xvi. 16). Moses must die, that Joshua may succeed. ‘By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified;’ ‘but now

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1 See on Num. xiii. 16.
2 Matt. i. 21.
3 Acts vii. 45.
4 Heb. iv. 8.
5 The prophetic character of the Book of Joshua seems to be recognized by the Hebrew Church itself in the title given by her to the class of Sacred Books in which this book holds the first place, and which she called “The former Prophets.”
the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe' (Rom. iii. 20—22).

"The command of circumcision was not given to Moses, but to Joshua", which speaketh Jesus to be the true Circumciser, the Author of another circumcision than that of the flesh commanded by the Law, even the circumcision of the heart (Rom. ii. 29), which is therefore called 'the Circumcision of Christ.' If we look on Joshua as the minister of Moses (Exod. xxiv. 13), he is even in that a type of Christ, the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God (Rom. xv. 8). If we look on him as the successor of Moses, in that he represented Jesus, inasmuch as 'the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ' (John i. 17). Joshua begins his office at the banks of Jordan; and there Jesus was baptized and entered upon the public exercise of His prophetic office. Joshua chose there twelve men out of the people, to carry twelve stones over with them: our Jesus thence began to choose his twelve Apostles, those foundation-stones in the Church of God." (Rev. xxi. 14).

Joshua brought the people into Canaan, after they had been lying, as it were, helpless under the Law in the wilderness for thirty-eight years after their sin and exclusion at Kadesh-barnah. Jesus came to the impotent man who had been thirty-eight years in his infirmity, and lay beneath the shade of Bethesda with its five porches, and bade him arise and walk (see John v. 1—8, and above on Exod. xvi. preliminary note).

The Book of Joshua has a twofold character. It looks back to the past history of Israel, and it looks forward to the future destiny of the World.

The Book of Joshua is an historical record of God's truth in fulfilling His promise made five hundred years before to Abraham. In it we trace the conquests of Joshua, treading in the footsteps of Abraham. For example, at Shechem, where God first appeared to Abraham in Canaan, and where Abraham built his first altar, there Joshua assembled the Tribes of Israel and built an altar, and offered sacrifice, and recited the blessings and the curses, and the hills of Ebal and Gerizim re-echoed their loud Amen, and he renewed their covenant with God. At Shechem also Joshua delivered his farewell charge to Israel, and recounted God's mercies to them ever since the call of Abraham, and made a solemn covenant with the people that day; and wrote the words which he had spoken in the book of the Law of God, and set up a great stone under the oak there, as a witness of the covenant. Between Bethel and Ai Abraham had built his second altar. There also we find Joshua. From that spot sprang forth his men, who captured Ai. At Hebron the mortal remains of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob repose in a peaceful grave, and in a joyful hope of a blessed resurrection. Hebron was the first place in Canaan that was bestowed as an inheritance; and it was given to Caleb, the heir of Abraham by faith. The historical moral of this Book—proving God's faithfulness—is stated by Joshua himself:—"Ye know in all your hearts that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you: all are come to pass.'

But this is not all. The fulfilment of God's promises to the literal Israel by the hand of Joshua was only an earnest of a still larger measure of God's mercy and love; namely, the fulfilment of His promises to the spiritual Israel,—the Universal Church,—by Jesus Christ.

The Book of Joshua is not only a divinely-inspired history of the entrance of Israel, under the leadership of Joshua, into the land of Canaan, which had been promised by God to Abraham; it is not only a record, that the God of Israel proved Himself to be the Lord of the Universe by mighty miracles; but it is also a prophetic representation of—

1 (1) The acts of Jesus Christ at His first Advent, in the Church Militant on earth, and of the extension of the Visible Church Universal, the seed of Abraham by faith, and the true Israel, and of her gradual settlement by means of Christian Missions in her earthly inheritance, co-extensive with the whole world;

2 (2) It is also a prophetic representation of the acts of Jesus Christ at His second Advent, in the

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1 Jos. v. 2.
2 Bp. Pearson has quoted passages from S. Justin Martyr, Tertullian, S. Ambrose, S. Cyril Hieros., S. Augustine, Theodoret, and Laetanius, in support of the above observations; and he might have confirmed them by numerous citations from Origens in his noble hortatory on this book. Origens Opera, tom. ii. pp. 397—457, ed. Benedict. Paris 1753; see also Prosper Aquitanus de Promissis ii. 14—16, where he traces the resemblances between the type and the antitype; and, of more recent authors, Dr. Barrow, Sermons on the Creed, Sermon xvii. p. 376; where, having summed up the resemblances between Joshua and Jesus Christ, he says, "Our Saviour, therefore, not only when He at last in fulness of truth did come into the world, but anciently in type and shadow may be supposed to have received this name Jesus, conferred upon Him in the person of Joshua, His most illustrious representative." See also Mother on Types, pp. 100—103, ed. Lond. 1705.
3 See ch. viii. 30—33.
4 ch. xxiv. 1—27.
5 ch. viii. 9.
6 See xiv. 9—13.
Church Triumphant, and of the final settlement of the Church glorified in the heavenly Canaan of her everlasting inheritance.  

These antitypical events are events of unparalleled importance and infinite solemnity to all Mankind. We need not therefore be surprised that their typical foreshadowings—namely, the circumstances attendant on Joshua's march into Canaan, and his conquest of that country, and the settlement of Israel there—should have been signalized by stupendous miracles. In this view, the very insignificance of the physical dimensions of Palestine, and the fewness of the Israelites—to which we have adverted—no longer perplex us. Palestine is in the spiritual world, what Attica 2 was in the intellectual. The territorial diminutiveness of each serves to bring out in bolder relief, and stronger contrast, the grandeur of their inner life. The littleness of Palestine, the paucity of its inhabitants, are very appropriate and significant, because they exhibit more clearly the important truth, that the Book of Joshua is not of the earth, earthly; that its value is not to be measured by the limits of time, and by geographical degrees of latitude and longitude, or by tables of population; but that it moves in a spiritual element, and breathes a heavenly atmosphere, and reaches forward to eternity. It displays the infinite superiority of mind to matter, of spirit to sense, of faith to sight.

An ancient Father of the Church, who lived and died in Palestine (S. Jerome), and who knew from his own observation how narrow its limits were, has well said, after speaking of the smallness of its extent, "I do not mention this, to disparage the Land of Promise, or to undermine the truth of the sacred history, which is the groundwork of all spiritual exposition, but in order that I may humble the superciliousness of the Jews, who prefer the narrowness of the synagogue to the amplitude of the Church; for if we only follow the letter which killeth, and not the spirit which quickeneth, let them show us, if they can, their land flowing with milk and honey. But we can point to God's promises fulfilled to us in Christ (Ps. ii. 8. Isa. xlix. 9), whence it appears, that all their history was a type, and shadow, and image of what we now see, and that it was 'written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come'" (1 Cor. x. 11).

Let the Book of Joshua be read in this spirit, and it will be seen to be consistent with the highest reason, the wisdom of God Himself. 3

1 S. Jerome, Epist. ad Paulinum, has well expressed this twofold design, of the Book of Joshua, the actings of the acts of Christ, first, in the Church militant; secondly, in the Church triumphant,—"Veniam ad Jesum Nave, typum Domini, non solum gestis, sed etiam nomine. Transit Jordham, hostium regna subvertitur, divinit terram victori populo; et per singulas urbes, viarum, montes, fluminia, torrentes, atque contina, Ecclesiae celestisque Hierusalem spirituina regna describit." 2 May the writer of this Introduction be permitted to refer to what he has said in another place (his description of Greece, p. 112), concerning this remarkable resemblance: it is clearly in its principles and parts applicable, mutatis mutandis, in a higher degree, and in a nobler and grander sense, to Palestine? The superficial extent of Attica is estimated at not more than seven hundred square miles, its greatest length is fifty, and its breadth thirty-six miles; if it is compared in size with some of the provinces of Europe, and much more with the wilds of Africa, or the forests of America, it sinks into the insignificance of some baronial estate, or of a private allotment in a colonial dependency. This, it is evident, is the case, if we look at its physical dimensions. But from a consideration of these we may pass to another view of the subject. While, strictly speaking, it occupies a space in the Map which is hardly perceptible, to how many square miles, or rather thousands of square miles, in the social, moral, metaphysical, and political geography of the world does Attica extend! This is, in truth, a contemplation which fills the mind of man with a feeling of triumph and exultation, and with an ennobling sense of its own dignity, as compared with that of the accidents and qualities of all the material objects of the world; it inspires him with a sublime sense of the energies of the intellectual and moral, and (may we not add?) of the divine and spiritual part of his nature. It is one grand object to him to see them confined within the narrow bounds which have been specified, yet stretching itself, like a living agent, from its contracted limits, by the vigorous growth, elastic energy, and expansive activity of those powers; to a comprehensive vastness, may, even to a kind of intellectual omnipresence, upon the surface of the earth. There is not a corner of the civilized world which is not breathed on by the air of Attica. Its influence makes itself felt in all parts of the earth, and that in a manner which will never cease to do so; it is not enough to say that it lives in the inspirations of the Poet, in the eloquence of the Orator, and in the speculations of the Philosopher. It exhibits itself everywhere in its finite visible forms, it animates the most beautiful creations of art. The works of the architect and of the sculptor, in every quarter of the globe, speak of Athens; even our manufactures are imprinted with her ornaments; the galleries of Princes and Nations, the temples and palaces, the libraries, and council-rooms of capital cities, pay homage to Athens, and will do so far ever. But, above all, it is due to the intellectual results produced by the inhabitants of this small canton of Europe, that the language in which they spoke, and in which they wrote, became the vernacular tongue of the whole world. The genius of the Athenians made their speech universal. The treasures which they deposited in it, rendered its acquisition essential to all; and thus the sway, unlimited in extent and invincible in power, which was wielded by the arms of Rome, was exercised over Rome herself by the arts of Athens.

To Attica, therefore, it is to be attributed, first, that precisely at the season when such a channel of general communication was most needed, there existed a common language in the world; and, secondly, that this language was Greek, or, in other words, that there was at the time of the first propagation of the Gospel a tongue in which it could be preached to the whole earth; and that Greek, the most worthy of such a distinction, was the language of Inspiration, the tongue of the earliest preachers and writers of Christianity. Therefore we may regard Attica, viewed in this light, as engrossed in the same cause, and leagued in a holy confederacy, with Palestine; we may consider the philosophers, and orators, and poets of this country as preparing the way, by a special dispensation of God's providence, for the Apostles, and Fathers, and Apologists of the Christian Church.

Such was the influence exercised on the destinies of the world, and such the manner and degree in which the highest interests of mankind have been, and are for ever to be, affected by a small province, whose physical dimensions may be said to bear the same ratio to those of Greece, which the estate of Alcibiades did to the territory of Attica itself.


It is, therefore, much to be regretted that in the commentaries on the Book of Joshua, which have lately been published by some of the Biblical Critics of Continental Europe, this important truth should have been lost sight of. Even in the most orthodox recent exposition of this Book, the name of Jesus, the Divine Antitype of Joshua, occurs only once. How different is such a treatment as this from the expo-
TO THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

The moral and spiritual lessons to be derived from this Book of Joshua receive additional force and clearness from the smallness of the territory in which the events that it relates were transacted. The mind, in contemplating those events, is not distracted by a variety of actions happening in distant countries; it is not wearied by a long inductive process of laborious generalization, but it sees the workings of Divine Power concentrated, as it were, in a focus, and displayed in a brilliant light in the grand scenes which take place within the limits of a few miles, and of a brief interval of time.

It is a main design of the following notes to illustrate these statements.

Let us now take a summary view of the contents of this Book, considered with reference to Jesus Christ.

Israel comes to the Jordan. The feet of the Priests bearing the Ark are dipped in the Jordan, and the waters flow backward, and the people pass over. God had said to Joshua, “This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel.”

Here was a foreshadowing of the manifestation of our Divine Joshua at His first Advent, in the sight of Israel, at the same river Jordan, when He began His ministry; and the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon Him, and the Voice was heard from heaven, “Thou art my beloved Son: in Thee I am well pleased.”

Christ is not only our Captain, but our Priest; and His feet were then dipped in Jordan; and He then entered on His office as our Priest, as well as our King; and He “sanctified water to the mystical washing away of sin;” and He bare the Ark with Him into the land of her inheritance.

Surely it is not without a mystery, that the waters of the Jordan, when the priests’ feet were dipped in them, are said to have flowed back to a place called Adam. Why was this recorded? The place is not found in our maps; it does not appear in the history of Israel. But may we not see a prophetic significance here? Is it not explained by the Baptism of Christ in the river Jordan? Then, when His feet were dipped in Jordan, the waters of sin, which flowed down upon us from Adam, were driven backwards, and we were saved from the overflowing stream, which would otherwise have drowned us; and we enter our Canaan through Him. And, as if to explain this mystery, the Holy Spirit has guided the Evangelist St. Luke to connect our Lord’s Genealogy with His Baptism, and to trace that Genealogy backward to Adam, and so to suggest to us, that the tide of Death, which flowed down upon us from Adam, has been stemmed and driven back from us in Christ.

Joshua began his work in Canaan at the river Jordan, and the priests began theirs. He commanded twelve stones to be taken up from Jordan, and to be set up in Gilgal. So Jesus Christ, when He had been baptized in Jordan, began His ministry. He began to choose His twelve Apostles, whose names are written on the twelve foundation stones of His Church, which is built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Head Corner Stone.

This passage of Israel over Jordan has also a prophetic reference to Christ’s second Advent.

There is a river which separates us from our heavenly Canaan. There is a stream which divides Time from Eternity. That stream is Death. The feet of our Great High Priest were dipped in that Jordan. He was baptized in the waters of Death; and when His feet were dipped in them, the waters, which were flowing down upon us from Adam, and stopped our entrance into heaven, were suddenly arrested and driven back; and all true Israelites now pass over it dryshod into their heavenly Canaan. “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

In another respect also the passage of Israel over Jordan seems to have a prophetic reference to Christ’s second Advent. Joshua ordered twelve stones to be taken out of Jordan, and set up in Gilgal, where the Israelites lodged after they had crossed the river.

The wall of the heavenly city, where the true Israel will lodge, after they have crossed the stream of Death, has, we read in the Apocalypse, “twelve foundation stones, and in them the names of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb.” The apostolic stones, set up by Jesus after His baptism in the river Jordan at His First Advent, when He had crossed the stream of Death, appear again in His

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sions of Origen, Theodore, and other ancient interpreters! Surely, in what is most essential—viz., in the unfolding of the spirit of this Book—modern Biblical Criticism has not made progress; but rather has declined from the standard of ancient exposition, and needs to be elevated from its present level to that of earlier times.

1 See below, iii. 7.
3 As the words of the original ought to be translated; see below, on iii. 16.
4 Rev. xxi. 14.
5 Eph. ii. 20.
6 See Matt. xx.
7 1 Cor. xv. 22.
INTRODUCTION

Second Advent. But they are now glorified; they have now become jewels, precious stones; and are described as such in the Apocalypse. The Apostolic Church, which was militant at the first Advent, will be triumphant at the second Coming of Christ.

As soon as Joshua had set up the stones at Gilgal, he was commanded by God to make knives of stone, and to circumcise the people who were uncircumcised. This act of Joshua is regarded by all ancient Expositors as figurative of the work of Jesus Christ, who alone can circumcise the heart, and whose circumcision is the true circumcision—the circumcision of the Spirit. This act of Joshua is connected with his passing over Jordan. Baptism, instituted by our Jesus, is not only a baptism by water, but a circumcision of the heart also, by the power of the Holy Ghost. We cannot enter Canaan, unless we have both. “Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.”

The Passage of Jordan and the Circumcision of Israel is followed immediately by the eating of the Passover. The feeding on Him who is the true Passover follows the Sacrament of Baptism; and the participation in that spiritual food is declared by Christ Himself to be a necessary preparation for the fruition of that heavenly life of which Canaan was a type.

Strengthened by that food, the Israelites began their campaign in Canaan.

Gilgal was near Jericho. Jericho was strongly fortified. It was the first city of Canaan which they encountered. But it would not fall by man’s power. The victory will be the Lord’s; yet man must do his part; he must do it in faith. The means prescribed by God appeared to be inadequate for the purpose. In the eyes of the world, they seemed to be foolishness. But this seeming foolishness was to be the trial of Israel’s faith. The warriors of Israel were ordered to march round the city; but it was not to be taken by them. The Ark of God was to be borne round the city every day for six days; and seven priests, bearing seven trumpets of Jubilee, must march before it; and they were commanded to compass the city seven times on the seventh day; and at the seventh time the priests were to make a long blast with the seven trumpets, and all the people were to shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city would fall down flat to the ground.

Such was God’s promise. It tested their faith. They believed and obeyed; as the Apostle says, “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed seven days.”

What does this represent? The final triumph of Christ. Jericho typified the City of this World, as opposed to the City of God. The Ark of God is now making a circuit of the world; it will continue to do so until the Coming of Christ to Judgment. And then, when the week of her work is over, and the Sabbath of Eternity is at hand, then the trump of God will sound, and the People of God will shout for victory, and the Jericho of this World will fall.

It may be thought surprising at first, that the final consummation of all things should be represented at such an early stage in the history of Joshua.

But this is the manner of Scripture. Even at the beginning it anticipates the end. When our Lord, at His first Advent, was beginning His course at Jordan, the Baptist foretold the glory and majesty of His second Advent. He saw the present Saviour, and proclaimed Him as the future Judge. “His fan is in His hand,” he says, “and He will throughly purge His Floor” (the threshing-floor of this world), “and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

In like manner, at the beginning of the Apocalypse, there is a prophecy of the End. “Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him.” So in the First Seal, in the Apocalypse, which refers to Christ’s first Advent, there is an anticipation of the second Advent. Christ is the Warrior, wearing a crown, and riding on the White Horse, and He has a bow in His hand, and “He goes forth conquering, and to conquer.” The victory of Christ

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1 Rev. xxi. 19.
2 See below, ch. v. 2—5.
3 John iii. 6.
4 Heb. v. 10.
5 See ch. vi. 4.
6 Hence S. Augustine (1 Epist. 55) says,—“Unde et illius civitatis muri, quse Jericho appellatur (quse in Hebraeo eloquo Luna interpretari dicitur) septimo circuitu circumcacta Testamento Arcæ coronerunt. Quid enim nunc aliquid agit annuatitio regni caelestri, quam circumacta Arcæ significavit, nisi ut omnæ munimenta mortalis vitae, id est, omnes spei hujus seculi, quæ resistat spei futuri seculi, in dono septenario Spiritus Sancti per librum arbitrationis destruatur? Ob hoc enim circumcactum Arcæ, non impulsa violento illi muri cecerundem, sed sponte.”
7 Hence S. Augustini thus speaks (c. Fanum xii. 31):
8 Videat Jesum (Joshua) introducendam populum in terram pro-
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missionem; neque enim hoc temerius ab initio vocabatur, sed ex ipsa dispensatione, nomine mutato, Jesus appellatus est. Videat in Jericho tanquam in hoc mortale seculo meretricem, de quibus ait Dominus quod precedent superbos in regnum celorum (Matt. xxi. 31), per fenestrae donum suæ cœcum mittenf, quod est utique sanguinis signum, propot remissionem peccatorum confiteri ad salutem. Videat muros ipsius civitatis, tanquam munitiones mortalis seculi, septies circumcactam Testamento Arcæ, ecclesiae; sicut nunc per temporæ, quæ septem dioram visa, ditaban, de pluribus, Testamentum Dei circuitum totum Orbem terrarum, ut in fine temporæ Mors novissima inimica destruerat.”
9 Matt. iii. 12.
10 Rev. vi. 2.
11 Rev. i. 7.
TO THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

is sure: therefore let His servants trust in Him: but their faith will be severely tried, for the World will fight against Him; but "this is the victory that overcometh the World, even our faith."

Let us now proceed to consider what were the forms of opposition to Joshua.

First, there was the league of Adoni-zedec, i.e., the lord of righteousness, the king of Jerusalem, with other four kings of the south of Palestine, who attacked the Gibeonites, the servants of Joshua.

Bearing in mind the typical character of Joshua and of his exploits, the reader may be invited to consider, whether this Confederacy did not represent one special form of opposition to Christ—viz., the first form of opposition which the Gospel had to encounter?

The first attack on the Church of Christ was not from the Heathen, but from the Jews. It was 'from those who went about to establish their own righteousness,' and persecuted the servants of Christ. And the head-quarters of that first confederacy against Christ was in Judaea, at Jerusalem. There was a league of a spiritual Adoni-zedec, a lord of righteousness, a king of Jerusalem, against our Joshua and His subjects. The voice from heaven said to Saul, coming with a commission from Jerusalem, and mad with zeal against the Church, and with fanatical confidence in his own "righteousness, which was of the Law," "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"

The victory gained by Joshua over the forces of Adoni-zedec and his confederates, rising against the subjects of Joshua, seems to have been a foreshadowing of the conquests gained by Christ at His first Advent over the spiritual Adoni-zedecs; a conquest begun at the walls of Damascus, when Saul, dazzled by the light from heaven, was smitten to the ground, as the Canaanites were by hailstones at Beth-horon; and it was consummated at the taking of Jerusalem, when there were "signs in the sun and in the moon," and many fled to their Makkedahs, which became their prisons, saying "to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us."

But the events of the great battle of Beth-horon will have their complete Antitype at the second Advent of Christ. Then, "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains and the mighty men, will hide themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; and will say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

The light of the sun was miraculously prolonged till Joshua's conquest was finished. "There was no day like that." And what day will be like the Great Day? Then Christ will put all enemies under His feet, as the kings were put under the feet of Joshua's captains. Then the light of the sun and of the moon will be prolonged till Christ's victory is complete, and then they will set for ever. "The heavenly city will have no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine on it; for the glory of God will lighten it, and that Lamb will be the light thereof."

Let us revert to the history of Joshua.

What was the next form of opposition to him? It was that of the kings of the north of Palestine. These were led on by Jabin, king of Hazor; and they had horses and chariots very many, and their hosts as the sand of the sea-shore.

It is here submitted for the consideration of the learned reader, whether this second confederacy does not represent another league against our Joshua, Jesus Christ.

After the opposition of the self-righteousness of the Jew, and all other forms of self-righteousness, represented by Adoni-zedec of Jerusalem and his league, the next adversaries of the Christian Church were the Power and Wisdom of the Gentile world. These seem to be foreshadowed by the league of Jabin, king of Hazor. The name Jabin speaks of wisdom, and Hazor is expressive of strength. The scene of their muster was not Judæa, but Galilee—Galilee of the Gentiles—near the waters of Merom.

This league of Jabin, king of Hazor, prefigured the marshalling of Antichristian forces in the heathen world; the horses and chariots of worldly power and worldly strength; the very much people, as the sand of the sea-shore; the clamorous outcries of infuriated myriads against Christ and the Church, such as made themselves heard at Rome, and in other cities of the empire, sounds of savage exclamation, "Christianos ad Leones."

This combination of forces was defeated by the Divine Joshua. The Wisdom of this World was vanquished by "the foolishness of preaching." Rome, the imperial mistress of this world, bowed
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her neck beneath the mild yoke of Christ; and in the Roman Colosseum, where Christians had been cast to wild beasts, the cross of Christ stands. There was the victory of our Joshua at the “waters of Merom.” But (as the Apoc is portends) 1 the full revelation of the struggle, the complete consummation of the victory, are reserved for the last days.

The power of this World and the wisdom of this World will again muster their armies against Christ. There will be a godless rebellion of human Intelligence against Divine Revelation. Some sounds of the approaching conflict are now heard. The dust of the countless legions of Antichristian powers, marching to the battle, is even now rising in the air. The glitter of their polished arms is already seen glancing in the sun. Spiritual Jabins are coming forth from the Hazors of their strength, and are marching at the head of an innumerable multitude against the Divine Joshua, and will encamp against Him and against the Israel of His Church. But they will be discomfited with great slaughter, and “the land will rest from war,” and then its peace will begin, the peace of Eternity. The fiercest outbreaks of Antichrist will be a signal for the second Coming of Christ 2.

After the display of God’s power and favour, blessing the armies of Israel, the sacred Historian describes the settlement of the Tribes in their inheritance.

This act, likewise, had a prophetic reference to the First Advent of Christ, and also to His Second Coming.

At His First Advent, Christ did His part for the planting of His Church—the Israel of God, the tribes of His people, in the Canaan of the whole World. And at His Second Advent He will settle all faithful Israelites in their heavenly inheritance.

Christ has done His part. But in the Visible Church, men have been slack to profit by the grace of God. The work of Christian Missions has been slow. So it was with the literal Israel. God had done His part; but they were slow to do theirs. “How long are ye slack,” said Joshua, “to go to possess the land which the Lord God of your Fathers hath given you?” God Himself had not intended that their enemies should be driven out all at once. Their settlement was to be gradual 1; but they allowed many years to pass away, and the work was suffered to pause, and even to go back. Fear, love of money, love of ease, withheld them from driving out the Canaanites, and taking possession of the land. And they even allowed the Canaanites to re-occupy cities and districts from which they had been driven by Joshua. The work of settlement was very slow. The various stages of its progress are remarkable. Have they not a prophetic significance 2?

The first tribes that received a promise of an inheritance, were the two Tribes and a half on the East of Jordan. They had been designated for that inheritance by Moses, and that inheritance was not in Canaan, properly so called; and it was not actually bestowed upon them by Moses, but by Joshua.

They represent (as Christian Antiquity believed 3), the faithful Israelites, who lived under the Law, and who looked forward to an inheritance with hope, and who received it from Jesus Christ.

Next came forth the lot of Judah 4, and next, that of Ephraim, and the other half of Manasseh 5. This second allotment seems to represent the next stage of the Christian Church; that is, its condition, as long as it was limited to Jewish Christians.

Thus these five Tribes were provided for. But the completion of the settlement of all the Tribes of Israel, the figure of the Church Universal, militant here on earth, and hereafter triumphant in heaven, was not effected till they all assembled at Shiloh; a very expressive name, significant of Peace; and a name also given in Scripture 6 to Christ, “who is our Peace.”

At Shiloh the Tribes of Israel found rest.

The order, in which the seven Tribes, which till then had not been settled, received their inheritance there, and completed the settlement of all, deserves careful attention. Why it was so ordered by God, that at Shiloh Benjamin’s lot came out first; why Simeon’s next; why they were followed by Zebulum, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and finally by Dan, are questions which have been considered in the notes in the following pages 10.

It will be a profitable and delightful employment to the Christian student, to trace the analogies between these allotments and the gradual extension of Christianity, from the time of Peace and

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1 See Rev. xvi. 14, 16; xix. 17, 18; xx. 8, 9.
2 Compare below, preliminary note to ch. xi.
3 See xviii. 3.
4 Exod. xxiii. 28.
5 Gen. xlix. 10.
6 ch. xv. 1.
7 ch. vi. 4—9; xvii. 1—18.
8 See below, on ch. xviii. 1.
9 See ch. xviii. 10, and ch. xix.
10 See ch. xvi. 10, and ch. xix.
Rest, when the Gentiles were brought into the Church, and since which they are ever being brought into it, and find Rest and Peace in the Christian Shiloh, and in Him who is their Rest and Peace, and who joins Gentile and Jew to one another and to God in Himself. Christ is our Shiloh; and our Shiloh is in His Church; and the identity of name between the Person called Shiloh, and the place called Shiloh, has its correlative in the unity of Christ and His Church.

We may also derive instruction by considering the spiritual significance of the Cities of Refuge appointed by Joshua 1, and also of the cities set apart for the Priests 2, and of those assigned to the Levites 3 throughout the tribes of Israel. All these Divine appointments have a religious meaning for us, and the Christian student may find profit and pleasure in searching for that meaning, and in gladly receiving it when found.

The full and circumstantial history of the Altar erected by the Two and a half Tribes on the eastern side of Jordan 4, when they were sent by Joshua to their inheritance, was surely not written without a purpose for us. The answer to the inquiry, what that purpose was, has been supplied by ancient Christian Expositors. It reflects clear light on the relation of the Law to the Gospel, and of Moses to Christ. It shows that the Law looked forward to the Gospel, and has its fulfilment there.

The spiritual view of the Book of Joshua, which has now been presented to the reader, seems also to suggest a solution of a moral question, which has been supposed by some to be beset with insuperable difficulties.

Joshua and the people of Israel were commanded by God to exterminate the nations of Canaan. They were forbidden to make peace with them; they were required to show them no mercy; to smite all the inhabitants of their cities with the edge of the sword 5.

How is this extermination to be justified?

In reply, let it be remembered 6, that God had waited patiently for five hundred years; that He had warned the Canaanites of His wrath against sin, by the terrible overthrow of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, on the soil of Canaan; that He had forborne to punish them many centuries before, because their iniquity was not yet full 7; that He had given them the blessing of the presence and the example of a Melchizedek, as well as of an Abraham, an Isaac, and a Jacob; that the Canaanites had heard of the punishments inflicted by the God of Israel on the Egyptians, and know what He had done for the Israelites on the other side of Jordan, as Rahab declared to the spies 8; and that the Canaanites had therefore reason to know that the God of Israel was the true God.

Rahab the harlot profited by this knowledge, before Joshua passed the Jordan, and was spared, with her whole household; even the Gibeonites were saved, who induced the Israelites to make peace with them under false pretences, and Joshua rescued them from the kings of Canaan, who rose up against them.

It is also to be considered, that the Canaanites were guilty of enormous sins; and (as the event proved) the impure and savage idolatry of the Canaanites 9, if spared, would prove contagious to Israel, and seduce them from the worship of the true God. The Canaanites were also polluted with the foulest and most unnatural abominations; so that, in the strong language of Scripture, "the land vomited out her inhabitants 10," and God might have destroyed them—men, women, and children—as He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, with fire and brimstone from heaven; but He chose, not an earthquake, nor a flood, nor a famine, nor a pestilence, to be the ministers and executioners of His vengeance against them, but He chose the sword of Joshua, in order that Israel might be deterred from committing those same sins, which, by God's express command, they themselves had so severely punished in others.

It is also not to be forgotten, that Death is not an evil, if it be followed by Life eternal, and that those Canaanites who repented, even at the eleventh hour—as, for example (we may suppose), some of the men of Jericho may have done, in those six days when the Ark was encompassing the walls—were mercifully accepted by God; and that the infants of Canaan, like those of Bethlehem, were taken from a world of corruption and evil example, to a world of holiness and peace, and are not to be mourned over, since their souls are with God. Their death was more blessed than their life probably would have been.

Nor can it be said, that the Israelites would be demoralized and brutalized by being made

1 See xx. 1—9.  2 See xxvi. 4—19.  3 ch. xxii. 21—24.  4 ch. xxii. 1—34.  5 See Deut. xx. 15—18. Cp. Exod. xxxiv. 11—17.  6 On this question concerning the extermination of the Canaanites, see note above, on Gen. xv. 16, and Num. xxxi. 2.

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ministers of God's wrath, or would be fired with an ambitious and sanguinary love of conquest and of carnage. God expressly provided against such a contingency. He forbade all aggressive warfare. He limited their commission to Canaan. At the very same time when He commanded them to execute His judgments upon Canaan, He required them to offer peace to all nations beyond it, even though those nations were enemies to Israel.

All this is true; but it is not the whole truth. Joshua was a type of Christ. The conquest of Canaan, and the extermination of the Canaanites, was a rehearsal of the dread events of the Universal Judgment to come. The Ancient Church of Christ regarded the seven nations of Canaan as having a mysterious moral significance. They considered them as typical representations of seven deadly sins.

Certain it is, that the command to exterminate the Canaanites was given to Israel by an all-wise and righteous God; and the history of that extermination by Joshua is written in Holy Scripture for a merciful purpose, to warn all men and Nations, by a terrible example, that a Day is assuredly coming, when, after long forbearance, God will arise to execute His full and final vengeance on all unrepentant sin. "The LORD Jesus will be revealed from heaven, with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe."

The spiritual inferences from these statements are clear. We, who are Christians, are bound to wage war against sins within ourselves; to exterminate the Canaanites in our own hearts.

As an ancient Father says, "Let Marcion and Valentinus and other heretics charge God with cruelty, because the kings of Canaan are placed under the feet of Joshua's captains, and were crucified by him; but let me see here a spiritual lesson for myself. Would to God, that Jesus Christ my Lord, the Son of God, would grant me His grace, and enable me to tread under my own feet the spirit of Lust, and to trample on the neck of Anger and Revenge, and to tread on the head of the malignant fiend of Covetousness and Vain-glory, and to bruise with my feet the spirit of Pride; and when I have done this, to ascribe all the glory of the work not to myself, no, but to His Cross, and to imitate the Apostle, who says, 'The world is crucified to me, and I unto the world!' If we thus wage war against our Canaanites, and drive out the Powers of spiritual wickedness in high places from among ourselves, we may hope to inherit our heavenly Canaan through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Such considerations as these seem to afford strong internal evidence of the Inspiration of the Book of Joshua. They appear to show, that it is pre-adjusted, in a marvellous manner, to future events; that it is, as it were, a typical Gospel; that it is a foreshadowing of the Acts of Jesus Christ, in the Church militant on earth, and in the Church triumphant in heaven.

Let any one compare the history of Joshua, and the settlement of the tribes in Canaan described in the Book of Joshua, with the treatment of the same subject by the Jewish historian, Josephus, who had this book before his eyes, and also by the writer of the Samaritan Book of Joshua; and in that contrast he will see abundant proof, that the writer of the Book of Joshua was not a mere human annalist, but was guided by the Divine Spirit, who came down upon Jesus Christ at His Baptism in the river Jordan, and who has recorded the acts of Christ in the Gospels; and has narrated the progress of the Christian Church in the Acts of the Apostles, and has revealed her future glory in the Apocalypse.

ON THE DATE AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

The Book of Joshua was accepted as a part of divinely-inspired Scripture by the ancient Hebrew Church, and it was received as such by Jesus Christ Himself.

Who the person was, by whose instrumentality the Book was written, is a question of minor importance. The Book itself is an integral part of Canonical Scripture, delivered by the Holy

1 Dest. xx. 1. 10—15.
2 See, for example, Prosper Aquilaus de Prom. ii. 16; Exspagnat Jesus, Nave filius, Chananellus, Cethaeum, Phere-seam, ceteraque gentes (Josh. ii. 3 seq.), quarum terras populo suo Dominus in hereditatem promiserit. Exspagnat et hoster Jesus Dominus idololatram, superbiam, invidiae, luxuriam, ceteraque vitia, ut suis secula prepararet externam hereditatem. The same feeling which is here expressed, has animated the devotions of some of our holiest divines; see Bp. Andrews, Preces Quotidianae, p. 107, "Superbia—Amorrahs; Invidia—Hethaeus!" &c. &c.
3 2 Thess. i. 7—10.
4 See Origen, Hom. viii.
5 See Origen, Hom. xii.
6 In his Jewish Antiquities, book v. ch. i.
9 It seems to have been deposited, as such, in the Hebrew Temple; see Joseph., Antt. v. 1. 17, where he speaks of it as among τα ανθρεματα το τω θεο γραφαι (see ch. x. 4).
Spirit guiding and inspiring the writer. What the channel was, through which it came, we do not know. We know the source, from which it comes. That is enough for us.

The composition of the Book was earlier than the latter part of David's reign. It speaks of the Jebusites as still in possession of Jerusalem (xx. 63), from which they were driven by David (2 Sam. v. 5). It represents the site of the Lord's house as not yet chosen (ix. 27); but it had been chosen in David's time (2 Sam. xxiv. 18). It speaks of Sidon as the capital of Phoenicia (xi. 8; xix. 28), which was not the case in David's age (2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Kings v. 15). The Book seems to date from the age of Joshua himself. The writer speaks of himself as among those who passed over Jordan 1. The harlot Rahab is mentioned as still living when the Book was written. Some things are recorded in it, which could only have been known in the first instance to Joshua himself; and which point to him as supplying the materials of it. Such are God's private revelations to Joshua; such is the vision which he saw of the Captain of the Lord's Host, near Jericho, and his conversation with him.

That Joshua himself was commanded by God to commit some things to writing, seems to be evident from the Book itself; and that he added to the Pentateuch some records of his own acts, is also clear. We seem therefore to be justified in ascribing a part of the Book to Joshua himself.

The additions concerning the death and burial of Joshua, at the end of the Book, may be compared with the record of the death and burial of Moses at the end of Deuteronomy.

Some other incidents are recorded in this Book, which seem to have happened after the death of Joshua, and which serve to connect this Book with the succeeding Book of Judges, as the Book of Joshua itself is connected with Deuteronomy.

The style of the Book of Joshua holds a middle place between the Pentateuch and the succeeding Books of the Old Testament. In language it has much in common with the Pentateuch, but the peculiar archaisms of the Pentateuch are not found in it. The attempts which have been made by some to disintegrate it into loose fragments seem hardly to require notice here. They will be examined in detail in the following notes.

The principal commentaries on the Book of Joshua are,—among Ancient Christian Writers, Origén (in his noble homilies), Augustine, Theodoret, Procopius Gaumer, Isidorus Hispalensis, Bede; among the Rabbis—Rashi, Kimchi, Abeyesra; among later Christian expositors—Masius, Arians Montanus, Servarius, Bonifarius, Cornelius a Lapide, Drusius, Seb. Schmidt, Rosenmüller, Maurer, Keil.

The edition of Keil's Commentary on the Book of Joshua, referred to in the following notes, is that published at Leipzig in 1863.

Let us pray to the Divine Antitype of him whose name the Book bears, that He who enlighten our minds, that we may read it aright, and profit thereby. May He who is the true Joshua, and who is also our Great High Priest, and whose feet were dipped in the River Jordan at His Baptism, and who "sanctified water to the mystical washing away of sin," and who has led us thereby into the Canaan of His visible Church, give us grace, who have been baptized into Him, to fight mansfully under His banner against our spiritual Canaanites, Sin, the World, and the Devil, and to continue His faithful soldiers and servants unto our lives' end! May He, who after His Baptism in the river Jordan, chose His Twelve Apostles, and set them up as the foundation stones of His Church, build us up, as lively stones, on "the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner stone!" May He, who has given the whole World to be the inheritance of His Visible Church, and has planted us therein, enable us to occupy and adorn that

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1 See ch. v. 1, "we were passed over." See also ch. v. 6, "give us:" this appears to be the true reading.
2 ch. vi. 25.
3 See i. 1—9; iii. 7; iv. 1; v. 2; vi. 2; vii. 10—15; viii. 1; x. 8; xi. 6; xii. 1; xx. 1; xxiv. 2.
4 ch. v. 13.
5 ch. vii. 32.
6 See ch. xxiv. 26. Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law. It is ascribed to Joshua by some of the Rabbis (see Daca Jathas, f. 14, c. 2). Lightfoot (i. 41) supposes it to have been written by Philo'sus. Perhaps there is some truth in both these suppositions. It may have been begun by the one, and completed by the other.
7 The phrase, "until this day," does not necessarily imply that a long time had elapsed since the event with which it is coupled had taken place (see Matt. xxviii. 15).
8 ch. xxiv. 29.
9 Josh. i. 1, 2; cp. Deut. xxxiv. 1. 5; and cp. Jos. i. 3—6. Deut. xi. 21; xxxiv. 7, 8.
10 Dr. Posey (Lectures on Daniel, p. 310) thus speaks: "On the ground of language, the Book of Joshua must have been very early; for its language has so much in common with the Pentateuch, although the Pentateuch has marks of greater antiquity, having archaisms which the Book of Joshua has not, and not having language which the Book of Joshua has. On historical grounds, it must have been written before the time of David."
11 See Keil, Einleitung, pp. 8, 9; in d. Buch Joshua; and his Einleitung in d. A. T., p. 111.
12 cp. Nachtrag, in Henkel's Mag., iv. 2, p. 362; Eichhorn; Berthold; Meyer; Paulus; De Wette; Horwagen; Maurer, and others. These have been examined by König, Stendel, and particularly Hüsemmer, Specielle Einleitung in Handbuch, ii. pp. 1—67. Cp. Keil, Einleitung, pp. 9, 10; and Rev. W. T. Bullock's Article on the Book of Joshua, in Dr. Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, i. p. 1145.
13 cp. ii. 20.
portion of the inheritance which He has allotted to us, and to drive out therefrom those spiritual enemies, against which He commands us to contend, and especially to expel them out of our own hearts! May He give us grace to extend His kingdom upon earth, by labouring to bring both Gentile and Jew into it, that in Him all Nations may be blessed! May He, who passed through the Jordan of Death, in order to bring us through its dark waters to the land of Everlasting Life, the Canaan of the Church triumphant in heaven, and who has made Death to be the entrance to a glorious immortality, enable us to follow Him in that march of victory; so that, at that Great Day, when all the types of the Book of Joshua will be swallowed up in their antitypes, when the Ark of Christ's Church will have ended her course, and the walls of all the Jerichos of this World, which oppose Christ, will fall flat to the ground; when the Sun and Moon themselves will be stayed from setting, till all things are subdued to Him; when all His enemies, who have fled to the dens and hiding-places of earthly security, and think themselves safe from the eye and arm of the Divine Joshua, in the Makkedahs of their worldly refuge, will find their hopes to be vain, and will be drawn forth from their caves and be placed beneath His feet; and when all the confederate forces of unsanctified Knowledge and antichristian Power will be routed, as the league of Jabin was at the waters of Merom, we may be with the Calebs of Israel, and have an inheritance in the spiritual Hebron, where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob rest in peace, and may hereafter sit down together with them, in the kingdom of God!
JOSUA.

I. NOW after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers.

CH. I. 1. Now] In the Heb. it is וְאֶתָּן, and, which connects this Book with what has gone before. The Book of Judges is connected with that of Joshua by the same copula, וְאֶתָּן; and the Book of Ruth with that of Judges, as that of Exodus is with Genesis, and Leviticus with Exodus, and Numbers with Leviticus.

— after the death of Moses] in the land of Moab, in the eleventh month of the fortieth year of the wandering. Cp. Deut. i. 8; xxxiv. 5. 8, whence it appears that the Israelites went for Moses thirty days; and they afterwards passed over Jordan on the tenth day of the first month (Josh. iv. 19). They had come out of Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month.

—the servant of the Lord] who was faithful in all His house (Heb. iii. 5).


unto Joshua] Joshua, in Greek Jesus, which name is given also to Joshua in the New Testament, as well as in the Septuagint; see Acts vii. 45. Heb. iv. 8. On the origin of the name (betokering Salvation to be effected by Jehovah), and the occasion of its imposition, see above on Num. xiii. 16; and cp. Matt. i. 21, concerning the divinity Antitype: “Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.” When Moses is dead, God speaks to Joshua. All these things were figures of us (1 Cor. x. 11). Moses represents the Law; Joshua, or Jesus, the Saviour. The Law cannot bring us to our heavenly Canaan, but only to the borders of it. The Law dies, and our Joshua leads us into our Promised Land in the Gospel (Theodore, Proleg. 1).

Another ancient Father thus speaks,—‘This Book of Joshua not only records the acts of the son of Nun, but reveals to us the mysteries of our Lord Jesus. After the death of Moses, Joshua received the command. The Law is now dead, the legal ordinances have ceased. The Law and Prophets were until John, but now the kingdom of God is preached’ (Luke xvi. 16). As St. Paul says, ‘The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth, but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband,’ and may be married to another. And so the soul, which was bound by the Law, as long as the Law was in force, is now joined to Christ, since the Law is dead.” Origen, Hom. i. 1; cp. Tertullian, c. Marcion.iii.16. Moses must die, that Joshua may succeed; for “by the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified; but now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, even the righteousness of God which is by Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe” (Rom. iii. 20—22). Bp. Pearson, Art. ii. p. 76.

On this subject see above, Introduction to this Book.

— Moses’ minister] Joshua first appears as the minister of Moses (Exod. xxiv. 13. Num. xi. 25), but afterwards is his successor, and does what Moses was not able to do,—he leads the people into Canaan. So our Jesus was “made under the Law” (Gal. iv. 4), and fulfilled all the righteousness of the Law (Matt. iii. 15), that He might redeem them that were under the Law (Gal. iv. 5; cp. Rom. xv. 8. Origen, Hom. 2. Theodot, Qu. 1).

2. the land which I do give to them] The conquest of Canaan, therefore, and the extermination of the nations of Canaan, were acts of God’s sovereign power, using the Israelites as His instruments for punishing the sins of those nations: see Gen. xii. 7; xv. 13—16; Genesis. Authentic. ii. pp. 471—507. Keil, p. 12. Here therefore is the refutation of the objection that the subjugation of Canaan by the Israelites was an act of unjustifiable aggression on their part.

God gave the land to the literal Israel by Joshua; so He gives the good land to us by Jesus, who says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit; for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt. v. 5). Origen.

3. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon] Not even so much as a foot’s breadth is excepted from the grant of the land to the descendants of Abraham, to whom God gave not so much of it “as to set his foot upon;” yet He promised that He would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child (Acts vii. 5).

These words, like many others in this Book of Joshua, are a repetition of words in the Pentateuch, and confirm its genuineness; and connect the one book with the other: see Deut. xi. 24, 25.

4. From the wilderness] With regard to these boundaries of the land, see Deut. xi. 24.

— this Lebanon] Visible from Shittim, where Joshua was; cp. Deut. xi. 24, 25, where the pronoun this is not inserted; they had now come within sight of it, or, at least, of Antiliasus. The limits here specified are far exceeded in the conquests of the Divine Antitype, whose dominion is “from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth” (Ps. lxxii. 8).

6. unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land] As our Jesus will do; to whom all judgment is given by
their fathers to give them. 7 Only be thou strong and very courageous,
that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, *which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest || prosper whithersoever thou goest. 8 a This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but * thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt || have good success. 9 o Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; 10 be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, 11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for * within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it.

And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, 13 Remember * the word which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, The Lord your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them; 15 Until the Lord have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the Lord your God giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy

the father (John v. 22). As Joshua, and not Moses, led the people into the land, and divided it to them for an inheritance, so will Jesus Christ allot their portions of the good land to His people (Justin Martyr, Dial. c. Trypho, p. 377, ed. Thirlby).

8. This book of the law. The Pentateuch, which was laid up in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle (see on Deut. xxxii. 9, 26), where, it is probable, God was now speaking: see v. 1. He might therefore well say, This Book, or, as it is in the original, "The Book of this Law."

shall not depart out of thy mouth. A precept in accordance with Deut. xvi. 18, where the future kings of God's people are required to write a copy of it: see also below, on viii. 32, 34.

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth," This was God's charge to Joshua. And our Divine Joshua said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled" (Matt. v. 17, 18); and as Joshua came to the Jordan to fulfill what God commanded by Moses (see iv. 10), so our Joshua came to the Jordan to be baptized therein, "in order to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. iii. 15).

10. the officers. Heb. shoterius, from shatar, to write; they are called scribes, scribes, by the Sept.; they were the secretaries or officers by whom the acts of the rabbis were promulgated to the people: see Exod. v. 6; below, iii. 2; viii. 33; xxiii. 2; xxiv. 1.

11. Prepare you victuals. The manna had not yet ceased (see v. 13); but probably they would not have time to go out each morning to gather it, and to prepare it. Perhaps, also, one of these three days was a Sabbath, upon which manna would not fall (Exod. xvi. 23—25).

a within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan. Therefore it seems most probable, that the events recorded below in chap. ii., concerning the crossing forth of the spies and their return, had already happened; see ii. 16, 23, whence it appears that after the reception of the spies into Jericho, they remained three days in the mountains; and cp. iii. i, 2, where it is said that Joshua rose early and the people came to Jordan, and lodged there, and after three days the officers went through the host and commanded the people to follow the ark through Jordan.

It does not seem likely, that after Joshua had received a command from God to go over Jordan (v. 2), he would have delayed and sent forth spies to search out the land. On this point see further below, ii. 1.

The term specified as three days in iii. 2, appears to coincide with the end of the three days mentioned here; and to date from the order given by God to Joshua: see further below, on iii. 2, as to what may perhaps be the typical meaning of this expression.

12. And to the Reubenites—the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh. It is observable that Moses assigned them their inheritance on the east side of Jordan (v. 14; cp. Num. xxxii. 33); but they were not settled in their inheritance by Moses; and that they were planted in it by Joshua, but not till after the other tribes received their inheritance under Joshua on the west of Jordan (see iv. 12, 18); and that these two Tribes and a half went over Jordan to help the other Tribes to obtain their inheritance, and then returned to their own portion assigned to them by Moses, and were established in it by Joshua.

It is well said by Bishop Pearson (Art. ii.), that there is "scarcely an action of Joshua which is not clearly predictive of our Saviour;" and it can hardly be doubted that this act of Joshua at this critical time of the history of the march of Israel into Canaan, had some figurative reference to the acts of Christ in His Church, in respect to the assignment to His People of their spiritual inheritance.

The question, what that reference is, has been considered above, in the notes on Num. xxxii. 20—33; and see the interesting homily of Origen here (Hom. 5), who shows good reason for believing that these two Tribes and a half were typical of the faithful Israelites who lived under the Law, and looked forward with hope to the Gospel: see also Bede, Qu. in Josh. c. 4.

14. armed! Heb. chaumshib; as to which word, see above, on Exod. xiii. 13. The Sept. has εἰκόνος here, but περίτυχεν there; which seems to show that the Pentateuch and Book of Joshua were not transcribed into Greek by the same persons.

— the mighty men of valour. Heb. giborey ha-chalil (see vi. 2; viii. 3; x. 7), an expression not found in the Pentateuch, which has beeny chalil, "sons of valour" (Deut. iii. 19).
Joshua sends two Spies.

JOSHUA I. 16—18. II. 1. Rahab of Jericho

it, which Moses the Lord's servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the surrising.

And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. 17 According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses. 18 Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.

I. 1 And Joshua the son of Nun || sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there.

Preliminary Note on the Spies.

The following chapter, concerning the sending forth of the spies by Joshua, is read in the synagogue as the Haphtarot to Numbers xi. 21-11. The description of the spies by Moses; and thus a comparison is suggested between the two acts. Moses, the representative of the Law, sent forth spies, but with the exception of Joshua and Caleb they brought an evil report, and the people murmured, and are excluded from Canaan. But Joshua, the type of Jesus, sends forth spies, and they bring a good report (e. 24); and the people are cheered thereby, and pass over Jordan into Canaan. Here the difference is marked between the unbelief of the great part of the Jewish Nation already under the Law, and the faith of the Apostolic Missionaries of the Gospel.

CH. II. 1. Joshua the son of Nun sent had sent (in the margin). Here is a return to a point antecedent to the speech of the Lord to Joshua in the first chapter (i. 1—9; see note on i. 11); and a similar recapitulation is observable in xvi. 16. Cp. John xviii. 24, "Anna had sent Him bound unto Caiaphas," where the writer goes back to a previous point and writes from it; see the note there.

Joshua sent the spies from Shittim before he had received God's command to pass over Jordan, which is mentioned in 1, 2, and before he himself had even orders to prepare for the passage in three days' time (i. 11). Joshua would not have sent them after God's command, and after his own order; and if he had done so, the spies would not have found him still at Shittim, as they did, after they had gone from Shittim over Jordan to Jericho, and had spent three days in the mountains (G. 29).

God's command is put in the first place, as the principal motive to Joshua's act in leading the people over Jordan; and this history concerning the spies is introduced parenthetically and subordinately to show that even before Joshua received God's command, he had made preparations for the passage.

But, if the passage had been represented as a consequence of the return of the spies, the act would not have appeared to be what it was, as an act of obedience to God, and done by commission from Him.

This order of events seems to be a foreshadowing of Evangelical Mysteries.

Joshua first sends spies. They are well received by the harlot Rahab; and she and her household are saved, and are admitted into the family of Israel. And after the sending of the spies by Joshua, Joshua himself is sent by God.

II. 17. The Dispensation. First, our Joshua, Jesus Christ, sent forth His messenger, John the Baptist, to prepare His way by preaching repentance. "The publicans and harlots believed him," and went into the kingdom of God (Matt. xxv. 31, 32). Afterwards God sent His own Son (Matt. xxi. 37). In order to get from all the nations who had received His messengers, and to destroy those who reject them.

We have a somewhat similar instance of a preparatory action by Joshua with regard to the Twelve Men who were to be the bearers of the Twelve Stones (ii. 12), and the consecration of the command by God, in iv. 1—7; and this sequence of events has doubtless also a figurative significiation: see on iv. 1, 2.

Joshua the son of Nun sent. He who had been sent himself as one of the spies by Moses into Canaan (Num. xxiii. 10)—on which occasion his name was changed from Hoshea to Joshua—now sends two spies to Jericho; perhaps Joshua knew something of the faith of Rahab from his own previous visit, and had directed the spies to her house:

—Shittim so called from the Acacia-trees (cp. Exod. xxv. 5): its full name seems to have been Abel-hash-shittim (Num. xxxiii. 49), i.e., "meadow of acacias:" it was in the arabah, or vale of Moab, about eight miles from Jordan (Josephus, Antit. iv. 7.1) and opposite Jericho; see Num. xxxi. 1; xxv. 1; xxvi. 3; xxxii. 12; xxxiii. 48, 49; below, iii. 1. Micah vi. 5.

—Jericho] situated about two hours west of Jordan, a little to the north of the valley now called Ribah, in Wady Kelt (Hesiodon, Resounding); The City in会让 (cp. Kelt, in the name of Ribah, with god after the rest); it is thus called twenty times in this Book; but in the Pentateuch, where it occurs eleven times in the Book of Numbers, it is always called Yarecho (without god after the rest).

Here is a sign of difference of authorship: cp. on xiii. 12, with regard to another case, where a difference is observable.

The name Jericho probably signifies "city of the Moon (Genen. 367), perhaps from the worship of the Moon there. Heliopolis, or city of the Sun, in Egypt, and Beth-shemesh, or house of the Sun, in Palestine, received their names for similar reasons. For this and other causes, e. g., its prominence among the cities of Canaan; the extraordinary manner of its overthrow under Joshua, the figure of Jesus; the curse pronounced by Joshua against those who should attempt to rebuild it (Josh. vi. 26. Cp. 1 Kings xvi. 34.); Jericho was regarded by the ancient Fathers as a type of the City of this world, as opposed to the City of God: see Augustine e. Faust. xii. 31. Epist. 35. Cp. below on Lake x. 30; and on Rev. viii. 1, on the Trumpets.

The History of Rahab.

—harlot's house] The word harlot is to be taken literally—not (as Josephus and some of the Rabbis and Targumists understood it) as equivalent to campagnia.

The Hebrew, zonath, requires this rendering, and so does the Greek ἱερατία, by which it is called in the Sept., and in the New Testament: see Heb. xi. 31. James ii. 25. Pfeiffer, p. 174; and Woevers, Op. 1. There is the moral of the history—Rahab was a harlot: but she did not remain such. Origen well says, "illa meretric, quam ab Iesus missos suscipit exploratores, propertia suscipit ut ultra sit meretric." (Hom. 1). Again he says (Hom. 6), "Aliquo meretricius fuisset, nemo vero casta."

Notwithstanding the circumstances of her position, living as she did in Jericho, an idolatrous city, Rahab profited by what she had heard of the wonderful works of the God of Israel, and professed faith in Him (cp. Deut. xiii. 20). Rahab declared to him her love and her father's house by interceding for them also (cp. 12, 13).

Therefore she was admitted into the Church of God, and is proposd as a pattern of faith, in the New Testament; and she was allowed to enjoy the high privilege of being among those who were ancestors of David, and of Jesus Christ according to the flesh (see Matt. i. 5).

Thus Rahab is an example of the penitent and faithful soul turning to Christ, like the woman in the Gospel who had
Rahab receives the Spies.  

JOSHUA II. 2—10.  

Rahab’s faith.

d Ps. 117. 1.  
Prov. 71. 50.

2 And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in lither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country.  
3 And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country.

4 And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were:  
5 And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.

6 But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.

7 And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

8 And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof;  
9 And she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.  
10 For we have heard how the Lord hath dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon

been a sinner (Luke vii. 37), and who was received graciously by Him.

In a larger sense, Rahab was also a type of the Gentile Church coming to Christ, by repentance and faith, in obedience to His gracious offers given by His Apostles and other Ministers of the Gospel in every age, and bringing forth fruits of love and holiness.

On the typical character of Rahab, see Clesens Rom. ad Coc. § 12. Justin Martyr c. Tryphon. § 112. Irenaeus, iv. 57; and Origens, Hom. 3, who says, "This harlot, who received those who were sent by Joshua, and who formerly had been defiled by sin, now is filled with the Spirit, and confesses God’s mighty works, and declares her faith in Him, and forecasteth the future (see e. 9); and ex moretrice fit prophetam. She is like the penitent on the cross, who prayed to Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom’ (Luke xxiii. 42).

As long as our souls were living in the lusts of the flesh, we were like Rahab in her former state of harlotry; but we have received the messengers of Jesus, and we have renounced the works of darkness, and are saved through His Blood. Hear the voice of the Apostle describing the state of the soul, first by nature, and next by grace,—"We ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures" (Titus iii. 9). And such were some of you; but ye were washed, ye were justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God’ (1 Cor. vi. 11); and so the soul which was once a harlot has now been espoused to a chaste Virgin to Christ’ (2 Cor. xi. 2).” Origens, Hom. 6.

Let no one (says another Father) deem that Rahab is unworthy to be regarded as a figure of the Church. For as the spies sent forth by Joshua saved alive the harlot for her faith, giving the sign of scarlet thread, so Rahab saved the Church, once a harlot—that is, given over to idolatry—from her former defilements; and she saved her, not by a scarlet thread as a token, but by the precious blood of Christ (Theodorets, Qu. 5, who quotes Titus iii. 5. Gai. iv. 8. Eph. v. 2. 1 Cor. xi. 9. 10).” named Rahab] Heb. Rachachab, which signifies wide, spacious; from Rachach, to become wide (Genen. 764). The Christian Fathers, who see in Rahab (once a harlot, and now by faith and repentance made a mother in Israel) a figure of the Church of Christ, gathered from the heathen world, and extended far and wide into all Nations, recognize in her name a happy omen of the diffusion of the Antitype, the Church of Christ.  
5. the men went out] Rahab was guilty of a falsehood: but here is an evidence of the truth of the history; her moral in-  

1. Rahab was brought up among Idolaters, who have little regard for truth; and she lived in Jericho, one of the greatest cities of Canaan. It was not to be expected, that all at once she would become a lover of truth, and would think it sinful to employ an artifice in order to attain a good end. Her case was like that of the Egyptian midwives, who told a false-  

2. In both cases God was “not extreme to mark what was done amiss,” but graciously accepted their acts of faith and mercy, although they were sullied and blemished by human in-  

3. and thus He gently led them on to higher degrees of virtue; and to the spirit of obedience and trust, which the midwives and Rahab evinced, they would hardly fail to attain those higher degrees, when they were more fully conversant with His Law—the Law of Truth as well as of Love: cp. Augustine c. Mendacium, cap. 19; and Dr. Waterland, Serfs.  

4. Violated. P. 110, who observes that “Rahab is commended in Scripture (Heb. xi. 31, and James ii. 25) for her faith and good works: i.e. for things truly commendable; but not for her falsehood;” which indeed Scripture condemns by whom-  

5. the stalks of flax] probably recently cut, and laid out to  

6. to dry in the sun on the flat roof of the house. The flax would be  

7. now ripe, for it was just before the Passover (see iv. 19; v. 10), and the flax was the staple of the world in Egypt (see iii. 14. 9th) the climate of which is nearly similar to that of Canaan.  

8. Blunt, Coincidences, pp. 71. 109; and as to the size of the flax-stalks, see Hasselquist, Reise, p. 501. Winer, p. 1375.  

9. the fords] of the Jordan. Cp. Judges iii. 28. 2 Sam. xix. 15. Probably at the mouth of Wady-Shah; or more to the south, at the mouth of Wady-Heshbon (Robinson). Other fords of the Jordan are now found at Zit-Mesahra, and at Zit-  

10. Mockaten; cf. Sir. 47. 10. El-Riha, in Keil, p. 21. But the waters of the Jordan were now swollen (iii. 15), and probably some of these were not passable at this time.  

11. And she said unto the men] This speech (ver. 9—13) is like the utterance of the Gentile Church, turning from heathen-  

12. ism to Christ. It contains a declaration of the impression pro-  

13. duced by the communication of the wonderful works of God, and by meditation upon them. At first the wonderful nature of these miracles caused fear; but this fear was a godly fear, and led to an acknowledgment of God’s omnipotence, and to a desire for  

14. his protection; and therefore takes the form of prayer for pro-
The scarlet line

JOSHUA II. 11—18. bound from the window.

And there is none other way of salvation to the messengers of the true Joshua, who preach the Gospel, and win Rahabs to the faith; and those messengers cannot rightly prescribe any other pledge of salvation to those who receive them, than the Blood of Christ. That blood is the scarlet thread by which the messengers themselves escape from their spiritual enemies, and from the power of the King of this world, Jericho, even Satan himself; and they must also declare that the same blood, by which they themselves are saved, is to be the scarlet thread which must hang from the window of every house, in order that its family may be saved from the wrath of the Divine Joshua, when He comes to overthrow the Jerichos of this world, and to judge all men.

Hence the Apostles say, "There is none other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," than that of Christ (Acts iv. 12). God has set Him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood (Rom. iii. 25), and we are justified through the Blood (Rom. v. 9). We were redeemed through His Blood (Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14); and He has made peace through His Blood (Col. i. 20); and the saints say, Thou hast redeemed us to God through thy blood (Rev. v. 9).

No wonder then that Christian expositors, from the times of the Apostles, should have seen in this scarlet line a type of Christ's saving blood. S. Clement, the friend and fellow-labourer of St. Paul (Phil. iv. 3), thus speaks: "On account of her faith and hospitality, Rahab, the harlot, was saved . . . and the spies commanded her to bring all her kindred into her house; and they also dictated to her this sign—namely, that she should hang from her house the scarlet line, thus declaring that through the blood of the Lord there is redemption to all who believe and trust in God" (S. Clemens, Ep. ad Corinth. ii. 9).

And another Father who lived in the second century, S. Justin Martyr, uses similar language. The blood of the Passover, he says, saved the Israelites who were in Egypt: so the blood of Christ will save those who believe; and "had not God been able to distinguish the Israelites without this sign? Would He have made the Passover, if they had not been so marked? We may not so speak; but thus He presignified that mankind would be saved by the blood of Christ; and the token of the scarlet thread, which was prescribed by Joshua's
thy father's household, home unto thee. 10 And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head: and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, *his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. 20 And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. 21 And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

x Matt. 27. 25.

In the third century Origen thus writes: "The sign which Rahab was required to use was of scarlet, the colour of blood; for there is salvation to none but by the blood of Christ. Blood is the sign prescribed, for by blood we are cleansed. Perhaps the scripture refers to the place here. The inscription on the scarlet line, for the window was the means of light to the house, and by means of the Incarnation of Christ we behold as through a window, the light of the Godhead, as far as we are able to behold it." [see also Acts ii. 22:3, see xiii. 10, and Theodore, Qu. 2; and on Heb. xi. 31; and Prosper Aguian, de Prom., Pars ii. c. 14. Bede, Qua. in Josh. c. 2; and c. 7.]

The Catholic church, from sub-apostolic times, is surely of great weight in favour of this interpretation; and it has an additional value, as showing, that the Catholic Fathers of the Christian Church from primitive times, knew of no other way of salvation than faith in the blood of Christ.

19. no one shall go out of the doors of the house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him] In the scarlet line in the window a type of Christ's saving blood, saw in this precept of Joshua's messengers a pre-announcement of the command delivered by Christ Himself and His Apostles, to seek for salvation by His blood in the Unity of His Church. "Nemo seipsum decipit (says Origen, Hom. 3), extra hanc dominam, id est, extra Ecclesiam, nemo salvatur; nam si quis fors egressi, mortis sus est reus." S. Cyril (Ep. 76), comparing the precept in Exodus with the command delivered here, says, "Inseparabilia atque indivisa unam unitatem tenere necessario: scripturam in solo Domino unam et in Domino. Quemadmodum hic St. Agnus, qui Christum designat, scripturam sit in domo und comedetia; quot item circa Rabah, quam ipsa vocem typum portabit Ecclesie, expressione videntem, cui mandatum et dictatur Patrum et Evangelistae, in saeculo, si est, in Ecclesiam, victoriae, et ab interiorty mundi evasuros, colligi eopere:...: see also his treatise "de Unitate Ecclesiae," p. 469; and cp. Bede, Qua. c. 7; and Jp. Pearson, on Art. ix. p. 348, of the Church of Jesus thus writes on this important subject: "The necessity of believing the Holy Catholic Church appeared first in this, that Christ had appointed it as the only way unto eternal life. We read at the first, that the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved (Acts i. 47), and what was then daily done, Christ in his last testament unites Christ never appointed two ways to heaven; nor did He build a Church to save some, and make another institution for other men's salvation. There is 'no other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,' but the Name of Jesus (Acts iv. 12); and that Name is no otherwise given under heaven than in the Church. As none were saved from the Deluge, but such as were within the Ark of Noah, framed for their reception by the command of God; as none of the first-born of Egypt lived, but such as were within those habitations whose door-posts were sprinkled with blood by the appointment of God for their preservation; as none of the inhabitants of Jericho could escape the fire or sword, but such as were within the house of Rahab, for whose protection a covenant was made: so none shall ever escape the eternal wrath of God, which belong not to the Church of God. This is the congregation of those saints heretofore recognized and gathered together. These are the vessels of the Tabernacle carried up and down, at last to be translated into, and fixed in the Temple" (Bp. Pearson).

Another eminent English Bishop and Divine thus speaks: "Bishop Bede says (c. 2) all families must be gathered into her house; and that red cord, which was an instrument of their delivery, must be a sign of hers. Behold, this is the saving colour. The destroying Angel sees the door-checks of the Israelites sprinkled with red, and passes them over. Lastly, through Rahab's window of Rahab dyed with red, and save her family from the common destruction. If our souls have this tincture of the precious blood of our Saviour upon our doors or windows, we are safe. But if any one of the brethren of Rahab shall fly from this red flag, and rove about the city, and not contain himself under that roof, which hid the spies, it is vain for him to tell the avengers, that he is Rahab's brother: that title will not save him in the street, within doors it will. If we will wander out of the window of Rahab dyed with red, and save her family from the common destruction. If our souls have this tincture of the precious blood of our Saviour upon our doors or windows, we are safe."

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Lastly, one of the most learned theologians of our own day thus animadverts on the poor and parblind criticisms of some in modern times, who can see no spiritual signification in these scriptural symbols, but rather treat them with scorn:"

"The pious and solid remarks of S. Chrysostom, S. Ambrose, and S. Jerome, and many other Fathers, making Rahab and Ruth to be types of the Gentile Church—as well as the mystery observed in the name Rahab, or Rahach, signifying enlargation; and the scarlet ensign, adumbrating, according to the spirit of the older edition, the blood of the Universal Redeemer which should make both one, are considered as fair subjects of ridicule by one who has exercised a great deal of learning in the last century" (Dr. W. H. Mill in the Genealogies, p. 138).

21. she bound the scarlet line in the window] And thus showed her faith. The meaning was, Rahab was apparel, because she showed her faith and repentance, while Joshua and Isreal were yet at a distance. But when they had crossed the Jordan, the day of retribution came to the guilty nations of Canaan (see Dent. xx. 10—17). The crossing of Jordan was to Canaan, what the Second Advent of Christ will be to the World. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vii. 2).

The forty years' Wandering of the Israelites, after the Passage of the Red Sea, and the fame of the mighty works which God had wrought for them—a fame which had propagated itself far and wide among the neighbouring nations (cp. Exod. xv. 14; above, ii. 10, 11; below, ix. 9, 10)—were mercurial providential dispensations of moral prohibition to the Canaanites; as the preaching of the Gospel, and the record of Christ's works and prophecies are to the World.
22 And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not. 23 So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them: 24 And they said unto Joshua, Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.

III. 1 And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. 2 And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host; 3 And they commanded the people, saying, 4 When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. 5 Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore.

6 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the Lord will do wonders among you. 6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people. 7 And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. 8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the Lord's covenant, saying, When ye come into the land of Canaan, which the Lord sware unto the fathers of Israel, the land which ye shall possess, then ye shall give the priests the Levites, as portions of the inheritance of the Lord; and they shall have it in possession for a possession: this is the offering of the priest, the portion of the Levites' inheritance:

22. the mountain or, the mountain region to the west of Jericho, afterwards called Quaranonta, or Kirnuttah, about 1400 feet above the plain, and abounding with caves (Robinson).

Cn. III. 1. Joshua rose early in the morning) after the command of God (i. 22. — removed from Shittim) whether they had come on the first day of the eleventh month, so that they had been there more than two months. Cp. above, ii. 1; below, iv. 19. — and lodged there) halted, tarried (see Gen. 38), till the third day.

2. three days) See above, i. 11. This period of time, three days, mentioned twice, and ending in the crossing of Jordan by Joshua, and the people of Israel, seems to have a spiritual significance. The passage through the Red Sea was probably on a Sabbath, and the climax of the victory then achieved by the Lord over the Egyptians seems to have coincided with the dawn of the first day of the week, on which Christ rose from the dead: see above, Prelim. Note to Exod. xiv.

The passage of Joshua into Canaan was typical of Christ's Resurrection, of which He Himself said, "After three days I will rise again" (Matt. xx. 19; xviii. 63. Mark xix. 58). Did the passage take place on the first day of the week—the Lord's Day?

3. When ye see the ark) The Ark was to be their leader, as it was from Sinaï (Num. x. 39). God's presence in His Church is the guide of His people to the Canaan of their heavenly rest.

— the priests the Levites bearing it) that is, the priests, who now did for a special reason the work usually performed by the Levites. The Sacred Writer observes that those persons, who now bare the Ark, were not the ordinary Levites, but the Levites who were also priests. On illustrous occasions, when the Ark was borne solemnly forth before Israel, the minister of the priests was used to carry it. The Ark was borne by the priests in crossing the Jordan, and afterwards in the compassing of Jericho (vi. 6—12); in the proclamation of the Law at Ebal and Gerizim (viii. 33); and in the consecration of Solomon's Temple. Cp. Deut. xvii. 9; and Keil on Deut. xxv. 21—27.

On the peculiar significance of the expression, "the priests
covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, 1 ye shall stand still in Jordan. 9 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God. 10 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will not have fail 1 drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. 11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan. 12 Now therefore 2 take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man. 13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as I have driven 3

ter of this entrance into Canaan under Joshua. These reasons may be stated in the words of an ancient Father of the Church, as follows:—

The Ark of the Covenant leads the people into Jordan. The priests stand still; and the waters, as if paying reverence to the ministry of God, check their course, and stand on a heap, and open a way for the people of God. Marvel not at this, O Christian, who hast thyself passed the waters of Jordan in the Baptism; for greater wonders than these are promised to thee. God has prepared for thee a way, not through the waters of a river, but through the liquid fields of air. Hear His voice when the Apostle speaks of the saints, 11 "they shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so be ever with the Lord!" (1 Thess. iv. 17). Do not wonder at the type, but see a greater wonder in thyself and in the antitype. If thou art among the people of God, if thou art initiated in the Christian Sacrament, then hast thou also stood on the banks of the Jordan by the ministry of the Evangelical Priesthood, and under the guidance of the Christian Ark, and Jesus is thy Captain, and the wonders of Jordan have been fulfilled in thee (Origin., Hom. 20).

Christ, the true Joshua, is thy leader. God said to Joshua at the river Jordan, "From this day I will begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel!" and at the same river, Jordan, God began to magnify the true Joshua, when Jesus was baptized there, and all the heavens were opened in the sight of Israel, and the Holy Ghost descended, and the voice came from heaven, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!" (Matt. iii. 16, 17. Mark i. 10, 11. Luke iii. 22); and He began to preach and to call the Twelve Apostles, the Twelve foundations of His Church (Rev. xxi. 14). God said to Joshua at Jordan, "On this day I will begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel," and we read, "on that day the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel" (v. 13).

God in like manner began to magnify our Joshua at Jordan in the sight of all Israel, for at His baptism there He was "declared to be the Son of God with power" (Rom. i. 4); and He began to preach the Gospel, and to work His mighty works, and to overcome Satan, and to open to us the possession of our Canaan.

This is well expressed by S. Cyril Hierosol. (Catech. 10): τόσον οὖν ἢν δοθέν (of Jesus) ἦν τῷ Ναξί Σαμουήλ (Joshua the son of Nun), ἡμεῖς τοιοῦτον ἢν δοθέν ἤρθατο ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, οὗτος καὶ Χριστὸς βαπτίσθηται ἤρθατο εὐαγγελίσασθαι. In the present verse, the Septuagint has the verb ἀρχύμαι (to begin); and this same verb, ἀρχύμαι, is adopted by St. Luke in his history of our Divine Joshua's Baptism in Jordan, when He began his Ministry. The Evangelist says, Ἰησοῦν ἅν οὖν ἐγένετο ἢν δοθέν (which ought not to be translated "Jesus began to be about thirty years of age," but "Jesus was about thirty years of age when He was baptized");—1. i.e., beginning His ministry: see the note below, Luke iii. 23.

And another Evangelist, St. Mark, opens his Gospel with the words Ἀρχάς ἐξεστίν τοῖς υἱοῖς χριστοῦ (the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ), when the Evangelist is about to describe His Baptism in Jordan (Cp. Acts x. 27), where the same verse is used.

Israel was baptized together with Joshua in the river Jordan; and Joshua by His Baptism in the river Jordan sanctified water to the mystical washing away of sin, and the waters so baptized into Christ; and art enlisted under His banner, as His soldier, and art made an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven (Theol. Qu. 2. Terr. ad. jud. 9. S. Cyril Hierosol. Cat. 10. Prosper Aquil. de promiss. ii. 14).

Joshua begins his office at the banks of Jordan, where

Christ is baptized, and enters upon the public exercise of His prophetic office. Joshua chooseth twelve men to carry twelve stones out of with them, as our Jesus thence began to choose His Twelve Apostles, those foundation stones in the Church of God (Bp. Pearson, Art. ii. p. 76).

God said to Joshua, "This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel." The crossing of Jordan was Joshua's Epiphany or Manifestation; and Christ's Baptism in Jordan was His Epiphany as well as His Baptism. Hence the Christian Fathers call His Baptism His θανάτος ἀπαντήσεως; and the Christian Church has connected our Lord's Baptism with the Season of Epiphany in the Second Lesson for the day. This was the Baptism of Christ, as our people by visible inauguration as our Prophet, Priest, and King; and the spiritual Life of the Church Universal dates from that event. Therefore the Genealogy of Christ as the Second Adam, the Foundation of the regenerate race of the spiritual Israel, is connected by St. Luke with His Baptism: see below, on Luke iii. 21.

What therefore could be more proper, than that so great a crisis in the history of the whole human race should be pre-signified by the marvellous event which is recorded in this chapter in the history of Joshua, the type of Jesus Christ?

8. ye shall stand still in Jordan] Cp. v. 17, where it is said that the priests stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Isrealites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were clean passed over. Here was an exercise of the faith of the Priests: they were to stand still, bearing the Ark on their shoulders, in the midst of Jordan, till all the people were passed over. And here was a foreshadowing of Christ's promise that the Ark of His Church should remain unharmed, even unto the end, and that none of the powers of the enemy shall prevail against it (Matt. xvi. 18). The Ark of the Church of Christ will ever be resting on the shoulders of an Apostolic Priesthood, and they will remain standing in the midst of Jordan, and no water floods will be able to overthrow them, till all the people of God are passed over.

12. take you twelve men] one from each tribe, under God's direction, to do what He should command them to do—namely, to take twelve stones out of Jordan, and to carry them on their shoulders, and set them up in their respective places on the shore of Jordan; and it is done all their teaching from one primary and fundamental principle —namely, the manifestation of Christ, as the Son of God, and as the Son of Man, our Prophet, Priest, and King (see on Matt. xvii. 18); and the baptismal incorporation in Him. By preaching these doctrines the ministers of Christ take up stones out of Jordan, and set them up for a memorial for ever.

—tribe] Heb. shebet. Some have imagined a double authorship of this book, because in some portions of it the Hebrew word shebet is used for tribe; and in other portions the word
the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap. 14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; 15 and as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest;) 16 That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the place where the priests stood, in the presence of Jordan.

matteh is used; but this allegation is grounded on an erroneous notion as to the sense of the words. Stellet represents the political corporatism; matteh the genealogical affinity; the former is used in the historical, the latter in the geographical portions of the book: see Keil, p. 10.

15. as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, which Jordan overfloweth, are removed out of Jordan, says, "What ailed thee, thou sea, that thou fallest; and thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back" (Ps. cxxv. 3. 5)? The waters fled before the Ark of the Lord; and God gave power to His priests to stand on dry ground. So, as in the book of Genesis, it is said of the river Jordan, the waters of Sin and Death, and the overflows of our corrupt nature from Adam, which would have overwhelmed us, and would have carried down our bodies to a Dead Sea of bitterness and of destruction, were checked and dried up in Jordan. Cp. xlv. 20, and which doeth in its virtue from His Incarnation, Baptism, and Death, Heaven is opened to all believers, and they become sons of God by adoption in Him.

Joshua walked through the Jordan's dry bed. Our Joshua did much more. He walked on the sea itself, and enabled St. Peter to do so. He rode upon the wings of the wind; and went upon the clouds of the sky, and will enable His saints to mount on the clouds, and to soar in glory to heaven.

—you shall stand upon an heap. Literally, upon one heap, or stack (Heb. nod; see Exod. xv. 8). The rendering of some, καραγω, skin, is from an erroneous rendering (nod). Cp. Gesen. 524. 533. "Instar montis tumescens," says the Vulg. (e. 16.) Here was another triad of the faith of the priests: see on v. 8. 15. the feet of the priests—were dipped. The Sept. has ἔβαρέναι. As soon as the feet of the priests were baptized in Jordan, the waters fled back many miles upward to Adam, near Zarethan.

So, when our Great High Priest was baptized in Jordan, the waters of Sin and Death, which would otherwise have drowned us, were driven back: see on v. 16.

Joshua was a type of Jesus, as Saviour, Captain, and King. The priests bearing the Ark were types of Christ, as our Great High Priest, supporting His Church. Let us not wonder at this. No one man, or set of men, could have represented the fulness of Christ, any more than one kind of sacrifice could symbolize the manifold virtue of the sacrifice of the Cross: see above, Intro. to Leviticus, p. 2. It required a group and a galal types to give even a faint image of His splendour and glory. Compare Exod. xv. 9—12, where Joshua, Moses, Aaron, and Hur are all joined together to typify Christ.

—Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest; or rather, Jordan overfloweth, the waters filled up to, all his banks all the days of harvest. Cp. 1 Chron. xiii. 15. Jer. xxii. 4. xlix. 19. Ecclus. xxiv. 26. The Sacred Writer says, that "Jordan overflowed all his banks, or margins, during all the harvest time; and the floods passed over the Jordan at that season;" see iv. 19. The miracle was more striking on that account. Here is an evidence of the local knowledge of the writer, as will appear from the following narrative:—"I visited the scene of this miracle on the 1st of April, and found barley harvest nearly ended. I also found the river full to the brim; and saw evidence in abundance that it had overflowed its banks very recently. . . . At that time the rains were over. How comes it that the Jordan alone is full to overflowing? This is easily explained. The Jordan does not depend on tributaries, but is fed by certain great fountains, which arise around the base of the snowy Hermon. These immense fountains are joined together with the melting snows of Hermon and Lebanon; and with the rains of the winter season, and rush forth in their full volume; and the Huleh-marsh and lake (see below, xi. 5) is filled; and thus Genesaret rises, and pours itself into the Jordan, over the middle of the river about the 1st of March. Thus it comes to pass, that it actually does 'overflow all its banks all the time of harvest;' nor does it subside, as other short rivers do, when the rains cease; the river keeps full and strong all through March and April, and the proper banks of the river are still full to overflowing in the time of harvest. To understand the passage correctly, we must also remember that Jordan has two series of banks, and in some places three, but it is the lower only which are overflowed and to these the reference in Jordan is usually made" (Dr. Thomson, "The Land and the Book," p. 631). Cp. Robinson (ii. 262), who says, that the meaning of the Sacred Historian is that "the Jordan ran with full banks, or was brimful;" and Durell, as quoted by Keil, p. 291: "The river was at its usual state of flood at the spring of the year, so as to fill the whole of the bed, up to the margin of the jungle, with which the nearer banks are lined;" and see Dr. Kittel, p. 275: "The immediate banks of the river are covered with a low, luxuriant forest of willows, oaks, oleanders, tamarisks, and canes. It is this part of the channel covered toward the stream with jungle which is overflowed with water when the river is in the flood. Hence the Scripture speaks of wild beasts driven from their retreats in the thickets by the overflowing of the Jordan" (Jer. xlix. 19). In its proper channel, at this place, when the bed is full, but not overflowed, the river is about 110 feet wide.

The Sept. here has ἀπλωρὶα βλαν τὴν θρύσων ἀντωνίων γενεαίς θεοῦ φιλομοίρων. Probably the true reading is, ὌΣΕΝ ΓΕΝΕΑΠΙΣ ΦΙΛΟΜΟΙΡΩΝ. The River Jordan is made to flow back to the City Adam.

16. very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zarethan, or rather, very far off, at the city Adam, which is toward Taaran. Some suppose that Zarethan is to be found in the modern name Sarakeh, a lofty, rocky ridge, about seventeen miles north of Jericho; and that it is the same as Zorah (1 Kings vii. 46. Cp. 2 Chron. iv. 17; and 1 Kings iv. 12). If this is correct, Adam may have been near the now ruined bridge at Ishr, or Damith.—Lynch, Van de Velde, Memoir, p. 354, who says, "The name Zarethan seems to have been preserved in Sarakeh,—the mountain group in the Ghor, south of Wady-el-Zarah."

The Sept. has here, "The waters stood fixed (ἰσθεύοντο) in every far off, as far off, as the region of Kariathiarim," perhaps the town in Naphtali (1 Chron. vi. 76), called Kartan (Josh. xxii. 31).

On the city called Adam, the Sacred Historian notes, that the waters stood very far off, at the city called Adam; or, as Stanley correctly expresses it (p. 231), "High up, far, far away in Adam, the city which is beside Zarethan." This mention of the city of Adam is remarkable. The place is nowhere else noticed in the Bible; and no topographer has been able to discover its site.

But though it is lost topographically, surely the mention of it has a very important theological and spiritual significance.
Jordan flows back to Adam. JOSHUA III. 17. IV. 1—3. Twelve men and twelve stones.

city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off, and the people passed over right against Jericho. 17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

IV. 1 And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying, 2 Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, 3 And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave

Let us remember the typical character of this Passage of Joshua, the forerunner of Jesus Christ. This Passage over Jordan was a foreshadowing of the Baptism of Christ in the same river, and a PREFACE.

Let us bear in mind also, that all who passed through the Red Sea are said to be baptized into Moses (1 Cor. x. 2). So all who crossed the Jordan (says Origen, Hom. 5) were baptized into Joshua; so that the things which happened to them in the Jordan are a figure of the Sacrament of our Baptism into Christ.

Is it then a fanciful conjecture, to suggest that there is a figurative significance in these words of the Sacred Historian, that the flow of the Jordan into the Sea of Galilee, “the city called Adam”? The waters, which would have prevented Joshua from entering into Canaan, the type of our Promised Land, and would have overwhelmed him and the Israelites, if God's hand had not arrested their course, stood fixed in the Jordan until the city called Adam was destroyed.

May we not see this fulfilled in the Antitype?
The waters, which would have obstructed our passage to Canaan, and which would have overwhelmed us, if God had not checked them, have been checked for us in Adam; the stream of Sin and Death which was coming down upon us from Adam, to destroy us, was checked at the Baptism of our Divine Joshua in the Jordan, when He sanctified water to the washing away of sins, whereby the old Adam is buried in us, and the new man is raised up in us.” Those waters, which would have impeded our course to heaven, and would have drowned us in destruction, have been driven back, and fixed far off in Adam; and a way has been opened to us in Christ, and by our baptismal incorporation in Adam, the water, the sign and token, of the death of Jesus Christ, for entrance into Canaan, the dark descending current of Death has been stemmed and thrown back by Christ.

The issue of blood, which had flowed so long in our diseased humanity, has been stanched and dried up by Christ; and spiritual life and health has been given us by Him; see on Mark v. 29.

This is what the Apostle has expressed in the Epistle to the Romans,—“By one man Sin entered into the world, and Death by Sin; and so Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. v. 12). The waters of a dark Jordan of death were flowing upon us from Adam, who, says the Apostle, was “the figure of Him that was to come.” Christ (v. 14). “But not only the offence, but the free gift of God upon the one (Adam) many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by the one Man (Roh Ihsos), Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.” v. 15; see also v. 17, “Death reigned by the one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by the One, Jesus Christ.”

Again, it is noted here that the waters stood after off. This is true in Christ. In Him we have peace from God, and forgiveness of sins; who, as such a one, He mentions all our children. So that we may say, Look how wide the east is from the west; so far hath he set his sins from us (Ps. cii. 12, 13).

It is worthy of remark, that in the Gospel history of the Antitype, namely, of Christ’s Baptism, the Evangelist says, Luke connects our Lord’s Genealogy, for obvious reasons, with His Baptism in the Jordan (see on Luke iii. 23); and he traces that Genealogy upwards in an inverted order to Adam (v. 38); he joins Jesus with Adam; he mentions the Second Adam with the First Adam; he couples life with death. In Adam we all die, in Christ we are all made alive. The waters of death stand far off in Adam; but a way to victory and joy is opened to us in Christ. As Augustine says, “Tutum genus humanum sunt quadammodo duo homines, Adam et Christus: primum hominum domicilium, secundum eius secundum Baptismum. Christus ab adventu dominii, qui in adventu magno omnium aeternitatis incubuit, et hic adventus suus a dicta universae terrae, et haec adventus a dicta universae terrae.”

The passing over of Jordan was prophetic not only of Christ’s Baptism at His first Advent, but of His Baptism in death (see Matt. xx. 22), and our consequent entrance into our heavenly Canaan, and eternal Life at His Second Advent. The feet of our great High Priest were dipped in the Jordan; in the stream of Death which came down on us from Adam, and would have overflowed us, and stopped our entrance into heaven; its waters were turned, and changed to “overcome the sharpness of Death, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.”

—and those that came down toward the sea . . . even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off] or rather, and the waters that were coming down to the sea of the plain, the sea of salt, were altogether cut off: the stream, that was tending in the direction of the Dead Sea, was cut off, by being checked at Adam, near Zaretan. The insertion of this notice seems to be also significant. The tendency of the stream to the Salt Sea—that the Sea of Death—the type of Hell itself (see above, on Gen. xix. 24)—was checked, while God’s people went over. Was not this also fulfilled in the Baptist of Christ? Is it not fulfilled in our Baptism into Him? This typical analogy is also illustrated by the mention of Zaretan here. Adam is red earth. At Zaretan was the clay ground in which the vessels of the Temple (types of us) were made (see above on 1 Kings vii. 40).

This passage over Jordan is, as it were, the spiritual complement of the passage of Israel through the Red Sea.

The passage through the Red Sea typified our deliverance from Death and Satan by the Death and Resurrection of Christ (see above, on Exod. xiv.).

The passage over the Jordan did more than this. It represented our entrance into the Church militant on earth, and also our entrance, in hope, to the Church glorified in heaven.

In the passage through the Red Sea, the people went as along a road between two walls of water (Exod. xiv. 22). In the passage over Jordan, there was a wide opening made for them of many miles; and probably the two millions and a half went over—they hasted over (v. 10)—in two or three ranks, or perhaps in a single rank, abreast. They took Canaan by storm. Here was an image of the holy violence with which Jesus went through the way of our Generation; and here also was a figure of the Army of the Saints springing from their graves at the Resurrection, and caught up on the clouds into the Church Triumphant in heaven (1 Thess. iv. 17).

The Twelve Men take up the Twelve Stones.

CH. IV. 1—3. the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying, Take you twelve men—And command ye them, saying, Take—twelve stones; this comes and was given, by the Lord when the people were clean passed over Jordan. This statement, it has been alleged, is not consistent with the assertion in iii. 12, where Joshua gives orders to choose twelve men before they had passed over.

But there is no inconsistency. There is indeed at first sight an obscurity, but like other obscurities in Holy Scripture, it suggests the belief that there is some hidden mystery to be discovered there (cp. Amyx, in Ps. 118).

As has been already observed (see on iii. 12), these twelve men, one from each tribe, bearing twelve stones from the bed
of Jordan, at Joshua’s command under God’s direction, were figures of the Twelve Apostles building up the Church of God. Christ is the Rock out of which the Apostles were hewn, and on which they rest. He is the living Stone, the Corner Stone; and the Apostles were lively stones built into Him. As Theodoret says (Qn. 2), “These twelve men and the twelve stones prefigured the twelve Apostles, who were builders, and also foundation stones” (see Eph. ii. 20. 1 Cor. iii. 10. Rev. xxi. 16). Joshua had prepared the men for the work (see v. 4) by suggestion from God, before they had passed over, and now that they have passed over, God gives the command by Joshua for its execution.

So it was in the calling and commission of the Apostles, after the Resurrection of the same river—Christ prepared them for the work, and He sent them, not only as their Jesus, but as Jehovah; not only as being man, but as God. By His divine authority He gave them power to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils (Mark iii. 15). As God, He gave them supernatural strength in the exercise of their ministry. He enabled them by gifts of the Holy Ghost to hear the stones out of the Jordan on their shoulders, and to build them up into His Church. He, the divine Rock, made them to be lively foundation stones of the Church Universal.

It is a sophism against the erroneous notion, that one man in the Church (the Bishop of Rome) is the Rock of the Church. Such a notion (which is the fundamental principle of the Church of Rome) is contradicted by all the prophetic and figurative representations of the Church, as displayed in the Holy Scriptures, from the beginning of the Old even to the end of the New: see above, on Exod. xv. 27; and below, on Matt. x. 1. Rev. xii. 1; xxi. 19, 20. The theory of the Papal Supremacy sullies all the beauty, and mars all the symmetry, of that spiritual imagery.

It is worthy of remark, that the spiritual figure of a stone runs through this book, and connects it with the Pentateuch. Christ was the Rock which was smitten in the wilderness, and from which the water flowed (1 Cor. x. 4). Joshua commanded stones to be taken from Jordan; he sets up twelve stones in its bed; he circumcises the people with knives of stone (see v. 2). He set up a great stone as a Witness at Shechem, and says, “This stone has heard all the words of the Lord” (see xxiv. 27).—Are not these things full of mystery? Are they not foreshadowings of Christ?

The Name, the Rock, joins together the prophecies of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 4. 14. 18. 30. 31) with those of Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 2), and of David (2 Sam. xxii. 3. 32. 47; xxiii. 9), and Isaiah (vii. 14, xvii. 2), and with the declaration of Christ concerning Himself (see on Matt. xvi. 18), and connects those prophecies with Him.

3. the lodging place] Gilgal: see v. 20.

4. the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: That this may be a sign among you, that as your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the Lord spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.

12 stones carried to Gilgal. JOSUHA IV. 4—9. Twelve stones set up in Jordan, in the days of the Lord; and that when John the Baptist preached at the river Jordan, when he baptized Christ, and when in his preaching to the Pharisees he used the words, “I say unto you, God is able of these stones to raise up Children unto Abraham,” he may have had an eye to the stones which God had commanded Joshua to set up there (see Remigius in Caten. Aur. ad Matt. iii. 9).

However this may be, certain it is that the Apostolic Antitypes were the spiritual fathers of the children of Abraham by faith; for the same were built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone (Eph. ii. 20); and their names are written as a “memorial for ever” on the walls of the heavenly city (Rev. xxi. 14).

8. the children of Israel did so] that is, did it by their representatives, the twelve men; and this phrase shows that the act of the twelve men was accepted by God as the act of the twelve tribes. What the ministers of the Church do rightly, in the execution of their office, that the Church herself is supposed to do.

9. Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan] Other twelve stones, as the Sept. renders it. A remarkable circumstance. Joshua, not only by God’s command, ordered the twelve men, one of each tribe, to take out of the midst of Jordan twelve stones, and carry them on their shoulders to Gilgal for a perpetual memorial (c. 7); but he himself “set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests, who bare the ark of the covenant, had stood; and there they are unto this day, for the Priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan until every thing was finished.”

What could be the meaning of these other twelve stones?

The number of the stones is the same in both cases; and that number is twelve; and the one set of twelve was borne to Gilgal for a perpetual memorial; the other were set up in the midst (Heb. be-tho) of the bed of the stream; and there “they are to this day”—they remained, not swept away by the violent stream, some years at least, till the book of Joshua was written.

The former set of twelve stones, taken out of the midst of Jordan, commemorated God’s power and mercy in checking the waters of Jordan, in order that His people, the twelve tribes of Israel, might pass over into Canaan.

But what was meant by the other set of twelve stones set up in the river Jordan, and remaining unmoved there?

Some have asked, “Of what use could they be in a place where they would not be seen?” And “how could they be secured against the impetuosity of the stream?”

But the Sacred Writer assures us that they were seen; and that they remained unmoved till his own day. They served an important purpose. They were not only a landmark of the place where the Priests stood bearing the Ark, and where the Twelve Tribes passed over, and so were a standing record of the Miracle; but they were also an emblem of God’s power to pro-
The two sets of twelve stones. JOSHUA IV. 10—20. Joshua is magnified—Gilgal.

10 For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was finished that the Lord commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hasted and passed over. 11 And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the Lord passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people. 12 And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them: 13 About forty thousand [prepared for war passed over before the Lord unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.

14 On that day the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

15 And the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying, 16 Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan. 17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan. 18 And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, 1 and the flowed over all his banks, as they did before. 19 And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped m in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho. 20 And those twelve serve His people from the assaults of their enemies, as He enabled the stones to resist the violence of the stream.

Our Divine Joshua set up twelve stones, as it were, when He said, "On this Rock (i.e., Himself) I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. xvii. 18).

The twelve men, bearing the twelve stones from Jordan to Gilgal, by God's command to Joshua, represent the work of the Apostolic Church of God, proclaiming God's mercies, by preaching, and building up the spiritual structure of a true faith. The twelve stones in the river Jordan symbolize the continuance of that same Apostolic Church, un halt by the impetuous tide and torrent of violent assaults, by virtue of the Divine promise of Him who said, "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 20).

10. the people hasted and passed over] for the Priests were bearing the Ark on their shoulders, and waiting for them, till all had passed over; and they must all be at Gilgal before nightfall.

They hasted and passed over. These words (says an ancient Father) are inserted by the Holy Spirit not without good reason. They who come to the waters of Baptism ought not to tarry, but to be eager to do God's will, and to walk in His commandments, in a word, to pass over Jordan with haste (Origes).

In like wise, Jesus, the son of Nun, says another ancient Father of the Church to those who postpone their baptism. Bear the Gospel, as he bade the Ark: leave the desert of sin; pass the Jordan, hasten to the new life in Christ, and to the spiritual land flowing with milk and honey. Destroy the Jericho of thine own evil arts, bring the Gibeonites of thine own evil thoughts into subjection to the law of God; destroy the works of evil covetousness in thine own heart. All these things were figures of us. All of them presaged what is now revealed to thee (S. Gregory Nyssen. Orat. ad eos qui different Baptismis, p. 567).


13. About forty thousand] of those two tribes and a half. 14. On that day the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel] as He had said that He would do: This day will begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel (iii. 7). How much more was this done to our Divine Joshua, when He was baptized in Jordan, in the sight of the multitude who came to John's Baptism, and the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost came upon Him, and the voice came from Him to heaven (Matt. iii. 10, 17. Mark i. 10); and the Baptist publicly declared Him to be his Lord and Master, who would baptize him with the Holy Ghost, even from heaven (John i. 26, 33). They are to be joined together, for those in Jordan were the marks of God's people, and their baptism was the sign of their cleansing, and the evidence of God's power (Deut. xxxii. 12); and the children of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh are to be the instruments through whom God should accomplish His work in the west, and the lands of Canaan should be possessed by those who were there (Deut. xxxiii. 4; Josh. xiv. 13). It is here as in the east: for as the "ark of Jericho," so is the "city of palm-trees." The palm-branches strewn in our Lord's way were accompanied with hosannas to Him, and were emblems of His victory; and Jericho, "the city of palm-trees," yielded glorious palms of victory to Joshua, the type of Christ. The palm branches (Ezek. xvi. 18; Matt. xxv. 23) are here used as in the "east border of Jericho," and in the arboth of Jericho (v. 10), that is, in the low region of the Ghor, which lay between Jericho and the Jordan. Josephus asserts that the encampment was fifty stadia from the Jordan and ten from Jericho (Joseph. Antit. v. 1. 4). Enœolus (Onomasticon.)
Twelve stones at Gilgal. JOSHUA IV. 21—24. V. 1, 2. Circumcision renewed.


stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. 21 And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, 2 When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? 22 Then ye shall let thy children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.

23 For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red sea, 4 which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over: 24 That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is a mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God 4 forever.

V. 1 And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, 4 which were by the sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, 4 neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel.

2 At that time the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee 4 sharp knives, and speaks of it as a place held in great veneration even at his day. S. Jerome appears to describe the existence of the stones in his time. His words are remarkable (in Epist. Pauli ad Eustoch. Epist. 89, p. 500, Græc. printing of Paulus, speaking of Paulus, “she beheld the site of the camp of Gilgal, and the hill of the for- skins, and the mystery of the second circumcision, and the twelve stones, which were raised from the bed of the Jordan, and wire reserved for the memory of the twelve Apostles. Scarcely had the night passed, when in eager zeal she came to Jordan, and at sunrise she thought of the Sun of righteousness, and how in the midst of the bed of the river the priests stood with dry feet 4 4 and how the Lord cleansed, by His own Baptismal power, the life of them that passed through the Flood, and defiled by the death of the whole human race.”

In later days there was a church standing near the spot on which the stones were shown, and they are mentioned by travelers as early as A.D. 1317 (Grelot, B. D. I. 700).

23. the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you] The Book of Joshua is not only a history, but a prophetic and typical representation of what is revealed in the Gospels and the Apocalypse. The drying up of the Jordan, in order that Joshua and the armies of Israel might pass over from the sunrising, and march against Jericho, the type of the city of this World as opposed to Christ (ii. 1), seems to have a connection with the prophecy in that book, that the river of the mystical Babylon, shall be dried up, in order that ye may be prepared for the Kings from the sunrising, that they may pass over to contend against the Powers of this world, called the Kings of the earth: see below, on Rev. xvi. 12, 14.

—from before you, until ye were passed over] Joshua speaks of the Hebrew Nation in Canaan, as the same nation that came out of Egypt. Israel, with all its failings in the wilderness, retained its national identity (cp. note above on Deut. i. 6). So it is with the Israel of God, the Church Universal. With all its shortcomings, it divided, its failures and decays, in different parts at different times, is it in essence the same. There is one Church of God, always visible, from the beginning of the world to the end of time. “God hath had ever, and ever shall have, some Church visible upon earth . . . the Church of Christ, which from the beginning is, and continueth unto the end” (Hooker, iii. 1).

Ch. V. 1. until we were passed over] The Sacred Historian identifies here what he reserved over Jordan (Exod. iv. 25) ; and the notes of Maimon and Drusius here; and Pfeiffer, Dubia Loc. 46.

The Circumcision of Israel by Joshua.

This command, to make knives of stone and to circumcise the people, was given by the Lord to Joshua at a critical time. It was given when they were almost in sight of the great city, which was to be destroyed in a day, and a large number of people—several hundred thousands—would require considerable time; and they, on whom the work was performed, would be disabled from fighting, and from resisting their enemies, if they were attacked; as may be inferred from the circumstance recorded in the history of the Shechemites, Gen. xxiv. 25, 26.

There must therefore have been something of grave and urgent importance, something of a divine character and meaning in this act, required by God to be done at this particular time, when, on mere human considerations, it would seem to have been an act of rashness and infatuation.

What then were the reasons of it?

(1) It was a trial of Joshua’s faith, and obedience to God, and of the faith and of the obedience of the people, submitting to the command of God, given them through Joshua. It was an acknowledgment from them that God had spoken to Joshua, and that Joshua was His chosen minister.

(2) It was a proof that Joshua and the people did not lean on an arm of flesh, but relied on God, to protect them against the enemies by whom they were surrounded.

(3) Circumcision was the appointed rite by which God’s people were brought into covenant with Him. The Israelites had been for many years under a ban, on account of their murmurings and rebellion at Kadesh-barnea (see above, on Num. xvi. 2). But now God mercifully invited them to return into communion with Him. This national reconciliation could only be inaugurated by circumcision: unless they were circumcised they could not keep the Passover which was now approaching, and in which they were about to be invited to partake (see v. 10).

(4) They were now about to engage in conflicts with their enemies. But how could they hope for victory, if they were aliens from God? How could they hope for success, unless they were restored to His favour, and to full communion with Him?

(4) Circumcision, therefore, at this time, was most opportune. They were again to become God’s people by the restoration of the covenant with Him. They were about to be permitted to feed on the spiritual food of the Passover; they would thenceforth enjoy God’s protection, and be able to overcome their enemies; they would march with courage from the camp at Gilgal against the armies of Canaan; “for the Lord of Hosts was with them; the God of Jacob was their refuge.”

(5) All these things were figures of us. Joshua and Israel were types of Jesus Christ, and of His Church. Moses, the representative of the Law, could not bring the people into Canaan, and settle them in their inheritance there. This was reserved for Joshua, the figure of Jesus, Who settles His people in their heavenly Canaan (see above, on
circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. 3 And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at [||the hill of the foreskins. 4 And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: 4 All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. 5 Now all the people that came out were circumcised: but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, then they had not circumcised. 6 For the children of Israel walked 40 years in the wilderness,

Num. xxvii. 12. Deut. xxxii. 48; xxxiv. 6; and Introduction to Joshua). Moses could not reconcile the people to God. But the out-lawed king, who in Joshua, as generation of Israel, a new people, into the true Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey—not by means of Moses, that is, not by the Law—but by Joshua, that is, by the grace of the Gospel, after we have been circumcised with the knives of rock, that is, by the precepts of Christ; for Christ in Scripture is often typified as the Rock” (see Matt. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. x. 4). The knives of rock (says Origens refer to Him who is the true Rock, from whom the living waters flow, and who has given us in the person of Christ, the figure of the true Rock, is called by St. Paul “the Circumcision of Christ” (Col. ii. 11). And again he says, “It is not Rhetoric or Science which can circumcise the heart; but it is Christ” (see Origens, pass. 325). In circumcision of the heart (Phil. § 24) circumcises all who will receive it, with knives of rock, that they may become a faithful and peaceful people. So also Augustine here; and Theodoret (Qu. 4), who says, “These knives in rock were the instruments of our Circumcision of the Heart (1 Cor. x. 4). He is sharper than a two-edged sword” (Heb. iv. 12). The healthful discipline of Christ brings with it a spiritual circumcision. And we know that they who are baptized into Him, and receive spiritual circumcision, cast off the reproach of sin, which is called by Joshua, in a figure, “the reproach of Egypt” (v. 9). So, also, Prosperi Antiquitatus de Prom. ii. c. 14, who says, “Here is a figure of Christ’s Baptism; they who had been born in the wilderness, and had not passed through the Red Sea, having now gone over the Jordan, are
The Name Gilgal.

Joshua 7:11.
The Passover.

Till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord: unto whom the Lord sware that he would not shew them the land, which the Lord sware unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

And their children, whom he raised up in their stead, they circumcised: for they were un circumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way. And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole.

And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.

And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover "on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho." And they

9. The Lord said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you! I have rolled away.
The act was the Lord's act. He commanded that the people should be circumcised, and then He received them again into covenant with Himself. He thus rolled away the reproach of Egypt, which lay upon them as a heavy burden, like a stone on a cave's mouth. At Kadesh-barnea the Israelites had turned their backs on the covenant, and raised a great and solemn outcry against the Lord's command, represented in the act of circumcision (see above on Gen. xvi. 10).

The Lord's act of grace was not confined to the physical nation, but was extended to all Israel, circumcision being the outward sign of the inward nature of the covenant, and of the new life which had been brought into the world by Christ. Thus at Joshua, 2,.sec. 3, it is said, "then there came to pass, that both they were circumcised." But there is this important difference. The circumcision which the Israelites went through at Kadesh-barnea was a confession of guilt, which was not complete, as their subsequent rebellion and unbelief showed. The circumcision at Gilgal was a confession of grace, a confession of the new life brought into the world by the Lord Jesus. It was a confession of the spiritual blessing which Christ confers on the believer.

Israel in the wilderness were rolled away from the mouth of the cave, and the Divine Voice would say, "Lazarus, come forth" (John xi. 25).

God, in mercy, invited them to Himself; and it was very fit that Joshua, who had stood firm at Kadesh-barnea, when the people murmured, and in their hearts turned back into Egypt (Num. xiv. 6–10), should be the Lord's instrument in this act of spiritual resurrection.

By restoring them to His favour in this act of circumcision, God, as it were, rolled away the stone from the cave's mouth, which contained the dead corpse of the Israelitish nation, and revived them from the dead. It was a more gracious act of spiritual resurrection was consecrated for the whole family of Mankind, by the true Joshua, Jesus Christ, when He raised Himself from the dead, and the stone was rolled from the cave's mouth, and the Apostles entered in, and saw that He was risen from the dead (Matt. xviii. 2. Mark xvi. 4. John xx. 1. 3–10).

Thus our reproach of Egypt was rolled away; for then we were restored to God's favour by our Joshua, who died for our sins, and was raised again for our justification: see on Rom. iv. 25.

As long as we are in sin (says Cp. Hom. i.), the reproach of Egypt is not rolled away from us; but if thou receivest the true circumcision, the circumcision of the Spirit and of the heart, the reproach of Egypt is rolled away from thee. When Christ was circumcised by the Baptist of Regeneration, and cleansed our hearts, He cast away theload of sin, and made the answer of a good conscience to the Lord, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ (I Pet. iii. 21). Thus, by the Second Circumcision of the true Joshua, the reproach of Egypt was rolled away from us. But after, if we have been cleansed, we commit sin, we go back to Egypt, then the reproach of Egypt is again rolled upon us: see Origen, Hom. 5; see also Theodoret, Qu. 4; and the note of Massius here; and Pererius on Gen. xvii.

The Name Gilgal.

Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal: Gilgal, from galal, to roll (Septuagint, p. 322. [Gen. 170], whence galathol, I have rolled. Josephus, referring to the moral signification of the word, says that it signifies freedom; for, says he, the Israelites here recognized that they were freed from the Egyptians, and from their toil in the wilderness (Josephus, Anti-

v. 1. 11). This is true in a certain sense, but the truth lies still deeper:

The reproach of Egypt was rolled away from Israel by God, through the agency of Joshua at Gilgal (see the foregoing note), and the reproach of Egypt, the Egypt of Sin and Death, was rolled away from us by God, through the agency of the true Joshua, dying and rising again for us at Golgotha.

It was at Gilgal and Golgotha (properly Gulgatha, or Golgotha, as Babel from Babylon. Gen. xi. 9. Ewald, § 158, c), are from the same Hebrew verb, the verb here used by God Himself, galal, to roll away! Gilgal was the place where Joshua rolled away the reproach of Egypt, and restored the people to favour and communion with God; and Gilgotha was also Joshua's camp (see v. 10), whence he went forth to victory.

So Golgotha was the place where our Joshua rolled away the burden of the world's guilt, and the shame of its natural state, and reconciled mankind to God; and it was also His camp, whence He went forth as a mighty Conqueror, triumphing over Satan, Sin, and the Grave. Cp. note below on Matt. xxvii. 33.

In a still wider sense, Golgotha is our Gilgal.

In it our reproach of Egypt was rolled away; and we receive spiritual circumcision there, being baptized into Christ's Death. At our baptism, the events of Golgotha — His Death and Resurrection — are represented to us, and in us; and we are made partakers in their benefits. Baptism is our "Death unto Sin, and New Birth unto Righteousness." It represents unto us our Christian profession, which is, to follow our "Saviour," our Divine Joshua, "Jesus Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that, as He died and rose again for us, so we, who are baptized, should die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness, continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living." Golgotha — represented in us, at our Baptism — is also our Gilgal, as an encampment, for in it we are enlisted under Christ, and are signed with the sign of the Cross, in token that we should not "be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against Sin, the World, and the Devil, and continue His faithful soldiers and servants unto our lives' end."" 

10. The children of Israel encamped in Gilgal.

They encamped in Gilgal; from Gilgal they went forth to their battles; and to Gilgal they returned after their victories: see x. 7, 9, 13.

In like manner we encamp in Golgotha (see foregoing note). Golgotha is our camp — our spiritual fortress; for there Christ was crucified, and Sin and Satan were overthrown, and the World was redeemed and bowed to the favour of God. From Golgotha we march forth, with the banner of the Cross unfurled, under the leadership of the Captain of our salvation, the divine Joshua; and from it we go forth to our spiritual battles, and to it we return. For "we preach Christ, and Him crucified" (I Cor. i. 23; ii. 2). His Death and Resurrection, our own Death unto Sin, and our Resurrection unto newness of life in Him, are the chief articles of Christian doctrine, the weapons of our warfare, the trophies of our victory.

The Passover.

— kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month) for which they had been prepared by circumcision. Then the forty years of trial after the Exodus were over; and, being

**did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day.** 12 And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the people—that is, all not above forty years of age—had never eaten bread before (Dr. Kitto, Illustr. p. 260).

12. the manna ceased on the morrow] for they had now come to a land inhabited (Exod. xvi. 35), and to that land which God had given them as their own (v. 2). Josephus (Ant. v. 14) says, “They reaped of the corn of Canaan, which was now ripe, and lived upon the forage of the country, for the manna now had ceased after a supply of forty years.”

This cessation of the manna as soon as they had ordinary supplies of food, after a supply of the manna for forty years in the wilderness, was a proof that the supply had been miraculous; that it had been sent from God Himself for a special purpose, to sustain them in the wilderness; and that His purpose had now been accomplished.

So it is in the Church of Christ. As long as extraordinary gifts of grace were needed—such as tongues, and miracles of healing—they were vouchsafed to her by God; but now that she has been planted in the world, and has the bread of life in the Scriptures, and the Sacraments dispensed by a constituted ministry, who are bound to sow the seed, and to till the soil of the spiritual field, and to pray for the dews and showers of divine grace and blessing on their labours, the extraordinary gifts are not to be expected. See below, on Mark xvi. 17.

Now that Israel is brought to the brink of Canaan, the cloud is vanished, which led them all the way; and as soon as they have but crossed Jordan, the manna ceasth, which sustained them all the way. The cloud and manna were for their passage, not for their rest; for the wilderness, not for Canaan. It was as easy for God to work miracles always, but He knows that custom was the way to make them no miracles. He goes by-ways, but till He have brought us into the road; then He refers us to His ordinary proceedings. That Israelite should have been very foolish, that would still have said, “I will not stir till I see the cloud. I will not eat unless I may have that sign again.” Wherefore serves the wheat of Canaan but for bread? So fond is that Christian, that will still depend upon expectation of miracles, after the fulness of God’s kingdom. If God bear us in His arms when we are children, yet when we are well grown He looks we should go on our own feet; it is enough that He upholds us, though he carry us not. Bp. Holfi, Contempl. p. 908.

The Captain of the Lord’s Host.

13. there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand] A man, Heb. ish (vir, Sept.), not Adam, or Enoch.

Who was this person?

(1) Some have supposed, that he was the Archangel Michael: so Tholore here; and Cornelius a Lapidis; and Dr. W. H. Mill (on St. Luke i. p. 92). Cp. Dr. W. Lee on Inspiration, p. 129. Some of the modern Rabbis are of the same opinion, but their judgment is of little value, on account of their known bias against Trinitarian doctrines: see the article, “Son of God,” in the Dict. of the Bible, ii. 1356.

(2) But the ancient Jewish Church was of a different opinion; and the following is found, in the guardian of the Lord’s Host was the Word of God; hence in the Paraphrase on this book (x. 42; xxiii. 3. 10) it is said, The Word fought for them; the Word cast out the Nations before them: and so Rabfolk, fol. 139. coll. 2. Zohar, par. 8, fol. 132. Theodol. and Rembi and Exod. ii. see Dr. Allier, Judgment of the Jewish Church, p. 189.

(3) This opinion, that he was no other than the Uncreated Word, the Son of God, is also expressed by ancient Christian Writers. So Justin Martyr c. Tryphon, c. 61 and c. 62. Euseb., H. E. i. 2; and especially Origenis (Qn. 6), who reasons thus on the narrative before us:—
host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord’s host said unto Joshua, "Be not afraid; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

VI. 1 Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the setting sun; the city was very strong. And all the people that were in it trembled because of them. And the children of Israel journeyed three days in the wilderness, until it came to the plains of Jericho. Now Jericho was very strong, both by reason of men and by reason of the walls; and there was no gate or way of entrance. And it came to pass, when Joshua had made the people curse, and had caused them to swear in their presence by the Lor 

Preliminary Note to Ch. VI. — The Fall of Jericho.

A question has been asked by some, What adequate occasion was there for such an extraordinary prodigy as is related in the preceding chapter? Others have discarded the history of it as incredible, and have not scrupled to assign the destruction of Jericho to mere natural causes (e. g., Ewald, Gesch. ii. p. 321).

It is therefore requisite to examine in detail the circumstances of the case; and to consider what could be the purpose of such a supernatural intervention as is related in the chapter before us.

(1) Let it, therefore, be remembered, that the Israelites were altogether unequal in the art of war, as far as it is concerned in carrying on the siege of fortified towns. They had either been born in the wilderness, or had not attained man’s estate before they had left Egypt.

(2) Such a popular hero was not qualified to attack the fortresses of Canaan. And the first, and one of the strongest, of its fenced cities, was Jericho. And at this time it was defended with more than ordinary munitions; as is implied in the first words of the chapter, "Jericho was straitly shut up." Besides, the faith, and obedience, and discipline of the Israelites were to be tried by the very strangeness of the divine command, requiring the Priests to encompass the city on seven successive days, and the people to shout on the last day; upon which, they were informed, the walls of Jericho were to be thrown down. They were also to be taught by a remarkable example, in the case of the first city that they attacked, that their strength did not lie in their own valor or might, but in the presence of the Lord: He alone led them to Joshua; and they were hence to receive a pledge of the presence and help of God to destroy all opposition before them.
the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. And the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying, ‘I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them’ (see Psalm xlv. 1–3).

(3) The inhabitants of Canaan were also to learn by a signal example, that the victories of Israel were not due to the prowess of the God of Israel, but to the God of Israel; and that therefore the God of Israel was far stronger than the deities which they themselves worshipped; that He, and He alone, is the God of all the earth—a truth which was learnt by Rahab the harlot at Jericho (xi. 11), and for professing which she was saved.

(4) Even on such grounds as these, it might be said, that there was an adequate occasion for the intervention of God in so miraculous a manner, as is described in this chapter, for the destruction of Jericho.

(5) But we should be taking a low view of this wonderful event, if we were to limit our thoughts to such considerations as these.

Jesus was a figure of Christ. The City of Jericho is regarded by all ancient Christian Expositors as a figure of this World, as opposed to the City of God, the Church of Christ. And the fall of Jericho, without the assault of a besieging army, and after it had been encompassed seven days, by the Priests bearing the Ark, in which was the presence of God; and by seven Priests going before them, blowing with the trumpets, and at the sound of the shout of God’s people, all acting together in faith, and promising obedience to the command of the Lord, Jericho, has ever been regarded as a type and prophecy of the final overthrow of all Worldly Powers, when the Church has fulfilled her work upon earth, and has made her circuit of the globe, and the majesty of Christ will be revealed with the Archangel and the trump of God at the Great Day (1 Thess. iv. 16).

‘By faith,’ says the Apostle (Heb. xi. 30), ‘the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.’

The faith of the Church will be tried to the end; but at last it will overthrow the world (John v. 4).

(6) This opinion is confirmed by a closer examination of the details of this history. The trumpets used by the Priests in compassing Jericho were not the silver trumpets used for war (see note on v. 4); but the cornets, which were employed to usher in the new moon of the seventh month (Lev. xxvii. 23–41); and also to inaugurate their year of Jubilee (Lev. xxv. 9).

The trumpet does not signify the power of armies, but with sacred sound; and these sound were, as is well known, illustrious figures of the rest, and liberty, which are promised to the People of God under the Gospel.

These Trumpets seemed doubtless to be weak and inadequate to the task. Each such a week, was an image of the

The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise (1 Cor. i. 18). This was the trump of war, and the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but yet they are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. x. 4,5).

The Trump of Joshua was proposed of that everlasting Rest ‘which remaineth unto the people of God’ in the heavenly City, and which will be proclaimed by the Lord Himself descending from heaven with a shout (1 Thess. iv. 16); and with the sound of the last Trump calling the World to judgment (1 Cor. xv. 52).

(7) There is a mysterious foreshadowing of this grand judicial climax in the revelation of Holy Scripture, from Genesis to the Apocalypse.

The Work of Creation was completed in six days; and on the seventh day, or Sabbath, God rested from all the work that He had created and made. The Ark of the Covenant was compassed by the Priests, bearing the ark of God, and by seven Priests going before them, and blowing the Sacred Trumpets, and on the seventh day their labour is done, and the people or God enter the City.

In the Apocalypse there are revealed ‘seven angels, standing before God, and on them are given seven trumpets’ (Rev. viii. 2). Those seven trumpets, like those of the Priests of Israel at Jericho, are holy Trumpets. They pre-announce God’s judgments on the World, as opposed to Christ and His Church—Israel—in successive ages, even till the Last Day (see below, on Rev. viii. 1).

The Seventh Trumpet is the Last Trumpet which usher in the Day of Dooms. When its sound is heard, then all the proud Jericho was compassed by this World, which by the Fall prostrated to the ground, and our heavenly Joshua will reign supreme. The prophecy runs thus: ‘The seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven: and the Anointed of the seven sounding of the Trumpets at Jericho, must be the shout of triumph, which was said, “The kingdom of this World is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. xix. 15).

Then follows a Hymn of Praise for the Victory; and there is a view of the Heavenly Ark of the Testaments (xv. 19), the Anointed of that on which God’s presence was enthroned, and which was borne by the Priests around the Walls of Jericho. This connexion between the history of the destruction of Jericho, and the future revelation of the Church in Christian Powers, after the sounding of the seven trumpets; and of the world itself, as far as it is opposed to Christ, was recognized by the ancient expositors of the Apocalypse. Thus, Read says, in his note on II. to the Brethren of the Apocalypse, “Revelation gloriorum saeculitis cælestibus quasi munus Hierico dejecturam;” see also Aquinas there, p. 223; and Joachim, p. 123; and the notes below on Rev. vii. 1.

(8) The interpretation now given of the present chapter, is confirmed by the concurrent testimony of the best ancient interpreters.

Thus, Origin says, “How is Jericho overthrown? No sword is drawn against it, no army is marshalled, no weapon is hurled, but only the trumpets of the Priests are used; and so its walls are cast down. Jericho is a figure of this World. Jericho is represented as such by Christ, in the Gospel, in the parable of the man who goes down from Jerusalem to Jericho (see below, on Luke x. 30).

There we have a type of Adam, who went forth from Paradise to the possession of this world . . . This our Jericho . . . the World will one day fall. Its destruction is revealed in Holy Scripture. And how will it fall? By the sound of the Trumpets. What trumpets? St. Paul reveals to us the mystery. ‘The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised’ (1 Cor. xv. 52). ‘The Lord Himself shall descend with a shout, with the Voice of the Archangel and the Trump of God’ (1 Thess. iv. 16). Then our Joshua will conquer Jericho.”

In another sense, also, the power of this world will be overthrown by the sound of the trumpets. Jericho was strongly fortified with walls and bulwarks. This World also has its strong towers. It relies on its wealth and its wisdom. But Christ, says Origin, gives us another figure of this. His Apostolic Priests to blow their trumpets against it. St. Matthew blew his evangelical trumpet; St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, blew their priestly trumpets. St. Peter blows the trumpet of two Epistles (Origin therefore receives the second Epistle as genuine) St. James and St. Jude blows theirs. St. John blows the Trumpet of His Epistle, and of the Apocalypse; and St. Luke blows his trumpet also in the Acts of the Apostles; and last of all St. Paul, with his fourteen Epistles. By these his trumpets overthrows the walls of this world’s Jericho (Origin, Hom. 7). Therefore, St. Paul says, “We do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. x. 3–5). Thus, the trumpets of Apostolic Preaching overthrew the Jericho of this world.

As Jericho was overthrown on the seventh day, in the seventh circuit of the ark, and at the blowing of the trumpets by the priests seven times; so at last the powers of the World will be destroyed, by the preaching of the Gospel and by the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit (Augustine, Epist. 55). This was the whole scheme of this world’s existence is prefigured by the Work of seven days, in which the Ark of God went round the walls. The Ark of the Church is now going round the whole world; and in its final circuit the enemy of God will be destroyed, and the faithful will be delivered, as Rahab was. Augustine c. De civ. xiii. 31. So also S. Cyril Alex. de Advent. pp. 145, 397. Prosper Aquitanus de Promiss. ii. 15. Bede, Qu. c. 7.
The Priests; the Trumpets; JOSUHA VI. 4, 5. the Ark; the shout of the People.

ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shall thou do six days. 4 And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven "trumpets of rams" horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. 5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of

It would be presumptuous to inquire curiously into the "times and seasons, which the Father has put in His own power" (Acts i. 7); but it may be worthy of notice here, that as the ark was seven times, so the rams' horns, and the seventh day was the Sabbath; and as, by God's command, the walls of Jericho were compassed six days, and in the seventh day they fell; and the Apostle writes that a thousand years in God's sight are as one day (2 Pet. iii. 8): so it was a common opinion among the priests that the World would come to an end in six thousand years, and in the seventh millenial period it would come to an end, and there would be a Sabbath of rest. See the passages of St. Justin Martyr and S. Ireneus, quoted below on 2 Pet. iii. 8.

(xxv.)

(10) On the whole, then, we see there was an adequate occasion for the Divine intervention by a miraculous agency in the overthrow of Jericho. It was not only a trial of faith to Israel, and a pledge of Divine favour, and a manifestation of the universal power of God, given by Him to His people the Israelites; but, as it were, a Gospel in action preached to the world; but it was a type and a prophecy of the future victories of our Divine Joshua, to be achieved by means of the Ark of His Church, in which His Priests dwelt to under-trumpet Evangelical preaching, by the Priests of the Christian dispensation, encompassing the earth, in the faith and patience of Christian Mission, even till the end of time, and by the shout of the People of God; and it was also a type and prophecy of the glorious majesty of His Second Adven
ture, when the last trumpet will sound, and the walls and bulwarks of this World's Jericho will be cast down, and all His enemies will be made His footstool; as He Himself declares when He says, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am going to shake all nations, and the kings shall be gathered together, as I have said, before the ark of the Lord" (Is. xiii. 21).

On v. 11. New Jericho was strictly shut up fortified. This verse is only a parenthesis.

2. And the Lord said in continuation of the conversation in the foregoing chapter; see on v. 13.

— I have given into thine hand Jericho. If the walls had their foundations in the hollows of the earth; if the battle
ments had been so high built that an eagle could not soar over them, this is enough. "I have given it thee." For on whose earth have they raised these castles? Out of whose treasure did they dig those piles of stone? Whence had they their strength? And why did God give them to Joshua? What if your walls be strong, your men valiant, your leaders skilful, your king wise; when God hath said, I have given thee the city, what can swards or swords do against the Lord of Hosts? (By. Halls). So said the Lord to Joshua, "Behold, I have given thee:" and our Divine Joshua says, "All power is given unto Me" (Matt. xxviii. 18).

3. all ye men of war. All the men of war must compass the city; but it was not by their arms, but by their faith, that the city fell.

— Thus shalt thou do six days. Here was a trial of faith and obedience. It seems almost incredible, at first, that not only Joshua and the priests, but the armed men of the people of Israel, should be persuaded to perform such a work, as this—that of going round the city of Jericho in procession for six days in succession, in the belief that any such result as the falling down of the walls of the city would ensue from such a process as that. How could it be thought to make sense and persevere in such a work? The answer is this:

Observe the sequence of events. Almighty God had brought them across the Jordan by a miracle, wrought by His divine power without concurrence on their part. He now proceeds to try them before the test; what if the priests, who had been privileged to perform such a task, would not have their power depend solely on God. This order of things, was natural and reasonable, and is itself an evidence of truth. The conduct of the Israelites at Jordan is a confirmation of the history of the miracle at Jordan. If the miracle of Jericho had preceded that of Jordan, it would have seemed incredible that the Israelites should have acted as they did at Jericho. But the Israelites had been schooled by the miracle at Jordan, and they now show their faith at Jericho, produced by that miracle at Jordan.

After their passage of Jordan, and their circumcision (which was the seventh day, the seventh day was the Sabbath; and as, by God's command, the walls of Jericho were compassed six days, and in the seventh day they fell; and the Apostle writes that a thousand years in God's sight are as one day (2 Pet. iii. 8): so it was a common opinion among the priests that the World would come to an end in six thousand years, and in the seventh millenial period it would come to an end, and there would be a Sabbath of rest. See the passages of S. Justin Martyr and S. Ireneus, quoted below on 2 Pet. iii. 8. the Ark; the shout of the People.

IX. 2. before the ark] on which the Lord's presence was en-
throned between the cherubim: hence in v. 8 the seven priests are said to pass out before the Lord.

The seven priests go before the ark, and sound the seven trumpets; so the seven angels in the Apocalypse sound the trumpets, and then the ark is revealed (Rev. xvi. 19).

trumpets of rams' horns] rather, trumpets of Jubilee (see Genea., p. 340 on the trumpet horn mentioned is the shophar (so called from its clear sharp sound); from shephur, to be bright (Genes. 811. 810), and was either made of horn, or curved like a horn; it is called "buccina pastoralis une corno curvo efflatu" by S. Jerome (on Hosca v. 8), and is the Latin tenuus, or bugle.

It was used among the Hebrews for sacred purposes, especially for the announcement of the seventh, or sabbatical year, and of the jubilee (see on Lev. xxvii. 14). It is called here the shophar or keren (horn of the yobel, or jubilee); the translation ram's horn is incorrect.

It is to be distinguished from the chatataserah, or straight trumpet, used for war, and described in Num. x. 2. 9 (see note there, and Genea., p. 386). The trumpets here used, the trumpets of jubilee, are rightly called σάλπιγγες λεπά, holy trumpets, by Sept. (v. 7); and are therefore fit emblems of Apostolic preaching. See the Prelim. Note to this chapter.

b. when they make a long blast with the ram's horn] Literally, when they draw out (a blast) on the horn of jubilee. The horn of jubilee was to be sounded by them in faith, as if they were already conquerors, and this is to be done by the evangelical priests. "Ecce in the Lord's array, again and again I say rejoice; the Lord is at hand!" is the language of St. Paul (Phil. iv. 4). — all the people shall shout! A great shout; Heb. terahakh, a joyful noise, έλασιγμός, 1 Sam. iv. 5. The first day of the seventh month was the "day of terahakh" (v. 10; Genen. 784). The people, as well as the priests, were to have their part in the work. The priests were commanded to sound the trumpets on each of the seven days, and to make a long blast with the trumpet on the seventh day.

Joshua commanded the people that they should not shout nor make any noise with their voice until the day that he bade them, and then they should shout" (r. 10). And on the seventh day, the seventh after that the priests had blown with the trumpets, then Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city" (r. 16); so the people shouted with a great shout, when they heard the voice of the trumpet, and the wall fell down flat (r. 20).

These directions and their results seem to indicate a great and uncommon object. It was the heart of the Faithful of the Christian Church, in co-operation with the Christian Priesthood, in the last age of the Church, for the overthrow of all Antichristian powers, and for the full and final triumph of the Gospel of Christ. Here, says an ancient Father, we see the blessed effects of Church Unity. "Blessed is the people, O Lord, that can rejoice in Thee" (Ps. lixxix. 10). If they have the blessedness of concord and unanimity, and if they all speak the same thing, with one heart and one mind; if all the people of God's Church take up the place which is written in the Acts of the Apostles, when the Apostles were praying together with one accord, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus (Acts i. 13, 14); and when, in answer to their prayer, the place was all filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts iv. 31). Thus all earthly things will be sublinded, and the world itself will be overcome: for our Saviour Himself has said to His own soldiers, "He of
The walls will fall on the seventh day. JOSUA VI. 6—17. Rahab shall live.

6 And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord. 7 And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the Lord.

8 And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the Lord, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. 9 And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, \(^{1}\) and the reward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. 10 And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor \(^{2}\) make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout. 11 So the ark of the Lord compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, \(^{3}\) and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. 13 And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the reward came after the ark of the Lord, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. 14 And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. 16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city. 17 And the city shall be \(^{4}\) accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the Lord: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because

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\(^{1}\) Or, devotion.
\(^{2}\) Or, devoted.
\(^{3}\) Lev. 27. 28.
\(^{4}\) Mic. 4. 13.

The English word "accursed" may produce an erroneous notion. Jericho was the first city that was taken by Israel in Canaan. The possession of Canaan was God's free gift. The sovereignty of God giving the land of Canaan to the Israelites was to be acknowledged by them. This acknowledgment was to be made by a solemn dedication of the precious things of Jericho, as firstfruits, to the Lord, etc. Cp. Num. xxxi. 54. As Josephus rightly says (Antiq. v. 1. 6), "Joshua commanded the Israelites to reserve the silver and gold of Jericho, the first city taken by them, as the firstfruits of their successes, to God."

Hence we may understand in what the sin of Achan consisted. It was sacrilege, robbery of God. Other things in the city were devoted as a sacrifice, Israel being the appointed executioners of His judgment upon the guilty nations who rebelled against Him.

On the twofold sense of cherem (from the verb cherem, to enclose, to shut up, to restrict to a special use), see Lev. xxvii. 28, 29; Deut. ii. 24; iii. 6; xiii. 16. Michah iv. 13. Gesen., p. 305. It corresponds to the Greek ἱδρυμα, Rom. iv. 3. Gal. i. 8, 9; and see Rev. xix. 17 on the twofold meaning of the word sacrifice.

Why was Jericho devoted? Because it was the first city to which they came after their entrance into Canaan, and it was to be dedicated as the firstfruits to God (Theodoret).

6 she hid the messengers that we sent. 14 And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. 15 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.

20 So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

22 But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye swear unto her. 23 And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

24 And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.

25 And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

26 And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho:"

The salvation of Rahab's house was the more remarkable, because her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall (v. 15). The walls of Jericho fell down flat. They fell down by faith; and she was saved by faith: see Heb. xi. 30, 31. The trumpets of the priests sounded, and the people shouted, and the city fell: so when the last trump shall sound, the City of this World will fall. But God's elect will be saved. "When ye begin to see those things come to pass, lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke xi. 28.)

Rahab's case, and that of her household, was an exceptional one, as compared with that of other Canaanites. She showed her faith and repentance before Joshua came to Canaan; and therefore the spies promised safety to her: see above, p. 38—29.

But after that Joshua had passed the Jordan, the time of probation was past, the day of judgment was come: see Deut. xx. 10—17.

18. and trouble it! A mysterious prophecy of the sin of Achan. The verb here used for to trouble, is scarce: see below, vii. 25. Gene. 626.

19. the treasury of the Lord. See below, on vii. 21, for the reason of this. The wall fell down flat as God had declared that it would do, after they had complied with the directions given by Him: see v. 2—5. Here is sufficient reply to those who allege that the fall of the wall was an effect of natural causes, independent of the faith of Israel. The Apostle to the Hebrews asserts, that "by faith the walls of Jericho fell down" (Heb. xii. 50).

21. they utterly destroyed all that was in the city! In the case of the other cities of Canaan, as in the case of the cities of Sihon and Og, the inhabitants were destroyed, but the city was preserved (see viii. 25; x. 28. Deut. ii. 34; iv. 6); according to God's command, Deut. vii. 2; x. 10—17.

In the case of Jericho, the city as well as the inhabitants were destroyed.

For the reasons of this destruction see on Num. xxxi. 2—17; and above, v. 17; and the Introduction to the Book of Joshua.
He shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn,
And in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.

VII. 1 But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing:
for "| Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of || Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel.

And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, on the east side of Beth-el, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country.
And the men went up and viewed Ai. 3 And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let † about two thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few. 4 So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men; † and they fled before the men of Ai. 5 And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them || in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

6 And Joshua † rent their clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. 7 And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, † wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan! 8 O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their † backs before their enemies! 9 For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and † what will thou do unto thy great name?

10 And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore † liest thou upon thy face? 11 1 Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: † for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and † dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. 12 Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because † they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. 13 Up, † sanctify the people, and say, † Ex. 19. 10.

So Vandevelde; but Ai is placed by Ritter, Kraft, Keil, and others, at some ruins now called Midinet Ga‘i, between Wady Farah, and Wady es Saennin.

Beth-aven was probably on the rocky eminence, a mile S.E. of Bethel, and about a mile west of Ai.

Bethel, formerly Lur (Gen. xxvii. 19. Judg. i. 23, 26), was on Mount Ephraim, on the highway from Jerusalem to Shechem (Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 3. Judg. iv. 5), an ancient Canaanitish royal city, afterwards a frontier city of Benjamin (Josh. xvii. 12. Judg. xxi. 19), and a national sanctuary (Judg. xxi. 18; 1 Sam. x. 3); and here Samuel judged Israel (1 Sam. vii. 10); and it became the chief place of Jeroboam’s idolatry (1 Kings xii. 29. 2 Kings x. 29. Hosea v. 5. Amos iii. 14); it is now called Bethin, twelve Roman miles north of Jerusalem (Eskeles, Ranmer, Robinson, Vandevelde).

† A proof that the Lord was not with them. The army of Israel was not overturned by the men of Ai, but by the sacrilege of Achan: see ver. 12, 13.

When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, keep thee from every wicked thing,” was God’s command (Dent. xxxii. 9); and here was a striking example of the need of observing it; see the excellent application of this precept, with special reference to the history of Ai, in the Sermon of Bp. Andrews preached at Richmond before Queen Elizabeth, A.D. 1599, Ash-Wednesday. Vol. i. pp. 321—327.

5. Shebarim[Literally, the breakings; perhaps stone- quarries.

9. what will thou do unto thy great name?] Wilt Thou allow that also to be destroyed? If Thou allowest us to be cut off, who alone, in this land, honour Thy Name, wilt Thou not also give up Thy great Name to be outraged by Thine enemies and ours? 12. except ye destroy the accursed from among you?] The Sept. has εἰ δέ ἡς ἔφασσες τοι τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ βύμαν αὐτῶν. The same phrase is used also e. 13. Compare St. Paul’s words concerning the inexcusable Corinhi, ἐφέσσες τοι τῷ ὕψος τοῦ θυμοῦ αὐτῶν; and above, Deut. xvii. 7.

14. tribes] Each tribe (mattech, or shebeb) was divided into families (mishkapoth), and each family into houses (batlim), and each house into persons (gevarim). See Exod. xviii. 25, and Keil, Archiv. § 140.

On the present occasion, first the heads of the twelve tribes came before the Ark, and lots were drawn for them; and the lot fell upon Judah; then the heads of the family of Judah were brought, and the lot fell upon the Zarthites; then the heads of the houses of the Zarthites were taken, and the lot fell upon Zabdi; then the men of his house were brought, and the lot fell upon Carmi. So the divine justice tracks out the guilty, step by step, sometimes slowly, but always surely.

The use of lots for the discovery of the guilty, compare 1 Sam. xiv. 41. Jonah i. 7. Prov. xviii. 18.
Achan's sacrifice. **Joshua VII. 16—25.** Achan's punishment.

16. burnt with fire] By taking what was devoted (cherem, andσα,) he had broken the covenant with God, he had been guilty of lying to Him; because, in the devotion of Jericho to God by the popular act, Achan had been included; and that act was, as far as Achan was concerned, a lie, if the whole vow was not kept; and he had been guilty of stealing from God; and Achan himself had thus become devoted, and is so called v. 12. and what was devoted to punishment for the reparation of God's offended honour was to be burnt; cp. vi. 24, and Lev. xx. 14; he was first stoned with stones, v. 25.

18. the son of Carmi] See above, on v. 1.

19. My son] Not said ironically but earnestly. My son: an example of the pity for the sinner which Justice feels even in punishing the sin. As Augustine says, "Nec propter vitia homines odier: nec vitae propter homines diligras." Abram called Dice "son" (Luke xi. 25). Our Lord called Judas "friend," even when Judas came to betray Him (Matt. xxvi. 50).

Detestation of the sin may well stand with favour to the person: and these two not distinguished cause great wrong either in our charity or our justice; for either we uncharitably hate the creature of God, or unjustly affect the evil of men. Subjects are sons to the Magistrate; such must be the corrections, such the provisions of Governors, as for their children; again, the obedience and love of subjects must be fitted (By. Hall. Cont. p. 915).

—give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel] for His truth is proved, and His honour is vindicated, and His people are saved, by this discovery.

20. Indeed] See above. Achan confessed his sin, and although he was punished by death in this world, yet there is good reason to suppose that his confession was mercifully accepted by God. The temporal death of the body is not an evil, but rather a benefit to the sinner, it leads to eternal life for the soul. Consider the case of the penitent on the cross, Luke xxiii. 43. Here is consolation to condemned malefactors. Cp. below on v. 24.

Achan's Sin.

21. a goodly Babylonish garment] Literally, a goodly mantle of Shinar. A mantle, Heb. addeth, from odor, to be wide—large as Shinar, i.e. Babylonia (Gen. x. 10; xi. 2); embossed with figures of various colours, whence it is called wide—wide (see, for which kind of work Babylon was famous (Piso. viii. 49; so Gesen., p. 15; Keil, p. 56). This ought to have been destroyed as accursed.

—a wedge of gold] Literally, a tongue: a jewel in the shape of a tongue; which ought to have been devoted to God and consecrated to His honour; and the appropriation of it by Achan was sacrilege, or robbery of God: see v. 1.

Observe, this jewel is called a tongue (laskon) in the Hebrew; and in the Septuagint it is called γλῶσσα, and so Syriac, Arabic, and Targum; and it ought to have been devoted to God's service; and some of the Fathers have commented on this in a spiritual sense (see Origen, Hom. 7; cp. Beels, Qu. c. 7), as follows: The tongues of heathen eloquence —the jewels of poetry, philosophy, and rhetoric, of this World's Jerichos, are not to be used for self-display and personal adornment, but are to be sanctified and dedicated to God. Many of the ancient heretics derived their unsound doctrines from Gentile philosophy, and embellished them with the oratory derived from heathen schools. But the Christian teacher must sanctify all to God. Compare God's command to spoil the Egyptians. The Egyptians were to be spoiled, in order that God's Tabernacle might be adorned with the jewels of His own Earth, which the Egyptians abused; so the gold and silver of Jericho, its jewel—lery and costly things, which had been profaned to unholy uses, were to be consecrated by Israel to the Lord, and to be put into His treasury, and to be hallowed to His service; see vi. 19; and above on Exod. iii. 22.

The sin of Achan has been already compared with that of Amaziah after Jerahmeel] (see above on v. 1). At Pentecost God Himself gave tongues of golden fire from heaven to His Church. At Pentecost the Apostles sanctified the tongues of all nations, and dedicated them to Him, by preaching the Gospel, and by prayer and praise to His name, and to all the ends of the earth (Acts xx. 23).

23. brought them] Literally, made them to go up; therefore this valley of Achor was higher than Gilgal.

24. unto the valley of Achor] Acor, i.e. causing trouble and sorrow (Gen. x. 26); so called from the act of Achan, and from the trouble caused by him to Israel; see v. 25.

Even to Achan himself the "valley of Achor" may have been made "a door of hope" (Hosea ii. 15. Cp. Isa. ix. 10), because he confessed his sin (see v. 20), and there is reason to hope and believe that he listened to the words of Joshua, "My
The Valley of Achor. 

JOSUH VII. VII. 1—5. Campaign against Ai.

And they took us up to the Lord shall turn thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, the Valley of Achor, unto this day.

VIII. And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed. Take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.

3 So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away by night. And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, even behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready: And I, and all the people that are with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first,

son, give glory to the Lord God of Israel, and submitted to the punishment due to his sin; and so, with reverence be it said, had those men once more profaned the holy name of God with the stoning of the property thief, who said, "We receive the due reward of our deeds." (Lake xxiii. 41). So Abalaos, Masius, Catelanus, and the Hebrew Rabbis.

28. Why hast thou troubled us? The verb here used twice, is to be understood not to mean to trouble by his covetousness. Achan troubled Israel: but the sins of both were overruled to the greater glory of God.

26. All Israel stoned him] The people, by their representatives, were made executioners of the punishment, in order that they might remove by a national act the burden of guilt which lay on the nation (see v. 1); and also that they might more effectually be deterred from afterwards committing a sin which they punished in another.

—burned them] Why were his sons and his daughters also stoned? They were probably accomplices in the sin; the garment, and the gold and silver were hidden "in the midst of the tent." This could hardly have been done without the knowledge of the family. Indeed, from the punishment, and from the law of Moses (Dent. xxiv. 16), which declared that the children should not be put to death for the sin of the father, it may be inferred that the children of Achan were privy to, and were partakers in, Achan's sin.

We see the same thing in the parallel case of Ananias. "Sapphira's wife" was privy to his sin, and was punished with her husband.

Not Achan alone is called forth to death, but all his family, all his substance. The actor alone does not smart with sacrilege; all that concerns him is enwrapped in the judgment. Those who defile their hands with holy goods, are enemies to the own flesh and blood. Go fire first covetences are so much the more fearful, because they must be exemplary. (Bp. Hall). Cp. note on Acts v. 5; and Num. xv. 32. 36.

Do why were his ass, his sheep, and his tent destroyed? Achan's sin was a sin of covetousness—a sin of robbing God. All property—cattle, goods, houses—is from God; and God gives and takes it away as He deems best. God's punishments are wise. We have a true example of the tenacity of the property of Achan. God would show that sins of covetousness and sacrilege never can enrich those that commit them. Rather, such sins are like the moths which fret the garment of their estate. "The eagle that stole a coal from the altar, thereby set her nest on fire, which consumed both her young eagles and herself that stole it." (Archbp. Whitgift's). The robbery of God by seizing on his property—such as tithes and Church-lands—by covetous and sacrilegious hands, has been shown from numerous examples to have followed by the extinction of the families and the impoverishment of the estates of those who, like Achan, have been tainted by this sin: see Archbp. Whitgift's speech to Queen Elizabeth, printed in the Appendix to Kennett on Improperities, pp. 17—20. Cp. Lord Clarendon on Serilege, xxix. Bp. of Ely's Sermon on the Funeral of Bp. Andrews, Nov. 11, 1626. Lord Strafford's last advice to his son, in Rushworth's Trial of Earl of Strafford, p. 763. Sir Henry Spelman's History and Fate of Serilege, Lond. 1698, written in 1682.

26. a great heap of stones] As a memorial and a warning against the sin of sacrilege.

The FALL of AI.

CH. VIII. 1. take all the people of war with thee] God's power begins with miracles, as at Jericho; but He afterwards requires men's skill and labour, as at Ai, and He promises His help to those who use them (Theodore). All the people must be taken with Joshua, in order that all may show their faith and obedience and readiness to fight the Lord's battles; but when this evidence has been given, then Joshua will choose some out of the number for a special service. v. 3.

2 an ambush] literally, a snare, a lie in wait, from arab, to wean, "noctere insidias, struere dolos." ἄθανω δαιμονία, παίτρεν (Gesen.). On the lawfulness of an ambush in a just war, see Augustine here, and Grotius de Jure Belli, i. c. 1—6, and Collet here.

— for the city behind it] No neighbourhood of Palestine (says Dr. Thomson) is more crowded with interesting associations than this. I should like to spend a day wandering over the hills between Er, Ram, Gibeh, Michmash, Rimmon, Bethel, and Beer. Ai must have been somewhere between Michmash and Rimmon—a region cut up with gorges and ravines; and as I passed from Bethin toward Michmash, I could easily understand how Joshua's ambush of 5000 men could lie between Ai and Bethel (Dr. Thomson, The Land and the Book, p. 671). See above, vii. 2.

3. thirty thousand] How are the numbers here to be accounted for?

Here, in v. 3, we read that 30,000 were sent by night to lie in ambush behind the city, between Bethel and Ai (c. 9). But in v. 12 it is said that he took about 5000 to lie in ambush between Bethel and Ai.

Some have said that there is an error in the Manuscripts, and that 30,000 ought to be written 5000 (Keil). Others suppose a discrepancy between two different accounts. But neither of these suppositions seems probable.

Joshua first sent 30,000 men by night to lie in wait on the west of Ai.

This was a dangerous position, as between two hostile cities, Bethel and Ai, and they were commanded to remain there.

In order therefore to encourage and assure them, he sent, on the next day, a second detachment from his own forces, of 5000 men (v. 12).

On the third day the King of Ai issued forth, and the victory was gained by Joshua.
The site of the ambush

JOSHUA VIII. 6—19. "between Bethel and Ai."

10 And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. 11 And all the people, even the people of war that were with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now there was a valley between them and Ai. 12 And he took about five thousand men, and set them to lie in ambush between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua lodged that night among the people.

13 And when they had set the people, even all the host that was on the north of the city, and + their liers in wait on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley. 14 And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw it, that they hasted and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain; but he wist not that there were liers in ambush against him behind the city. 15 And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness. 16 And all the people that were in Ai were called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the city. 17 And there was not a man left in Ai or Beth-el, that was not wont out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel.

18 And the Lord said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai: for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand toward the city. 19 And the ambush arose

5—7. we will flee— they will come out after us—then ye shall rise up] Here was a combination of circumstances somewhat similar to those by which Pharaoh's host were overwhelmed. He reckoned that Israel and Israel's God were disinclined—that they fled before him; and he pursued after them and was overwhelmed: see above on Exod. xiv. 2.

The same was the case with the Divine Joshua, Jesus Christ. At the Crucifixion, He seemed to be worsted and to flee before the enemy, even before Satan himself. Satan exerted all his powers against Him; He stigmatized the chief priests and scribes and the people of Jerusalem to cry, "Crucify Him!" But so Satan's own city was taken. Christ's flight was the cause of His victory, as he was the king who hung the spear by the tree by Joshua, so Satan was, as it were, nailed to the Cross of Christ by Him who conquered death by dying (see below on c. 29); and our Divine Joshua spoilt the Ai of Satan, and made it a perpetual desolation (see n. 29).

Jerusalem herself, by rejecting Christ, became an Ai. She imagined that she had defeated and destroyed Him by the Crucifixion. But that proud and rebellious City was taken in her own snare—she was destroyed. Many thousands of her inhabitants were enslaved by the Romans, who were the executioners of God's vengeance upon her. Her temple was reduced to ruins. Her house was left unto her desolate. See also on Matt. xxiii. 38.

9. between Bethel and Ai] Observe these words. They occur also in the history of Abraham (see Gen. xi. 8). He removed from thence (i.e. from Sichem) unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the West, and Hai (or Ai) on the East, and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord."

Therefore Joshua's ambush coincided very nearly in site with Abraham's altar. This coincidence becomes more interesting when we remember

that 'we will flee before them, ' (For they will come out after us) till we have drawn them from the city; for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them. Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the Lord your God will deliver it into your hand. And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, that ye shall set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the Lord shall ye do, See, I have commanded you. Joshua therefore sent them forth: and they went to lie in ambush, and abode between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua lodged that night among the people.
The destruction of Ai.

JOSHUA VIII. 20—31. The hanging-up of its King.

quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it, and hasted and set the city on fire. 20 And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers. 21 And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai. 22 And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they 1let none of them 1 remain or escape. 23 And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.

21 And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were all fallen upon the sword, until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword. 25 And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai. 26 For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. 27 Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the Lord which he a commanded Joshua. 28 And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it 0 an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day.

As Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it

The Septuagint renders it by γασ απυκνοειδες ναζε οιδων, a short javelin or lance, the Triglath sees οιδων, it is distinguished from the long spear, and also the shield, in 1 Sam. xvii. 41, 42. Job xxxix. 23.

So our Divine Joshua stretched forth the spear of victory when He raised Himself from the grave. Joshua raised the men from the ambush by a signal in his hand. Christ is often represented as rising from the grave with a flag of victory. His resurrection was a signal of ours.

19. set the city on fire] So Jerusalem was destroyed by fire, for fighting against the true Joshua.

28. 0 a heap] Heb. tel, a rare word, occurring only in Deut. xii. 16, here, and xl. 13; Jer. xxx. 18; xl. 2. The site of Ai is now called by the Arabs Es-Etal (the heap).

The Punishment of the King of Ai.

29. the king of Ai he hanged on a tree] ἴπειρον τινα αὐτῷ (Septuagint), remarkable words; they are applied to Christ in the New Testament (Acts v. 30; x. 39, Gal. iii. 13). The Sept. has τινα αὐτῷ δηλον, a double tree or wood, in the Targum of Jonathan and Aramaic version we read here—he crucified the King of Ai.

1. observe the parallel—Christ triumphed by the Cross (Eph. ii. 15, Col. ii. 15); and, with reverence be it said, He hanged Satan thereon. As Dr. Barrow says, "To the external view and casual sense of men, our Lord was there exposed to scorn and shame (as Joshua seemed to be deflected from the King of Ai); but to spiritual and true discerning, all Christ's and our enemies did there hang as objects of contempt, quite overthrown and undone. There the Devil did hang, bound, disarmed, and spoiled, utterly baffled and confounded. There Death itself did hang, with its sting plucked out and all its terrors quelled"

(Dr. Barrow, Serm. xxiv, vol. iv. p. 505. See below, on Col. ii. 15). Thus the King of our hostile Ai, the enemy of the spiritual Israel, was punished and overthrown.

If any one should allege that such analogies as these are fanciful, let him be requested to consider the words of Origen, "What are these things to me? What good is it for me to know, that the inhabitants of Ai were conquered? as if many other battles of far greater note had not been fought! Was it worthy of the Holy Ghost to pass by in silence so many more illustrious exploits, and to describe so minutely this battle before Ai, in the pages of Holy Scripture?" There must therefore, he concludes, be something in this history far more deep than at first appears. We are reading the history of a conflict and a victory of Joshua, the figure of Jesus Christ. And referring to the act of Joshua, hanging the King of Ai on a tree, Origen says, "Cruce Christi tropheum de Diasolo fuli, in quo et crucifixus est et triumphatus." "The Cross of Christ was a trophy of victory over the Devil, on which the Devil himself was crucified and led in triumph by Christ; and he refers to Col. ii. 14, 15; and Gal. vi. 14: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of Christ, by which the World is crucified to me, and I to the World" (Origen, Hom. 8). "Hoc in loco mysterium tegitur," he says, the Mystery of the Cross: see also below, x. 26.

As soon as the sun was down] According to the Law of Moses (Deut. xxi. 23; and compare below, x. 27).

As soon as the sun went down] Lo, when the sun of this world is set, the prince of this world will be condemned by Christ to his last prison house (Matt. xxv. 41, Rev. xx. 10). 30—35. JOSHUA'S March with all ISRAEL to SICHEM: the BUILDING of his Altar there; the SETTING UP of the STONES; the BLESSINGS and the CURSINGS; the READING of the LAW there.

This narrative is very unworkable; and to some has seemld
is written in the 'book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings sooner? The answer is, He had an express command from God to besiege Jericho: "The Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho" (vi. 2). He had also a commission from God against Ai: "Arise, go up to Ai" (ch. viii. 1). These things having been done, according to God's special order, he must now obey the divine commission given in the law of Moses, and march to Sichem, for the purposes therein specified.

(6) This march to Sichem was through the heart of the enemy's country. True; but Sichem was a marked place in the history of God's dealings with His people, even from the days of their father Abraham. Sichem was the first place in Canaan where God had appeared to Abraham, and Abraham built there his altar. Sichem was the first place to which Jacob had come with his family when he returned from Padan-aram, and there he built his altar. Sichem was the place where the bones of Joseph and the Patriarchs were buried. Sichem was the national sanctuary of Israel. At Sichem Joshua first revealed Himself as the Messiah: see above, notes on Gen. xii. 6.

This journey of Joshua and of all the people with their wives and little ones to Sichem; the building of the altar there; the writing of the Law there on the stones; the recital of the blessings and the curses in that illustrious spot, enounced and hallowed by the history of Abraham and Jacob and the Patriarchs, is the most grand and interesting sample of faith and obedience in a Ruler and a Nation that is recorded in the history of the world.

(7) Yet further; what God had promised to Abraham, that God was now fulfilling to Joshua. There is, as it were, a marvellous mystery even in the local coincidences between the promise and the fulfilment. As we have already seen, Joshua's ambush, between Bethel and Ai, from which Israel sprung to victory, coincided with Abraham's altar (see above, on v. 9). Was this the altar a memorial of God's promise to Abraham? And whence had Abraham come, when he built that altar? From Sichem. At Sichem he had his first vision of the land of Canaan; there "the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him" (Gen. xi. 7, 8). What could be more fitting and appropriate, than that Joshua and Abraham's seed, coming from Egypt and Arabia, should tread in Abraham's steps in an inverted order; and should go from Ai to Sichem, and return thanks to the Lord at Sichem for the fulfilment already begun of His promise to Abraham there; and should offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings there, where their father Abraham had built an altar—his first altar—to the Lord?

(8) But a greater than Joshua is here; even Jesus Christ, the Seed of Abraham and Lord of Abraham, in whom all the promises to Abraham are fulfilled, and in whom all families of God's Israel are blessed.

Joshua goeth up to Sichem, the Sanctuary of Israel, after the capture of Ai, and the hanging of the King of Ai on the tree. It has been already observed, that the rising of Joshua to victory after a seeming overthrow, and the excution of that king, who deemed that he had troved all the ways to appear to betypical of the resurrection of Christ, and of the overthrow of Satan by the Cross: see above, on v. 29.

We recognize in the present history a further confirmation of that opinion.

Suddenly, after his victory at Ai, Joshua goes up to Sichem, which became the national sanctuary of Israel (see xxiv. 1, 25, 26. 32). So our Lord ascended to the true Sichem—the heavenly sanctuary. Joshua took the people with him. Joshua's ascent is ours (see above); and they offered there, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings there. Christ intercedes for us at the heavenly altar, and presents His sacrifice—the true burnt-offering, as well as the true peace-offering—by which we are reconciled to God, and communicants with Him. Joshua writes the Law of Moses before the Lord, and in His Ascension, writes the Law of Love by the Spirit on our hearts. As Origen says (Hom. 9), "Noster Jesus scripsit Deuteronominum in lapidibus vivis, non in tabulis lapideis, sed in tabulis cordis carnalibus (2 Cor. iii. 9), non stratesmus sed Dei Vivi." Joshua, attended by the priests bearing the Ark, which was the throne of God, gave orders that Blessings and Cursings should be pronounced to the people. So our Divine
unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings. 32 And "he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. 33 And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, 7 which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; 8 as Moses the servant of the Lord commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. 34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, 9 the blessings and cursings, according to that which is written in the book of the law. 35 There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, 10 with the women, and the little ones, and 1 the strangers that 1 were conversant among them.

IX. 1 And it came to pass, when all the kings which were on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of "the great sea 2 as Moses commanded Joshua, etc.

Joshua, from His throne of judgment, will pronounce benediction to those on His right hand, and malediction to those on His left, at the Great Day. Joshua read all the Day of the Law of Moses before all the people. So Hengstenberg (as Origen observes) reads and interprets to us the Old Testament. "Legit nosis Jesus Legem, quam Legis revelat arena" (Origen, Hom. 9). He reads it to all, to women and children as well as men—to all He says, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. xiii. 9).

30. Joshua built an altar] According to God's command: see on Deut. xxvii. 6. Here is evidence that Joshua had a copy of Deuteronomy.

31. they offered] i.e., the Priests and Levites offered: see Hebr., And. xxv. 58.

32. burnt offerings—peace offerings] The burnt offerings seem to have also included sin-offerings, of which there is no express mention in the Books of Joshua and Judges. Cp. Hengst., Anti. ii. 86; and below, Judges xx. 26.

33. And he wrote there upon the stones] Not on the stones of the altar, but on the stones prescribed by the Law, that is to say, on the plaster with which those stones were covered: see Deut. xxvii. 4—8.

34. the stones]—not any stones which he himself had mentioned, but the stones of which Moses had spoken in the Pentateuch, with which the Sacred Writer here supposes the reader to be familiar; just as in the history of the Battle of the Kings of St. John, after his expedition was taken away—"not any stone that he himself had mentioned before, but the stone which had been described in the other Gospels, with which St. John supposes the reader to be acc quainted: see below, on John xx. 1.

35. the ark] which was stationed in the middle, between Ebal and Gerizim: see above, on Deut. xxvii. 2—13.

Preliminary Note on the History of the Gibeonites in Chap IX.

The Gibeonites occupy a remarkable place in the history of the ancient people of God. What are the inferences which the Sacred Writer intends us to derive from it?

(1) The Gibeonites were Hivites (v. 7), condemned therefore to extermination for their sins, after long endurance on God's part (Exod. xxiii. 32; xxiv. 12—15. Num. xxxiii. 51—50. Deut. vii. 1, 2; xx. 10).

(2) They themselves were aware of this. They were filled with fear and consternation, when they heard of Joshua's vic-
tories at Jericho and Ai, and of the utter destruction of those cities (v. 3).

(3) They therefore came to Joshua in order to make a league with Israel.

(4) Knowing that God had commanded Israel to exterminate the Canaanites, but that Israel had no such commission from God against any other nation (cp. Deut. xx. 10—12), they ventured to the arbitrage which is described in this chapter, and by which they hoped themselves to be inhabitants of a distant country beyond the limits of Canaan.

They acted in fear, and with fraud.

(5) At the same time, by their overtures to Joshua, they exposed themselves to the enmity of the other Canaanites, who afterwards made a league against them, and came up to Gibea to suing it: see x. 1—5.

The Gibeonites therefore, who were Canaanites, preferred the friendship of Israel to that of the Canaanites, their country men; and they believed that Joshua and Israel would eventually prevail over the inhabitants of Canaan. Here then was an act of faith, though not of clear-sighted and strong faith.

(6) Under the influence of fear, and in order to save their lives (v. 24), they practised a fraud upon the elders of Israel, and overreached them; and the elders promised with an oath to preserve them. And though, when the fraud was discovered, the people of Israel murmured against the princes of Israel on this account (v. 18), yet the princes of Israel pleaded that they might not harm them, "out of their cash" (v. 19).

(7) But on account of the deceit practised on Israel, Joshua says, "Now are ye cursed, and there shall be none of you freed from being bondmen, and harvests of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God" (v. 25). He made them to subordinate ministers and janal servants of the Tabernacle.

(8) When the Gibeonites were afterwards attacked by the other Canaanites, because they had made peace with Israel, Joshua flew to their succour and rescue, and was enabled by God to work a miracle for the overthrow of their enemies and his own (v. 1—14).

Yet further, more than four hundred years afterwards, God signified in a striking manner His determination to preserve the Gibeonites, and His disapproval of the slaughter of some of them by King Saul, who "sought to slay them in his zeal for Israel?": see below on 2 Sam. xxii. 1—6.

This history leads to the following conclusions:

(1) It is a reply to the objections of those who charge Joshua and Israel, and even the God of Israel, with cruelty in their dealings with the Canaanites.

It is clear from the case of the Gibeonites, that the elders of Israel were not cruel in their conduct towards the Canaanites, but strained their practice to the side of mercy. Their promise to spare the Gibeonites was exerted on false pretences, but yet it was kept; and four hundred years afterwards God punished the violation of it.

The destruction of the Canaanites was due to their own sins, after solemn warnings (especially the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah from heaven) and after long forbearance on God's side: see on Gen. xv. 16.

(2) God's general decree for the extermination of the
Canaanites was tempered by equity and mercy in the case of the Gibeonites (cp. S. Augustine, Quaest. 13 and 14). At the same time, by their dedication to the service of God's house, it was prudently provided that they should not tempt the Israelites to Canaanish idolatry. *Cp. Natalis Alex. Dissert. xii.*

And when the inhabitants of *Gib'eon* heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, they did work diligently, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old,
Gilgal.  JOSHUA IX. 5—15.  The league with the Gilgones.

and rent, and bound up; 5 And old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.

6 And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us. 7 And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a league with you? 8 And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye? 9 And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the Lord thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt.

10 And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth. 11 Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us. 12 This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy: 13 And these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey. 14 And the men took of their victuals, 15 and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord. 16 And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them.

5. clouted patched—properly, spotted with patches (cp. Gen. xxx. 32). Ezek. xvi. 16. Gesen. 322. 6. Gilgal! Where is the Gilgal here mentioned? Many modern expositors have supposed it to be a different place from the Gilgal mentioned hitherto in this book (iv. 19; v. 3), which was near Jericho. The camp of Joshua is said to be at Gilgal after the event recorded in chapters x. and xi., when he had extended his conquests to the waters of Merom (ch. xi.: see xiv. 6). Why, it is asked, should he have returned to the Gilgal at the extreme s.e. corner of Palestine after those conquests (cp. Acts ii. 3)? They who suppose that the Gilgal here specified is a different place from the Gilgal hitherto mentioned, are of opinion that it was situated at a spot now called Jfljila, on the road between Jerusalem and Sichem, and rather nearer to the latter (Vandervelde, p. 316). Keil, who, however, has modified his opinion: see his note on 1 Sam. xii. 16, pp. 58, 94). Some suppose that there is a reference to this second Gilgal in Deut. x. 30; but see the note there; cp. below, xx. 7.

On the whole, while there is something to be said in favour of the opinion which supposes two Gilgales in the history of Joshua as his head-quarters, it seems more reasonable to prefer the natural construction of the narrative, which appears to speak only of one. Cp. Gesen. R.D. p. 700, who says, "The camp established at Gilgal remained as his head-quarters there during the early part of the conquest (Josh. ix. 6; x. 6, 7, 9); and we may probably infer from one narrative that Joshua retired thither at the conclusion of his labours" (xiv. 6, 15); and so comment. xxvi. 2. "The Tabernacle remained at Gilgal till it was fixed at Shiloh" (see xviii. 1).

To the question—why Joshua should have returned to a place at the s.e. corner of the Land of Promise, the Gilgal near Jericho, it is enough to say that Joshua's acts are not to be regarded as those of an ordinary man. That Gilgal must have had a sacred character in his eyes, and in the eyes of all his people. It was the spot where the reproach of Egypt was rolled away from the nation, and where the nation was reconci-

led to God, and where it sprung up from the darkness of its grave of near forty years, by a spiritual resurrection, to new life (see above, v. 9). It was the place where they were cleansed. It was the place where they ate their first Passover. It was the place where the twelve stones had been set up (iv. 19).

As the Christian soldier looks back to his Baptism and his first Confirmation, as he returns ever to them in his thoughts, as he derives strength from the Sacraments which receive their efficacy from the Blood and of the Lord and of the Lord's blood, and which are ministered to him in the Communion of the Apostolic Church of God, and as he goes forth from that Gilgal to fight the Lord's battles, and returns to it again as his camp to go forth again to new conquests, under the banner of the Lord, the Christian, so the Israelite of old found his strength in Gilgal, and went forth therefrom to victory.

9, 10, in Egypt—Heshbon—Bashan. They do not mention what had been done in Jericho and in the wilderness; but in Egypt was the real centre of their prayer, see v. 3), lest they should seem to be acquainted with the affairs of Canaan, and not to be foreigners.

14. the men took of their victuals Either to taste whether they were old, as they seemed to be; or as a token of friendship, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord! By the Urim and Thummim, Exod. xxvii. 30.

This fraud of the Gilgonites is like that which is practised by some in our own days; especially by the Church of Rome, which pretends Antiquity for many of her own novel opinions and corrupt practices; as has been shown by the present Editor in one of his Occasional Sermons, No. xxvi.

The touchstone by which these professions are to be detected, is the Urin and Thummim of the Holy Scriptures. "It is no new policy that Satan would beguile us with a vain colour of Antiquity, clothing falsehood in rags. These Gilgonites did tear their bottles, and shoes, and clothes, and make them naught, that they might seem old; so do the false patrons of new errors. If we be caught with this Gilgonish stratagem, it is a sign we have not consulted with God. There is no way to convince the Gilgonish pretences of antiquity, but have recourse to the Oracle of God. Had this been advised with, none of these false rags had claimed the Church of God: whether in our practice or judgment, this direction cannot fail us; whereas what you take upon the words of men, proves ever either light or false words" (Bp. Hall, Contemp. p. 919).

15. Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live. A question here arises, Was the oath sworn by the elders of Israel to the Gilgonites (see v. 18) obligatory, or no?
And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they knew that they were their neighbours, and that they dwelt among them. 17 And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim. 18 And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes.

But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them.

This we will do to them; we will even let them live, lest their wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them. 21 And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but let them be hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had promised them.

And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, 'We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us?' 23 Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God. 24 And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the Lord thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing. 25 And now, behold, we are in thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do. 26 And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. 27 And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the Lord, even unto this day, in the place which he should choose.

Now it came to pass, when Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with, and were among them; 2 That they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty. 3 Wherefore Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of An oath to do an unlawful thing, e. g. to commit murder, is not binding (see on Matt. xiv. 7—9).

But the promise made to the Gibeonites—though made unlawfully—was not a promise to do an unlawful thing; as is evident from two facts, viz.: (1) That God, by an illustrious miracle, blessed Joshua's arms in his defence of the Gibeonites; and indeed sent him against the five kings who attacked Gibeon (v. 8). (2) That God punished Israel four hundred years afterwards for the violation of the oath (2 Sam. xxiv. 1). Cp. Bp. Sanderson, Pref. ii. § 14, and Prefect. iv. §§ 12, 13, vol. iv. pp. 293. 809; so Lyra, Hugo, Victorious, Cudianus, Estius, and A. Lapide. The question is determined on the other side by some, e. g. Masius, Servius, Tironius, Arias Montanus, and Woevers, Dillen. cap. ix. qn. 3.

17. the children of Israel journeyed] Westward. Gilgal was on the coast of Jericho: see v. 6. — Chephirah] Afterwards in the tribe of Benjamin (see xviii. 24. Ezra ii. 25. Neh. vii. 29); now perhaps Kefr yard (Dr. Thomson, p. 533). — Beeroth] Also afterwards in Benjamin (2 Sam. iv. 2); about nine miles north of Jerusalem; now probably Birket. — Kirjath-jearim] City of forests; also called Kirjath-heel (xv. 60); and Baal-jehuda (2 Sam. vii. 2). Assigned to the tribe of Judah (xv. 60; xviii. 14); about ten miles N.W. of Jerusalem.
of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying, 4 Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: 5 for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel. 6 Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it. 

6 And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua 7 to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us. 7 So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour. 8 And the Lord said unto Joshua, 9 Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; 10 there shall not a man of them stand before thee. 9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night. 10 And the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up 11 to Beth-horon, and smote them to 12 Azekah, and unto Makkedah.

11 And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, 12 that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

12 Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered
JOSHUA X. 12.  up Gibeon; 
up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; And thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

LOD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said—Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon, stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.

To this narrative it has been objected—

(1) It is not consistent with what we know of the natural world. The sun does not move, and therefore it is a mere absurdity to command it to stand still; and there is no room for a miracle, in making it do what we choose. If it shall be said that Joshua designed only to say, “Let not the sun set,” and if this miracle was really wrought, then it was effected by a sudden check in the rotation of the Earth—a rotation at the rate of a thousand miles an hour at the equator; and this sudden check would have given a shock to the globe, and to every thing upon it, which must have produced confusion and ruin; and would have extended itself to all parts of the planetary system.

(3) Such a miraculous prolongation of sunlight, accompanied with all such consequences, must have been perceived by all the inhabitants of the earth, and some records would have been preserved of it in the history of other nations.

(4) If the moon had stood still in its course, it would have added another day to the known globe continents.

(5) It is not probable that such power should have been given to Joshua. God never works miracles without adequate cause, and there was no sufficient reason on the present occasion for the destruction of the laws of the Universe. Joshua might have waited till the next day, and have overcome his enemies then.

(6) Lastly, if it be granted that a miracle was wrought upon the sun, why should it have been wrought on the moon also? Would not the light of the sun have sufficed for the purposes of Joshua’s prayer?

First, let us observe, in reply to these objections, that whatever is here done is represented as done by the Lord. Joshua spake unto the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites. And so in other parts of Scripture where reference is made to the miracle: “The Lord shall raise up as in Mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may hide His work, His strange work; and bring to pass His strong act” (Isa. xxxvii. 21). “The sun and moon stood still, at the light of Thine arrows they went, and at the shining of Thy glittering spear. Then didst march through the land in indignation. Thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou didst proceed for the salvation of Thy people, even for salvation with Thine anointed” (Hab. iii. 11-13).

Whatever was here done, was done by the Creator Himself. As to the objections above recited, it must be answered,

(1) If a Copernicus or a Newton had prayed to God “in the presence of all Israel,” and had desired to do what was desired by Joshua to be done, and if they had desired that their prayers should be understood by all Israel, in whose sight they prayed, they could not have used any other language than Joshua did. And if a Copernicus or a Newton had written the history of this miracle, and had intended to be understood by the Hebrew Nation at that time, they would have written in their history which are used in this history. We ourselves, who speak of the sun’s setting and of the sun’s rising, should also speak of the sun’s standing still, if we desired to be understood by those to whom we would convey the idea that the sun’s light was prolonged, and that the effect usually produced by sunset was postponed for an unusual time.

There is no contradiction between physical Science and Scripture here; the contradiction has been alleged, is between Science and an erroneous interpretation of Scripture. There is no inconsistency between the two, when he says here, in recording this miracle, that it stood still, any more than we imply that the sun moves, when we say that it rises and sets every day. Virgil says (Ec. iii. 72), “Provenience fortis, synequie velascens recedunt.” But did he mean to imply that the woods and cities moved? St. Luke says (Acts xx. 27), “εντεύξαντω ο νυχτὸς προσέγνω αὐτὸν τινα χθαρω.” But did he suppose that the land moved towards them? And what was the word here used in the original for “stand still,” is remarkable. It is from damam, to be dumb, mute, silent; and the word is usually applied to the stillness of what is vocal; to the keeping of silence, patient waiting, and resignation; or to the prostration of that which is powerful: see Exod. xx. 16. Lev. x. 3. Job xxii. 21. xxx. 27. Ps. xxx. 7. Jer. viii. 14. The Vulgate, “ove il sol luce,” and Milton, “The sun to me is silent as the moon.” The light of the sun is its voice; and Joshua’s words mean that the light of the Sun and Moon was to be mute.

The rendering of the Vulgate, “ne movatur,” was probably a principal cause of the controversy with Galileo on this text (see his letter, written in 1633, in Tiroboschi Letterat. Italian, viii. p. 175).

(2) But how could the earth’s rapid rotatory motion have been suddenly stopped, as to produce the appearance of the sun standing still? How could this have been done without a sudden shock to the globe and every thing upon it? And, if it had been done, should we not have some tradition of such an extraordinary phenomenon at least among the other nations? To this question it is indeed rightly replied, that the act is represented by the Sacred Writer as the act of God, and that God could have obliterated all such consequences as these. It is a contrivance in its dark to say that what we call physical difficulties stand in the way of the performance of a miracle; for the essence of a miracle is that it implies the performance of something which overcomes what we call physical difficulties.

The omnipotence of God, which could arrest the motion of the earth, could equally obliterate all the effects; nay, such a thing would naturally arise from such a sudden check of the earth’s rotatory motion. God can control Matter, but Matter cannot control God.

Miracles are not contrary to Nature; for Nature is only another word for what God does, Who is the Author of Nature. All that can be said of them is that they are deviations from the usual course of Nature, as far as is known to us. As Augustine well says (de Genesi, ad lit. vi. 19), “Naturarum conditionem Deus nihil in mundum obtulit, nisi quod non est consuecutum, respugnans est rationi. Nolid videntur contra naturam insolita, quibus aliter naturae cursus inmutabat quum Deo, hoc est naturae, quod fecerit.” It is also answered that the histories of other nations are lost, and we have no means of ascertaining whether such a phenomenon was observed by them.

But these answers seem to be hardly relevant. The Sacred Historian appears distinctly to affirm that the miracle was local; the scene of it was, as it were, between the longitude of Gibeon on the east and Ajalon on the west. The words of Joshua seem to intimate this: “Sun, stand thou still (literally, be thou silent) on Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.”

Indeed, this appears to have been required by the very purpose of the miracle.

The miracle was wrought in order to show that Jehovah, the God of Israel, was the only true God; that the gods whom the Canaanites worshipped were false gods and usurpers; that Joshua was the servant of Jehovah; that Israel was His people; and that they were now doing His work in punishing the Canaanites for their sins; and that the victory gained by Joshua, and the inheritance of Canaan acquired by Joshua for Israel, were due to the favour of Jehovah.

The miracle would not have had this peculiar significance, if it had been universal in its extent.

The marvelous darkness over the natural land of Egypt during three days, while the Israelites had light in their dwellings in Goshen (Exod. x. 22, 29), showed that the God of Heaven was angry with Egypt, and favoured Israel; and that the God of Israel was the God of Heaven. And as the pillar of light to Israel, which was a visible token of God’s presence, was not applied when he says here, in recording this miracle, that it stood still, any more than we imply that the sun moves, when we say that it rises and sets every day, Virgil says (Ec. iii. 72), “Provenience fortis, synequie velascens recedunt.” But did he mean to imply that the woods and cities moved? St. Luke says (Acts xx. 27), “εντεύξαντω ο νυχτὸς προσέγνω αὐτὸν τινα χθαρω.” But did he suppose that the land moved towards them? And what was the word here used in the original for “stand still,” is
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

13 And the Sun stood still, and the Moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.

He did not make the sun and moon till the fourth day, in that He alone that is in the Light, and the sun and moon are only channels of light to men; and He gave light to His people Israel without the sun in the wilderness; so He now stayed the shemesh, while He allowed the chasamah to set. He gave solar light without the solar orb, in order that it might be known that He is the Light of the World, and is independent of His creatures, who are all dependent upon Him; and that all nations should worship Him alone Who will shine with light eternal when sun and moon shall be no more; "The sun shall be no more, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. xxi. 23. Isa. lx. 19, 20).

(4) An ingenious illustration of this narrative has been offered in a learned work, entitled "Science and Scripture," by Professor J. R. Young, Lond. 1863, p. 176, who observes that light is not merely an emanation of luminous particles, any more than sound is an emanation of sonorous particles from a sonorous body; in each case a medium of conveyance is necessary; and that the vehicle of light is the luminiferous ether. Suppose now a void had been introduced above the scene of Joshua's operations, then if the vibrations essential to light in the lower region had not been suffered to cease, the light would have been continued to be supplied with its necessary intensity. A temporary separation of the upper and lower portions of the luminous ethereal fluid would have been analogous to the temporary separation of the two portions of aqueous fluid in the miraculous passage of the Red Sea. And the water was held in suspense in both portions in the one miracle, so might the light be held in suspense in the two portions in the other.

(5) But was there adequate cause for such a miracle as this? This question has been already answered in part. Surely there was a reason given for a miraculous intervention, when, by means of it, the nations of Canaan might learn that the God of Israel is the only true God; and might thereby be brought to seek for His pardon by repentance and faith in Him, as Rahab had done. Thus the result of the deed was, that the nation was avenged, and the name of God was glorified; and it was accomplished to the end that Israel might learn, before the Divine Joshua, the battle of Beth-horon, and the destruction of the Kings of Canaan, brought forth from their hiding-place at Makkedah, to which they fled for refuge, were foreshadowings of the final subjection of all hostile powers before the Divine Joshua.

The sun and moon were not created as we have hitherto supposed them, but were brought into existence and put in their places by the Lord in answer to the request of the sun. The Lord is the Creator of the sun and moon, the sun is His poster, the moon His favours, and He will not destroy either. The sun and moon are God's light, and the inhabitants of the earth cannot live without it. (Lk. vii. 17, 18.)

Next to the sun and moon, the sky is the next object of God's care, as we see in the prostration of the sun on the day of the Deluge. The sun is the 'heaven above,' and the moon is the 'earth beneath' (Gen. ii. 1, 2).

The sun and moon are the signposts of the days, the months, and the years. When the sun and moon were put in their places, the days became months, and the months became years. The sun and moon are the measure of time, and without them there would be no measure of time. The sun and moon are the symbol of God's power and majesty, and without them there would be no symbol of God's power and majesty. The sun and moon are the symbol of God's love and favour, and without them there would be no symbol of God's love and favour.

The sun and moon are the symbol of God's power and majesty, and without them there would be no symbol of God's power and majesty. The sun and moon are the symbol of God's love and favour, and without them there would be no symbol of God's love and favour.

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The kings hide themselves in the cave; JOSUA X. 14—24. but are brought out of it.

1. Is not this written in the book of |Jasher?

So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. 14 And there was 'no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for 'the Lord fought for Israel. 15 a And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

16 But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah. 17 And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah. 18 And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them: 19 And stay ye not, but pursue after your enemies, and † smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the Lord your God hath delivered them into your hand. 20 And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they were consumed, that the rest which remained of them entered into fenced cities. 21 And all the people returned to the camp at Makkedah in peace: *none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

22 Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave. 23 And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. 24 And it came to pass, when they brought those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, † put your feet upon the necks of these kings.

— Is not this written in the book of Jasher? That is, the Book of the upright one, or of Israel; called Jashwkhna. Dnt. xxiii. 15; so Arabic, Syriac, and the Aldine and Complutian edition of Sept., to εἰσίδος. Theodore (Qn. 14) has, το εἰσίδος, but this is probably an error of the copyist for το εἰσίδος, or το εἰσίδης; see his Qn. 4 on "Kings." In the Hebrew justerum (Tat., in the Bll., Hymns (Syriac). It is also quoted in 2 Sam. 1. 18, and seems to have been a collection of rhythmical records of the acts of holy men of old, forming together a corporate whole, the ideal true Israel—{the national "Israelite indeed in whom is no guile"—the Jeshurun of God; cf. Dr. Lee on Inspiration, p. 405. Wright in Smith, B. D. i. 952. — in the midst of heaven] Gibeah was on the east of the scene of the battle, and thus the prayer of Joshua seems to have been uttered in the forenoon, and not when the sun was verging to the west, as is supposed by some (see Hippol., Frag. 56).

This circumstance suggests, what indeed is otherwise evident, that Joshua was moved by a special impulse from God Himself to utter this prayer. — a whole day] So that the day was prolonged twelve hours, and thus there would have been on the whole a continuous sunlight of thirty-six hours, viz. twelve hours of natural light, twelve hours of extraordinary light, and twelve hours of natural light again. (Cp. Justin Martyr c. Tryphon. p. 361, cap. 132. Ecles. xvi. 4. "Was not one day as long as two?"

The Day of Judgment is described by Zechariasah in these terms, "It shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord; not day nor night, but it shall come to pass at that evening time it shall be light" (Zech. xiv. 7).

14. there was no day like that before it or after it] That is, up to the time when this book was written. As to the question whether the light was extended to Hezekiah, at his prayer for a greater length of time, see Pfifffer, Dublin, p. 170; and on 2 Kings xx. 11. Josephus (Ant. v. I. 17), referring to this miracle, says that it is recorded "in the writings laid in the Temple," by which he means the Book of Joshua itself, not the Book of Jasher, which was not so preserved.

15. Joshua returned—to Gilgal] This is, as it were, a rapid finishing off of the narrative; and may perhaps be a continuation of the quotation from the Book of Jasher (Keil).

In what follows, the Sacred Writer takes up the thread of the narrative of what took place in the day just described (c. 14), and the story is pursued till the return of Joshua to Gilgal, which is mentioned at the end of this chapter. This practice of "finishing off" a subject, and of afterwards returning to a previous point in the narrative, is common to both Testaments. Cps. on Matt. xx. 29. Luke x. 17; xix. 45; xx. 50.

16. but these five kings fled] i.e. had fled before Joshua returned to Gilgal. Here is a recapitulation like that in ch. ii.: see the foregoing note; and cp. v. 28.

— hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah] See above, v. 16. So at the Great Day "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, will hide themselves in dens and rocks of the mountains, and say to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the Great Day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi. 15—17 (cp. Isa. ii. 19. Amos ii. 1, 3. Luke xxiii. 30).

17. Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave] So the earthly devices, to which the Powers of this world resort for defence against Christ, will one day be their destruction. Their place of refuge will be their prison.

21. Joshua at Makkedah] Where he had set men to guard the cave (v. 18). — none moved his tongue] Cps. Exod. xi. 7. As much as to say that before this time many had moved their tongue; probably in blasphemy against Israel and the God of Israel; as the enemies of Christ are described doing, in Rev. xvi. 10, 11.

24. put your feet upon the necks of these kings] So at the Great Day, all the enemies of Christ will be placed under His feet (Ps. cx. 1. Matt. xxii. 41. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Heb. i. 13). This was the custom of Oriental Conquerors, to tread upon the necks of their subdued enemies; as when Joshua had the five kings as his prisoners he said unto the men of war which went with him, "Come near, put your feet upon the necks of
And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. 25 And Joshua said unto them, “Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight. 26 And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. 27 And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave’s mouth, which remain until this very day.

28 And that day Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, them, and all the souls that were therein; he let none remain: and he did to the king of Makkedah as he did unto the king of Jericho.

29 Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, unto Libnah, and fought against Libnah: 30 And the Lord delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein; he let none remain in it; but did unto the king thereof as he did unto the king of Jericho.

31 And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it: 32 And the Lord delivered Lachish unto the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

33 Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining.

34 And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it, and fought against it: 35 And they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

36 And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron; and they fought against it: 37 And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that were therein.

38 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and fought

He has also thereby taught us the duty, as well as given us the power, to hang our own spiritual Canaanites thereon; “to crucify the flesh with its sinful affections and lusts;” to have the word crucified to us, and ourselves crucified to the world.

28. That day] Here is another return to a previous point in the history (cp. 8. 10).
29. Libnah] Probably at Arak-el-Menshiyeh, between Makkedah (Sameel) on the north, and Lachish (am Lakhis) on the south-west, not far to the west of Eleutheropolis, and north of Eglon (Vandercelle).
31. Lachish] See v. 3.
32. On the second day] Perhaps therefore within the thirty-six hours described above: see on v. 13.
35. Gezer] Perhaps at El Koubah, a little to the south of Eleutheropolis, and east of Eglon and Lachish.
34. Eglon] See v. 3.
38. Debir] A little to the south of Hebron; it was also called Kirjath-sepher, or Book-town (see xv. 15), and Kirjath-sannah (xv. 49).

It has been alleged that there is a discrepancy between
against it: 39 And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that were there; he left none remaining: as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king.

40 So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel 8 commanded.

41 And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea even unto 9 Gaza, 1 and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon. 42 And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, 8 because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel. 43 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

XI. 1 And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard those things,
that he sent to Jobab, king of Madon, and to the king of the Madonians, and to the king of the Madiah. And to the kings that were on the north of the

The last form is that of the present chapter, the form of open Antichristianism against the Lord Himself. This chapter displays the climax of Joshua's history. It represents the several stragglers of the Church.

This chapter may therefore be read in connexion with the divine revelation of the final conflict of Christ against the combined powers of this world, rising up in a league of open aggressions against Him.

If we may use of Dr. Centlivre to use the expression, there is a remarkable catchword which rivets this description to the prophecy in the Apocalypse.

Let us place them side by side—the former as it stands in the Septuagint, the latter as it is found in the twentieth chapter of the Revelation of St. John.

Here then is the mora.

This history represents various forms of opposition to Christ, and of His final victory over them. It prepares us for the conflicts of the last days, and for the triumph by which they will be succeeded.

Whether they who oppose Him be like Jericho, confident of their own strength; or like Ai, repelling His attempts to subdue them; or like the kings of the south, banding together in a league, and making war on His servants; or whether, in fine, they be like the kings of the north, coming forth with countless myriads to the battle against Him; they will all at last be routed. “All kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall do His service” (Ps. lxxi. 11). “The kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of the Lord, and of His Christ” (Rev. xvi. 15).

The words of Origen may be cited here: “The prime mover of this war against Joshua is called Jabin king of Hazor. He gathered the others together against Joshua. Jabin means wisdom or prudence. And what is this wisdom and prudence? That wisdom of which Isaiah speaks, ‘I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent’ (Isa. x. 12, 13).”

In Paradise the serpent is said to have been more wise than the other beasts of the field; and in the Gospel the most illustrious thief is said to have acted wisely (Luke xvi. 8). Hazor is Jabin’s castle, his stronghold. The World is the fortress of the strong man, the Prince of the Power of Earth, who holds his goods in peace till a Stronger than he comes, and takes away his armour, and calls his goods” (Origen, Hom. 14. Matt. xii. 29).

The site of Hazor is described by Josephus (Antt. v. 5. 1) as “above the Semenoch Lake” (which is supposed to be the water of Merom), now called Bakeh-el-Hulah (see on v. 5); it is placed by some topographers at the N.E. of that lake, at Tell-kharabeh (Robinson).

Dr. Thomson supposes it to be further to the south, on a site called Hazara, and he gives some local traditions in support of this opinion (p. 283).

Hazor was afterwards celebrated in the history of Deborah (Judg. iv. 17), and was the metropolis of northern Pales-
The confederate Kings

JOSUA XI. 3–7. encamp at the waters of Merom.

Mountains, and of the plains south of Chinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of Dor on the west, 3 and to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and to the Amorite, and to the Hittite, and to the Perizzite, and to the Jebusite, in the mountains, and to the Hivite under Jericho, in the land of Mizpeth. 4 And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many. 5 And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

6 And the Lord said unto Joshua, 7 Be not afraid because of them: for to-morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire. 7 So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Merom.
and arrived on the fifth day (Joseph., Antit. v. 1. 18), and that he afterwards returned to Gilgal (v. 1. 19). This battle has been thus described by a recent traveller:— 8 And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto Zidôn, and unto Misrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none remaining. 9 And Joshua did unto them as the Lord bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire. 10 And Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms. 11 And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them: there was not † any left to breathe: and he burnt Hazor with fire. 12 And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, and he utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the Lord commanded. 13 But as for the cities that stood still † in their strength, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; that did Joshua burn. 14 And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe. 15 ounded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; † he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.
16. So Joshua took all that land, the hills, and all the south country, and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same; 17 Eben from || the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon: and all their kings he took, and smote them, and slew them. 18 || Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.

19. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save x the Hitites the inhabitants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle. 20 For y it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, z as the Lord commanded Moses.

21. And at that time came Joshua, and cut off | the Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel: Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities. 22 There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in x Gath, e and in Ashdod, there remained.

23. So Joshua took the whole land, d according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel e according to their divisions by their tribes. || And the land rested from war.

XII. 1 Now these are the kings of the land, which the children of Israel smote, and possessed their land on the other side Jordan toward the rising of the sun, f from the river Arnon g unto mount Hermon, and all the plain on the east:

2. e Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and ruled from Aror, which is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon: 3. And g from the plain to the sea of Chinnereth on the east, and unto the sea of the plain, even the salt sea on the east, the way

17. from the mount Halak] rather, from the smooth mountain: cp. xii. 7. The Hebrew word chalak (smooth) enters into words in many western languages, e.g. chak, chal, chike, chak, chalek, chalek, chahal, chasek, chasek, chane. Joshua "took the land," from the white hills, which run south of the Dead Sea, and from the southern limit of the Ghir of Jordan, and the northern of the Arabah; probably the northern ridge of the Azem range of hills with its white shining masses of chalk (Fries, Keil). This was the southern limit of Joshua's conquests.

— Baal-gad] Where Baal was worshipped as God, or deity of Fortune (cp. Gen. xxx. 11). It was called also Beal-hermon (Judg. iii. 2. 1 Chron. v. 23); probably Panias, or Canaan Philippi; now Banias (Ramus, Robinson, Keil).

18. a long time] Literally, many days; about seven years: see xlv. 7—10. Caleb was forty years old when he was sent from Kadesh-barnea to spy the land; after that time he was thirty-eight years in the wilderness; and at the end of the war he was eighty-five years old.

20. if was of the Lord to harden their hearts] After their long resistance to His warnings. This was their punishment: God dealt with them as He had done with Pharaoh: see on Exod. iv. 21.

— he might destroy them utterly] A warning to all who remain obstinate in sin; and who by so doing, "treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God:" see Rom. ii. 5—9. 14. 15. The Jews, who read such histories as these with their eyes fixed only on the letter, and do not regard the spiritual sense of this history, are stimulated by it to cruelty and revenge; but we, who read it with our minds directed to Christ, see here a warning against our own sins, which are the Communions within us; and an exhortation to ourselves to give no quarter to our own corrupt affections, but to destroy them utterly: see Origen, Hom. 15.


— Anab] The name of which is still preserved at a village about nine miles south of Hebron, on the east side of the Wady-el-Khatil, which stretches from Hebron to Beerseba (Robinson).

22. Gaza—Gath—Ashdod] In Philistia, forming a triangle. Ashdod (now Esdod) on the north, on the sea-coast; Gaza (now Gazzeh, or Azzech), one of the oldest cities in the world (see Gen. x. 19), on the south, on the sea-coast; and Gath, in the interior; —its present position has not been determined. Mr. Porter supposes that he has discovered it at Tell-el-Safiah, ten miles N. of Ashdod, about ten miles S. by E. of Ekron; see Dr. Smith's B. D. i. 565.

The first and the last are mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts viii. 29, 30), and the Gospel makes conquests there, and the prophecy was fulfilled, "Philistia, be thou glad of Me" (Ps. lx. 8); see on Acts viii. 27.

23. Joshua gave it for an inheritance] Moses could not do this. It is not the Law, but the Gospel, not Moses, but Jesus, who brings us to our heavenly inheritance, and settles the Land of God in the Canaan of its rest: see on Num. xxxii. 20—33; and Theodoret, Qu. 15; and below, xiii. 8.

— the land rested from war] A vision of the Eternal Peace, the Prince of Peace, our Divine Joshua, when all His enemies will be subdued (Origen).
to Beth-jeshimoth; and from the south, under Ashdoth-pisgah: 
4 And the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of the remnant of the giants, that dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, and reigned in Mount Hermon, and in Salach, and in all Bashan, unto the Geshurites and Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

6 Those did Moses the servant of the Lord and the children of Israel smite, and Moses the servant of the Lord gave it for a possession unto the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

7 And these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel smote on this side Jordan on the west, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon even unto the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir; which Joshua gave unto the tribes of Israel for a possession according to their divisions.

8 In the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains, and in the springs, and in the wilderness, and in the south country; the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: 9 The king of Jericho; 10 The king of Ai, which is beside Beth-el; 11 The king of Jerusalem; one; 12 The king of Hebron, one; 13 The king of Jarmuth, one; 14 The king of Lachish, one; 15 The king of Eglon, one; 16 The king of Gezer, one; 17 The king of Debir, one; 18 The king of Geder, one; 19 The king of Hormah, one; 20 The king of Arad, one; 21 The king of Libnah, one; 22 The king of Adullam, one; 23 The king of Makkedah, one; 24 The king of Beth-el, one; 25 The king of Tappuah, one; 26 The king of Hepher, one; 27 The king of Aphek, one; the king of Jabesh, one; 28 The king of Lasharon, one; 29 The king of Madon, one; 30 The king of Hazor, one; 31 The king of Shimron-meron, one; 32 The king of Achshaph, one; 33 The king of Taanaah, one; 34 The king of Megiddo, one; 35 The king of Kedesh, one; 36 The king of Jokneam of Carmel, one; 37 The king of Dor in the coast of Dor, one; 38 The king of the nations of Gilgal, one; 39 The king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one.

— Beth-jeshimoth] Literally, house of the deserts, i.e. of Moab, at the south end of the Jordan valley.

— Ashdoth-pisgah] springs of Pisgah (Num. xxi. 15, 20; xxvii. 12. Deut. iii. 17). Moses—gave it! That is, he designed for him on a certain condition, but the possession was not actually granted to them by Moses, but by Joshua: see above, on Num. xxxii. 29—33. Deut. iii. 12, 13; and below, xlii. 8.

9 Jericho] On these and other places here mentioned, the reader will best consult references in the margin.

This catalogue begins with the kings of Jericho, Ai, and Jerusalem, and ends with the "kings of the nations" at Gilgal (v. 23), and of Tirzah, the original capital of the ten tribes of Israel (v. 24).

They have been so far the same in the next two chapters, where we have first a description of Joshua's victory over the confederacy headed by Adoni-zedec king of Jerusalem; and next over the league led by Jehin king of Hazor, all of the Gentiles.

It seems to be not only a historical narrative, but also a prophetic representation of Christ's evangelical progress from the waters of Jordan, where He began His ministry, to Galilee of the Nations; and of His ultimate conquest over all the Heathen world (cp. Phil. iii. 20, to chap. xi.).

13. Gedor] perhaps Gedor, in the hill country of Judah (iv. 58); now Jedur (Robinson).

14. Hornah] in Simeon (xix. 4), called also Zephath (Judg. i. 17); perhaps Sephath, to the west of the high plain of Rakah (Wilton, Geog. p. 12).

— Arad] now Tell-Arad, in the Negeb, or south country of Judah (Wilton, Geog. p. 11).


— Heber] also in Judah, near Socheh (I Kings iv. 10).

18. Aphek] also in Judah, not far from Ebenezer (I Sam. iv. 1).


21. Taanach] Given to the Manassites in the territory of Issachar (see xvii. 11), now Taanach, about three miles s.e. of Ledschun.

— Megiddo] now Ledschun: see the foregoing note (Robinson, V'andeleve).

22. Kedesh] in Naphtali (xix. 37; xx. 7. Judg. iv. 6).—Jokneam in Zebulun (xix. 11; xxi. 34), now Tell-Ka'anan, on the east of Wady-el-Milh (Robinson, V'andeleve).

23. The king of the nations of Gilgal] or the king of the Goyim at Gilgal (cp. Josh. x. 12). His seat in his kingdom was perhaps at Jiljiley, in the plain of Sharon, about twenty miles W. of Gerizim (V'andeleve). What is meant by these "nations" is not certain; they may be a proper name, Goyim (see Gen. xiv. 1), of an aboriginal tribe (Grave, B. D. i. 701); or they may be perhaps a miscellaneous aggregate of various tribes, with no specific name (cp. B. D. i. 767), and this opinion seems more in accordance with the corresponding phrase "Galliee of the nations" (Isa. ix. 1. Matt. iv. 15).

24. Tirzah] The residence of the kings of Israel till the time of Ouri (I Kings xiv. 17; xiv. 21), perhaps at Tolema, about four miles north of Sichem, and four east of Samaria.

— all the kings thirty and one] The specification of each king by himself singly in this chapter, and the summing up of all collectively, may be designed to remind the reader of Holy Scripture that each individual particularly, and especially each individual in a place of eminence and responsibility, will be judged by the Divine Joshua; as He Himself says, "Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. xxii. 12); and that this judgment will be universal: cp. above on x. 42.

G 2
Much land remains unpossessed. JOSHUA XIII. 1—10. The inheritance of the tribes.

XIII. 1 Now Joshua 1 was old and stricken in years; and the Lord said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land 2 to be possessed. 3

This is the land that yet remaineth: 4 all the borders of the Philistines, and all 5 Geshuri, 6 7 From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Eknor, northward, which is counted to the Canaanite: 8 five lords of the Philistines; the Gazzathites, and the Ashdothites, the Essholdonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also 9 the Avites: 4 From the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and 10 Mearah that is beside the Sidonians, into Aphek, to the borders of 2 the Amorites: 5 And the land of 3 the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, 1 from Baal-gad under mount Hermon unto the entering into Hamath. 6 All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon unto 7 Misrephoth-maim, and all the Sidonians, them 8 will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only 9 divide thou it by lot unto the Israelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee.

Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh, 8 With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, 9 which Moses gave them, beyond Jordan eastward, even as Moses the servant of the Lord gave them;

9 From Aroer, that is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, 9 and all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon; 10 And all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, unto the

Cu. XIII. 1. Joshua was old and stricken in years] Literally, Joshua waxed old, came into days; cp. Gen. xviii. 11, where the same expression is used of Abraham and Sarah, and Gen. xxiv. 1; and 1 Kings i. 1, where it is applied to David: cp. Luke i. 7, 18. The parallel Greek phrase is applied to Zacharias and Elisabeth. It seems not to be used of any but holy persons, in Scripture: "the days of the wicked are consumed in vanity" (Ps. lxxviii. 33), they are never so well stricken in years.

— and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed! How came this to be the case?

Was it from any lack of zeal and courage in Joshua? or from any failure of God's promise to him? Joshua was a figure of Christ, and how can this be said of Him? Is there any failure in Him? And how is it consistent with what has been said before of Joshua, that "he took the whole land?" xii. 23; cp. xiii. 7, 8.

"Joshua took the whole land:" and yet there remaineth "much to be possessed," that is, to be inherited by Israel. He conquered it; but by reason of their love of ease, and fear of the Anakim, the tribes of Israel did not go forth to occupy it. "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land?" was his question of remonstrance to them (xviii. 3).

This is precisely what has been done by Christ. Christ died for all; the world is His field, and He sent forth sowers to sow the good seed in the whole. But men have slept; and the devil has come and sown tares: see on Matt. xxii. 24—30; 31—46.

Christ has conquered our ghostly enemies. He has purchased an Universal Church with His most precious blood; but we are remiss in our endeavours to convert the heathen to Christ. Christ may well ex post facto with us, as Joshua did with Israel, "How long are ye slack to possess the land?"

Christ has done His part for the universal dissemination of His Gospel, and for the universal diffusion of His Church; but there remaineth much still to be possessed.

In His will and design, His Church was settled in her inheritance at His first Advent, but this has not been accomplished. He is, as it were, "come into days," and it is not yet done—no, nor will it be done fully, till His second Advent. As Origen says: "Multa adhuc superstant, quae videmus nonnulla potius Jesu esse subjecta, Quon sequese est omnium obtinerre. In secundo advente hanc terram multum, que supersecte, obstrictis Jesus; sed beatum illi qui in primo Eius advente obteniunt sunt." (Origen, Hom. 16).

Here then is a divine encouragement to Christian Missions.

2. Geshur] on the south of Phœlia; 1 Sam. xxiv. 8. 11

3. Sihor] Sichor; literally, the dark river, the Rhine or corum, now Wady-el-Arisch, the southern boundary of Canaan toward Egypt; cp. xv. 4—7. Num. xxxiv. 5. — Ebron] now Akib, the northernmost city of Philistia. — Afron] see Ezek. xxv. 15. The word, deriving here, is applied only to the princes of the Philistines (cp. Judg. iii. 3; xvi. 5. 1 Sam. vi. 4)., and signifies literally, an ax; figuratively, that on which the wheel of a city revolves—a prince (Gesen. 590). There is somewhat similar metaphor in the word Cardinals.

— Gazzathites] See xii. 23.

— Essholdonites] now Askulan, on the sea-coast between Gaza and Ashkelon, about ten miles north of the former.

— Avites] cp. Deut. ii. 23.; their position is doubtful.

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border of the children of Ammon; 11 and Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salcah; 12 all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, which reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the giants: 13 for these did Moses smite, and cast them out. 14 Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites: but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

15 And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben inheritance according to their families. 16 And their coast was from Arero, that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, 17 Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon, 18 and Jahaza, and Kidemoth, and Mephaath, 19 and Kirjathaim, and Beth-heshbon, and Zareith-shahar in the mount of the valley, 20 and Beth-peor, and Ashdoth-pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth, which were duke of Sihon, dwelling in the country. 21 Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them. 22 And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border thereof was the Jordan. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben after their families, the cities of their inheritance.

24 And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad, even unto the children of Gad according to their families. 25 And their coast was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aror that is before Rabbah; 26 and from Heshbon unto Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim; and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir; 27 and in the valley, Beth-aram, and Beth-nimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of 28 of Poor; springs of Pisgah, or spur of Pisghah; house of wastes. Beth-poor was over against Jericho (Num. xxiii. 25); Ashdoth-pisga, of Beth-por, on the N.E. shore of the Dead Sea (Num. xxvii. 12). Beth-jeshimoth in the Ghor-el-Seisaban, also X.E. of the Dead Sea; cp. Num. xxvii. 1. 21. Duke of Sihon] Literally, anointed of Sihon, from masac, to pour, to anoint (Gen. 553), or because the power of Sihon flowed from him on those who had a derivative authority under him (Gasset, Keil); they are called kings of Midian in Num. xxxi. 8. 22. Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer] See Num. xxxii. 5; xxiv. 3; xxxi. 8. 23. The word soothsayer, inserted here, is from kasam, and is always used in a bad sense (see Gen. 793); it marks the abuse of the prophetic gift by Balaam, and the consequences of that abuse. 25. Aror that is before Rabbah] Thus distinguished from Aror on the river Arnon. Cp. Judg. xi. 35. 26. Ramath-mizpeh or Ranim-gilead, xx. 8. — Mahanaim] See Gen. xxxii. 2; 3; probably at Makene (Robinson). — Of Debir] or perhaps Lodebar; see 2 Sam. iv. 5; xxiv. 5, and Gen. B. D. ii. 131. 27. The valley of Jordan; the Arabah running from Wady Hasbon, the, of the Dead Sea, up to the Sea of Galilee. — Beth-aram] near Mount Poor, and near the entrance of the Jordan into the Dead Sea; rebuilt by Herod, and called Livias by him, from Livia, the wife of Augustus; now Er Rameh; see Gen. xxxii. 36. — Beth-nimrah] now Nemein; see Gen. xxxii. 36. — Succoth] See Gen. xxxvi. 17. — Zaphon] near the southern extremity of the Sea of Galilee.
of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and his border, even unto the edge of the sea of Chinnereth on the other side Jordan eastward. 23 This is the inheritance of the children of God after their families, the cities, and their villages.

29 And Moses gave inheritance unto the half tribe of Manasseh: and this was the possession of the half tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families. And their coast was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore cities: 31 And half Gilead, and 'Ashtaroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were pertaining unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, even to the one half of the "children of Machir by their families.

32 These are the countries which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan, by Jericho, eastward. 33 But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them.

XIV. 1 And these are the countries which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed: 2 By lot was their inheritance, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes, and for the half tribe. 3 For Moses had given the inheritance of two tribes and an half tribe on the other side Jordan: but unto the Levites he gave none inheritance among them. 4 For the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim: therefore they gave no part unto the Levites in the land, save cities to dwell in, with their suburbs for their cattle and for their substance. 5 As the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did, and they divided the land.

6 Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that go forth and win for Christ: see S. Jerome and Severus, as quoted below, on Acts ii. 18.

1. "By lot was their inheritance." In the prophecy of Jacob on his death-bed (Gen. xlix.), and afterwards in the prophecy of Moses (Deut. xxxii.), Almighty God had given a general intimation of the territory to be assigned to the tribes of Israel; but jealousies might have arisen, and false interpretations might have been propounded, in the application of those prophecies; therefore God required that the territory of each tribe should be determined by lot. And since the result arrived at by means of the lots coincided with the designations uttered many years before by the patriarch Jacob, and also by Moses, here was a practical proof that those utterances of Jacob and Moses, which were thus verified, were inspired by God Himself.

As to the process, in which the distribution by lot was effected, it is supposed by the Rabbis that there were two urns, or vessels, in one of which the names of the tribes were placed, and in the other the names of the regions to be allotted, and that the names of the tribes were drawn out one by one, and the names of the regions simultaneously, one by one; and that the particular region was allotted to that tribe whose name came out concurrently with it.

2. "They divided the land." They distributed it by lot; but the tribes did not go in at once to possess it; and Joshua afterwards expostulated with them for their slowness in this respect (xviii. 3). See above, v. 1.

3. "In Gilgal" near Jericho: see ix. 6; x. 6.

4. 12: "Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite" Caleb is called the Kenezite here and in Num. xxiii. 12, from Kenaz, of the tribe of Judah; a name borne by several members of that tribe of the family of Caleb: see xv. 17. 1 Chron. iv. 13.

Caleb came, not as the head of the tribe of Judah (for that he was not), but to remind Joshua of a special promise made to
Caleb; JOSUA XIV. 7–15.

his inheritance at Hebron.

The Lord spake unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea. 7 Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espout the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. 8 Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the Lord my God. 9 And Moses spake on that day, saying, Surely the land wherein thou seekest to go over to possess unto thee, is an inheritance of strong and faithfulness, in the presence of God. 10 And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. 11 As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. 12 Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake that I should possess it, and which I have long desired. 13 And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. 14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel. 15 And the name of Hebron before was Kiriath-arba; which Arba was a great man among the Anakims. And the land had rest from war.

him by God forty-five years before, which he had treasured in his heart. The word Caleb seems to signify "helpful, expounder" (cp. Genesis 30:8). He was of the tribe of Judah; and in his faithfulness, courage, and vigilance, was he not perhaps a type of the expounders of God’s Word? (Gen. xlix. 9.)

8. my brethren] He speaks gently of the other spies, as St. Paul does of the Jews (Acts xxii. 5, Rom. ix. 3). For the history, see above, Num. xiii. 24–31; xiv. 6–9.

9. Caleb was on that day] In consequence of God’s declaration, “The Lord sware, saying, Caleb the son of Jephunneh, he shall see the land, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children” (Deut. i. 31. 36. cf. Judg. i. 90.)

10. I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day] Therefore the complaint in the song of Moses (Ps. xx. 10), “though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years, yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow,” does not apply to him; an exception was made in his case, on account of his faithfulness.

Compare the case of Moses himself (Deut. xxxiv. 7). The sorrows of old age are due to man’s sin. Caleb is as strong and useful as he was under Moses; Israel is strong both under the Law and under the Gospel, “in utterance and knowledge, in faith and love: the mystery of God, so great and deep.” (1 Pet. i. 25.)

12. Now therefore give me this mountain] Hebron (v. 13), to which Caleb had come when he was sent by Moses; and whence he brought the cluster of grapes from the brook Eshcol; and which the other spies made the people afraid with their report of the men who dwelt there; Caleb said, “Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” (Num. xiii. 22–25. 30). If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land” (Num. xiv. 8).

13. Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb—Hebron] And Caleb expelled thence the three sons of Anak (Judg. i. 50). Joshua blessed Caleb: our Divine Joshua will bless all true believers, and give them their everlasting inheritance.

15. the name of Hebron before was Kiriath-arba] That is before it was assigned to Caleb, it was called Kiriath-arba, from Arba, the great man among the Anakim, who had driven out the original inhabitants, and had called it by his own name; but its primitive name in Abraham’s days was Hebron; and that name was restored by Caleb: see Gen. xxii. 3.

This is the character of the Christian Caleb—to drive out the Anakim and their corrupt innovations, and restore primitive doctrine and the true worship of God.

— the land had rest from war] The Anakim did not dare to rise up against Caleb, who had driven them out (cp. xli. 29).

Caleb’s Inheritance at Hebron.

On this history of Caleb it may be observed:

(1) When others among the Israelites were slack in going in to possess their inheritance, on account of their love of ease, and fear of their enemies (see on xiii. 1, and xviii. 3), Caleb came boldly forward to claim Hebron, although it was then occupied by the sons of Anak.

In the Church militant, the Caleb’s of the Gospel go forth to subdue cities to Christ; such a Christian Caleb was St. Paul. He claims Ephesus for Christ because there are many adversaries there (1 Cor. xvi. 9).

(2) Caleb’s inheritance was at Hebron; the place which he himself had visited when he spied the land, and which occasioned the declaration of his faith and courage in opposition to the spies, with the exception of Joshua (see on v. 12).

At the Great Day, when our Divine Joshua awards his inheritance to each man’s, then “every one will receive the deed doth his body” (2 Cor. iii. 10), and eat the fruit of his month (Prov. xi. 14), and reap what he has sown (Gal. vi. 7). Every Caleb will inherit his own Hebron, and eat the grapes of his own Oshel.

Caleb is therefore an example to all; but especially to the Christian Missionary and Christian Preacher.

(3) Caleb inherited Hebron. He was near Manre, where Abraham built an altar to the Lord (Gen. xxiii. 18); and where he had a visit from the “three men,” who promised him the birth of a son, by Sarah, in a year’s time (Gen. xxvii. 1, 10).

As Caleb, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah were buried in peace in the cave of Machpelah, in faith
**Boundaries and cities of Joshua XV. 1-4.**

**This** then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; even to the border of Edom the wilderness of Zin southward was the uttermost part of the south coast.

And their south border was from the shore of the salt sea, from the bay that looketh southward: and it went out to the south side to Kadesh-barnea, and passed along to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and fetched a compass to Karkaa: From thence it passed toward Azmon, and went out that God would give Canaan to their seed, and in hope of a blessed Resurrection of their bodies from the dead.

Canaan was a Levitical city, and also a City of Refuge.

Hebron was now called El Kkalli, “the Friend,” from Abraham, the friend of God.

Caleb’s courage had doubtless been stimulated on his first visit to Hebron by the local recollections of the faith and hope of the Patriarchs; and now that he is associated with them, he looks forward with them to a heavenly Hebron. He did not grudge a share of his inheritance to the Levites, but gladly welcomed those who ministered in the Sanctuary of God. He knew that the use of health with strength of body and soul. A noble example of indisputable pity! He did not deem it loss to give to God in His ministers. Hebron also became a City of Refuge; and perhaps Caleb may have had some knowledge of the spiritual meaning of these cities. The reminiscence of Caleb’s faith and courage may have stimulated David the king when he was enrothed there; and the Day is coming, when all the holy names, which are associated in the history of Hebron, will be united together in the royal city of the true King of Israel, the Seed of Abraham and David—Jesus Christ, at that blessed time when the land will rest from war for evermore.

**Bounds and Cities of Judah.**

**Preliminary Note to Chapter XV.**
What is the design of the specification of the bounds, and of the enumeration of the names of the cities of Judah?

1. One purpose that it serves, is to show the exact knowledge of the historian, descending to such minute local details. No writer who had not confidence in his own resources, would have ventured to enter on such particulars as these in a document designed to be read by the Hebrew Nation. And if it had not been so, it never would have been received as Holy Scripture by that Nation, as it has been and is to this day. Here then is evidence of truth.

2. The large number of the cities within the narrow limits assigned to Judah—doubtless by blessed local recollections of forty-two miles in length, and fifty in breadth—shows the great population of Canaan at the time of its subjugation by the Israelites, who had not been trained in war; and it is a proof, that this conquest could not have been achieved by mere human means, and is a confirmation of the narrative of the miraculous agency employed in this conquest.

3. Many of the names of these cities are indicative of their strength as fortresses, and are additional proofs of the same thing.

4. Many of the names are significant of the false worship which was practised by the Canaanites, and afford evidence of the justice of the divine sentence upon them.

5. Many of those names are also significant of the fruitful state of the country, and show the goodness of the land given by God to Israel.

6. Others of these names show that the Canaanites were not without literary accomplishments in the days of Joshua (see e. g. 21: 28), and that the conquest of them was not the subjugation of a barbarous population, but of civilized nations.

But we must ascend higher than this.

7. Doubtless this and the following chapters have a spiritual meaning also.

**They speak of the inheritance to be given in this life to the Church militant on earth; and to the Church glorified in the world to come.**

They are designed as incitements to missionary labors in the subjugation of ghostly enemies, and in the extension of Christ’s Church.

The conquest of heathen cities of Canaan by Israel, aided by God, the settlement of the families of their tribes in those cities and lands once desecrated by idolatry, and by all its foul associations, is designed to be an example to Christians; it is intended to stimulate them first in their exertions to eradicate the heathen, who dwell in the Jerusalem of their own hearts (see e. g. 83), and to make the Kirk-judicators of a heathen literature to be ministerial to Christianity, and to convert the Chaos of false worship into Bethels of the Gospel of Christ.

**CIT. XV. 1. (be.) goral, from gur, to turn aside, to sojourn (Genes., pp. 164, 165).**

— **Judah.** The lot of Judah, the royal tribe, the tribe of the Messiah, came out first: cp. Gen. xiv. 8. “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise.”

The Jews (who derive their name from Judah) had the first lot in the Church of Christ; from them came the holy Apostles, as well as Christ Himself.

A special honour is paid to the tribe of Judah, in the description of them, and of the cantica of the Ex. 15: 1—21, and Gen. 48: 1—20, to the “honor of Zion.” The limits of this literature to be ministerial to Christianity, and to convert the Chaos of false worship into Bethels of the Gospel of Christ.

**— border of Edom the wilderness of Zin** where Kadesh-barnea was: cp. Num. xiii. 21.

With regard to the boundaries and cities of Judah, the reader may refer to Yandeved’s Map, and of the boundaries traced, but its cities are specified severally by name in this chapter, and see xviii. 11—28.

But with regard to the other eis-Jordanic tribes, the cities are not mentioned (as in Ephraim and half the tribe of Manas-ses), or cities only, and not the boundaries, as is the case with Simeon and Dan (xix. 1—9. 40—48); or, for the most part, only boundary cities, as in the case of Zehulun, Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali (xix. 10—16. 17—23. 24—31. 32—30).

It is probable, that the territories of these latter tribes were still, in a considerable degree, occupied by Canaanites.

And in a figurative sense this delineation represents the world; some of it only half evangelized, some possessed by heathenism even till the end: see e. g. 89. Cp. xviii. 3, and above, xiii. I.

— families] mischapachoth, from shapach, to spread out (Gen. 519. 844). It would appear therefore that not only those of the same tribe, but also those of the same family, were settled together.

**— wilderness of Zin** low palm-tree; now Wady Murrek. Num. xiii. 21.

3. Malach-acrabbin.] Literally, the going up of scorpions; the chain of white hills running across the Arabah at a distance of eight miles s. of the Dead Sea.

— Kadesh-barenea (see Num. xiii. 30).

— Hezron] enclosed.

— Arad] weak.

— Karkaa] level.

4. Azaen] strong. On the site of these places see Keil on Num. xxxiv. 4.
unto the river of Egypt; and the goings out of that coast were at the sea: this shall be your south coast.

5 And the east border was the salt sea, even unto the end of Jordan.

And their border in the north quarter was from the bay of the sea at the uttermost part of Jordan: 6 And the border went up to Beth-hogla, and passed along by the north of Beth-arabah; and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben: 7 And the border went up toward Debir from the valley of Achor, and so northward, looking toward Gilgal, that is before the going up to Adummim, which is on the south side of the river: and the border passed toward the waters of En-sheshem, and the goings out thereof were at En-rogel:

8 And the border went up by the valley of the son of Hinnom unto the south side of the Jebusite; the same is Jerusalem: and the border went up to the top of the mountain that lieth before the valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end of the valley of the giants northward: 9 And the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border was drawn to Baalah, which is Kirjath-jearim:

10 And the border compassed from Baalah westward unto mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of mount Jearim, which is Chesalon, on the north side, and went down to Beth-shemesh, and passed on to Timnah:

11 And the border went out unto the side of Ekron northward: and the border was drawn to Shicron, and passed along to mount Baalah, and went out unto Jabneel; and the goings out of the border were at the sea.

12 And the west border was to the great sea, and the coast thereof. This is the coast of the children of Judah round about according to their families.

13 And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua, even to the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron. 14 And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the

— at the sea] or to the sea—the Mediterranean.
5. salt sea] the Dead Sea.
6. Beth-hogla] house of partridge; probably Ain Hadschlah, about three miles s.e. of Jericho.
— Beth-arabah] in the wilderness of Judah, v. 61; and afterwards given to Benjamin, xviii. 22; perhaps at Koor Hadschlah, about a mile s.w. of Beth-hogla.
— stone of Jeholan] probably the ridge of hills called Katar Judisch, s. of Koor Hadschelah, and w. of the Dead Sea.
— Gilgal] Supposed by some to be the same as Gelloth in xvii. 17 (Keil); others identify it with the first encampment of Israel, iv. 19 (Kosel).
— Jehovah] l. e. the red, reuforn; on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho (Onomast.); now Kalat-al-Domm.
— the river] rather, the torrent (nabali); probably Wady Kel. En-sheshem] fountain of the sun. Another record of the heathen worship of the heavenly luminaries, as Jericho itself was of the worship of the moon. It is now called the Well of the Apostles: a remarkable change, suggestive of the spiritual change wrought by the true children of Judah in the Canaan of heathenism; it lies about a mile s.e. of Bethany, on the way to Jericho from Jerusalem (Tobler, Vanderbeke).
— En-rogel] fountain of the spy; now, probably, the Well of Joss, or of Nehemiah, on the s.e. of Jerusalem, where the valleys of Beth-humon and Kebron meet, and in the bed of the former. Thomson, p. 658, where it is described.
8. valley of the son of Hinnom] See xviii. 16. Another record of the idolatrous and savage worship of Canaan, whence Christ Himself borrowed the name for Hell. See on Matt. v. 22; and cp. 2 Kings xxiii. 10. 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. Jer. vii. 31.

— of the giants] Rephaim, on the s.w. of Jerusalem (see 2 Sam. v. 18; 22; xxiii. 13). 9. Nephtoah] now Lifshut; about three miles n.w. of Jerusalem (Vanderbeke). mount Ephron] perhaps on the west of Wady Beit Hanina, on the n.w. of Jerusalem. Baalah] or Kirjath-jearim; now Kureyel-el-Enab, nine miles n.w. of Jerusalem; cp. ix. 17, and 1 Sam. vi. 21. 10. mount Seir] n.w. of Bashan. Chesalon] firm confidence: see below, v. 30; now Kesla, s.w. of Bashan. Beth-shemesh] house of the sun; called Ir-sencas, xix. 41 (cp. 1 Sam. vi. 9. 2 Kings xiv. 11. 2 Chron. xxviii. 18); now Ain Sheshes, about fifteen miles w.s.w. of Jerusalem, on the borders of Dan.
12. the great sea] the Mediterranean.
14. Caleb drove thence] Caleb, at the head of his family, see Judg. i. 10. It seems that when Joshua cut off the Anakim whom he found at Hebron (xi. 21), some of them had escaped and afterwards repopulated it (Keil).
It has been questioned whether the narrative here (vv. 14—19) is an anticipation of what took place at a later period, after Joshua's death, and is recorded in Judg. i. 10—15; or the narrative in Judges is a recapitulation. The latter seems the more probable opinion. It is not likely that Caleb would have been slack to enter on the inheritance which he claimed, and which Moses had promised. II
15. Debir] i. e. oracle; south of Hebron.
— Kirjath-Sepher] book-town, πόλις γραμματών; showing the existence of a literature at that time among the Canaanites; perhaps the town was a national sanctuary (Debir, oracle), where the national records were preserved; as the Pentateuch was in the Holy of Holies (Deut. xxxi. 9, 25). Othniel takes Kirjath-sepher, the City of Books, and Caleb gives him his daughter to wife. May we not see here an emblem of the reward promised to those who Christianize heathen literature, and make it ministerial to the Gospel?

17. the brother] Does the word brother agree with Othniel, or with Kenaz? Was Othniel the brother of Caleb or his nephew?

The Vulg. is in favour of the former translation, and so Keil; but the Sept. adopts the latter; and so Syriac, Arabic, and Targum Jonathan (cp. 2 Sam. xiii. 3, 32, with 1 Chron. ii. 13). The same ambiguity occurs in Judg. i. 13; iii. 9. It seems most probable that Othniel was the nephew of Caleb (Pfeiffer, Dublin, p. 176).

18. a field] Called the field in Judg. i. 14; that is, the field which had been given to Othniel when the Book of Judges was written, and which was known to be well supplied with water.

19. and she lighted off her ass] To show reverence for her father; as Rebekah to Isaac (Gen. xxiv. 61), and Abigail to David (1 Sam. xiv. 19). The Sept. here has ἐγκέφαλλα, she snouted, from her ass; and the Vulg. has ισχυρισάσθαι τού σακατός αὐτής; but it can be no doubt that the Authorized Version, which is confirmed by the Syriac, Arabic, and Chal. Targ., is correct. The Hebrew verb šanáth is found only here and in Judg. i. 14 and iv. 21, where it ought to be rendered, "I set down" (cp. Prov. vi. 723).

19. give me also springs of water] On the word here used for spring—gullah, from gallat, ‘volvo’—cp. well, Quelle: see Gesen., pp. 171, 172.

It would seem as if Achsa was more eager for the "springs of water" than Othniel was; and Caleb gave her more than she asked. She said, "Thou hast given me a south land—that is, a hot and thirsty land—give me therefore springs of water for its irrigation." She asked for springs, and he gave her both the upper and the lower springs.

Is this incident introduced as an encouragement to earnestness in prayer for spiritual blessings? We see here the effects of prayer, particularly of women's prayers. Our Lord says, "Ask, and ye shall have" (Matt. vii. 7. Luko xi. 9), and He invites us to pray for springs of spiritual water, when He says to the Woman of Samaria, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water" (John iv. 10, 11).

Caleb gave to his daughter Achsha more than she asked, who showed her reverence for him, as well as her faith in his love. "If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts" (springs of water to fertilize an earthly soil) "unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give good gifts?" (the promised springs of living waters of the Holy Spirit) "to them that ask Him?" (Matt. vii. 11. Luke xxi. 13). For the further history of Othniel, see on Judg. iii. 9—11.

21—32. And the uttermost cities] For an elaborate attempt to identify the cities mentioned in these verses, see Mr. Wilton's Negeb, Part iii. p. 70.

The cities of the Negeb, or "South Land," are here arranged in four groups (cp. below, on v. 38).

— southward] in the Negeb, or southern region of Canaan, from the Arabah at the south end of the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean on the west.

— Kabzeel] perhaps El Kussis, near the southern end of the Dead Sea.

These three verses (vv. 21—23) contain the first group of cities, nine in number. Kebedes, in v. 23, is probably Kadesh-baana; cp. 1 Chron. x. 41.

— Jagur] The Sept. has Asor; and it has been joined by some with the "enclosure of the Kenites" (Wilton).

24. Ziph] The second group of five or six places.

— Beer-sheba] See vii. 121.

25. Hazor, Hadattah] or rather, Chazer Chadatha, i. e. New Hazor; and so Vulg.

— Kerioth, and Hazron] rather, Kerioth Hezron, the towns of Hezron, which is Hazron: see Keil.

The tribe of Judah gave Hazor, the old Canaanitic city, a new name, "Towns of Hezron;" now El Kerveitien; probably they were several towns encircled by the same fortifications (cp. Wilton, p. 102).


— Moladah] afterwards given to Simeon (xix. 2); now El Milh, twenty Roman miles south of Hebron: see Wilton, p. 111.


28. Beer-sheba] See Gen. xxi. 14, 31; xxii. 19. In the days of the Judges and Kings it was on the southern frontier of Israel (Judg. xx. 1. 2 Sam. xvii. 11); now Bir-e-Sheha (cp. Wilton, p. 141).


— Tim, and Azem] or Je Azem (see Wilton, 157); probably El Arjib; Ibid, p. 127.

30. Eltolad] or Tolad (1 Chron. iv. 29); probably near the Wady-el-Toula; near this place "Abraham dwelt, between Kadesh and Shur" (Gen. xx. 1), and dug wells in the adjoining valley of Gcen, Wady-el-Toula (Wilton, p. 179).

— Chezill or Cessil, i. e. pool, with the additional idea of impurity (Gesen., 408); see Ps. xlix. 11; xlviii. 18. Prov. i. 32; xiii. 19. It is from the root casal, to be fat, to be obdilatate and self-confidence (Gesen. 408).
Hormah, 31 And Ziklag, and Madmannah, and Sansannah, 32 And Leboath, and Shilhim, and Ain, and Rimmon: all the cities are twenty and nine, with their villages:

33 And in the valley, Eshton, and Zoreah, and Asma, 34 And Zanoah, and En-gannim, Tappuah, and Enam, 35 Jarmuth, and Adullam, Soco, and Azekah, 36 And Sharaim, and Adithaim, and Gederah, and Jodearith; 37 Or, er., fourteen cities with their villages: Zenan, and Hadashah, and Migdal-gad, 38 And Dilean, and Mizpeh, 40 And Joktheel, 39 Lachish, and Bozkath, and 41 And Gederoth, Beth-

ON CHEZIL.

Chezil, or Chezil, represents a heavenly luminary, supposed to be Orion (see Job ix. 9; xxxviii. 21. Isa. xiii. 10. Amos v. 8); and since Orion was the heavenly representation of Nimrod, the bold and impious rebel against God (Gen. x. 9—10), and was an object of worship to the Canaanites, therefore it seems that Orion, so worshipped, was called Cesil (God, impious) by the Hebrews.

The place here called Cesil was probably celebrated among the Canaanites for the worship of the sun, being one of the names Beth-shemesh, Ev-shemesh, which are records of the sun-worship, which false worship was a snare to Israel: cp. Amos v. 4—6. 8. 26; viii. 14.

This group of Bethel, the place under the name of Bethel here in the Sept., and is probably the same place as is called Bethuel, or Bethuel, in xix. 4 and 1 Chron. iv. 30, where it is mentioned between Elkad and Hormah, as here; and is probably the same place as Bethel in 1 Sam. xxx. 27. This is the Bethel from which the Isaurites occupied possession of it under Joshua, they gave it the name of Cesil in reproach; and converted it to a Bethel, a sanctuary of God. It has been identified with the present El Khelouan, about four miles south of Beerseba (Robinson, Roelands; cp. Thomson, p. 558).

The false worship of the heavenly bodies seems to have lingered there even to the fourth century. S. Jerome (vit. Hilarion, c. 25) states that at Elusa (now El Khelouan) there was a temple of Venus (Astarte), where the Canaanites worshipped Lucifer.

This assignment of Cesil to Judah, and the change of its name to Bethel (house of God), may be compared to the work of the Church of Christ, changing the heathen temples and basilicas of the Roman Empire into Christian churches; and suggests a lesson to every Christian Church, and to every Christian soul, to endeavour to recover to God whatever has been paganized by the World.

Now, "the mighty hunter," the rebel against God, the builder of Babel, was idolized as a brilliant constellation, an Orion, by men; so they who abuse their power, their genius, and their intellect—the Herods and the Voltairets—are often adored as bright luminaries by the world; but in God's sight they are Cherub's; their wisdom and power are folly, and will one day be quenched in darkness for ever.

—Horwich—destruction; originally called Zephath (Judg. i. 17), now Sephitah (see xxi. 14, and Roelands, in Willian's Holy City, p. 485).

The place named Kesil, or Kesilech, about seven miles e, of Sephitah (Roelands; Wilton, 206—209).

—Madmannah—probably the same as Beth-maracoboth (house of carriage) in xix. 5 and 1 Chron. iv. 31; probably a station on the route from Egypt to Wady Gaza, about fifteen miles s.w. of Gaza, at which it branched off in a N.E. direction to Jerusalem; the route still retains the name Sultana, or royal road.

The road on which the Ethiopian nobman was returning when he was overtook by Philip, Acts viii. 20—26 (Willon).

The names, Beth-maracoboth (house of chariots) and Hazarsusim (village of horses), indicate that they were stations of passage (Robinson, Wilton, Keil).

—Sansannah—called Hazarsus (horse village) in xix. 5 and 1 Chron. iv. 31 (see foregoing note), now Wady es Siniah (Robinson, Wilton, Keil).

—Leboath—called also Beth-lebath (house of Giones) in xix. 6, Nah. ii. 12; perhaps El Bethgezah, v. n.e, of Arad (Wilton). It is called Beth-lehri in 1 Chron. iv. 31.

—Shilhim—Supposed by some to be Tell Sherihah, between Gaza and Beerseba (Keil); in xii. 6 it is called Sherahun, and Sharaian in 1 Chron. iv. 31. Mr. Wilton identifies it with El Birein, near Wady es Seram, much further to the south, and far to the west of Bethlehem (p. 223.

—Ain, and Rimmonim, or Ain Rimmon (see xix. 7). fount of the prince of Jacob; probably at Um-er-Romania, about twelve miles north of Beersheba (Robinson, Wilton, Keil). Mr. Wilton observes that this and other similar names show that the valleys and slopes of the Judean hills were favourable to the produce of fruits. Thus we have En-gannim (fount of gardens), Tappuah (apple), Arab (grape), Gath-rimon (pomegranate-press), &c.

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Or, er., fourteen cities with their villages: Zenan, and Hadashah, and Migdal-gad, and Dilean, and Mizpeh, and Joktheel, Lachish, and Bozkath, and Gederoth, Beth-
dagon, and Naamah, and Makkedah; sixteen cities with their villages:
42 Libnah, and Ether, and Ashan, 43 And Jiphtah, and Ashnah, and Nezib,
44 And Keilah, and Achzib, and Mareshah; nine cities with their villages:
45 Ekron, with her towns and her villages: 46 From Ekron even unto the sea,
all that lay near Ashdod, with their cities: 47 Ashdod with her towns and her
villages, Gaza with her towns and her villages, unto the river of Egypt, and
the great sea, and the border thereof:
48 And in the mountains, Shamir, and Jattir, and Socoh, 49 And Dannah,
and Kirjath-sannah, which is Debir, 50 And Anab, and Eshtemoah, and Anim,
51 And Goshen, and Holon, and Gilo; eleven cities with their villages:
52 Arab, and Dumah, and Eshean, 53 And Janum, and Beth-tappuah, and
Aphekah, 54 And Humtah, and Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron, and Zior;
nine cities with their villages: 55 Maon, Carmel, and Ziph, and Juttah,
56 And Jezreel, and Jokdeam, and Zanoah, 57 Cain, Gibeah, and Timnah;
ten cities with their villages: 58 Hallun, Beth-zur, and Gedor, 59 And
Maarah, and Beth-anoth, and Eltekon; six cities with their villages:
60 Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim, and Rabbah; two cities with their
villages:

— Beth-dagon] house of Dagon.
— Naamah] pleasant.
— Makkedah] place of shepherds; see x. 10.
42—44. The third group of nine cities, in the southern
half of the hill country of Judah.
— Libnah] see x. 26.
— Ether] abundance.
— Ashnah] smoke.
43. Jiphtah] he will open.
— Nezib] garrison, or station, whence Nisibis.
44. Keilah] fortress.
— Achzib] deceit (Mic. i. 14); the same as Chezi, Gen.
xxviii. 3; now Kewba, about fifteen miles s.w. of Beit Jibrin.
— Mareshah] chief; head city; between Hebron and Ash-
dod; perhaps Marash, one mile s. of Beit Jibrin.
45—47. Eleventh group of cities on the coast line of
Phoibla; Ekron, uprooting; now Akrik (xii. 3).
47. Ashdod] fortress; now Enfid.
— Gaza] strong; now Gussch (xiii. 3).
48. in the mountains] The Har, or highland region
of Judah, extended between the Shephelah on the west (see v. 33)
and the wilderness of Judah, adjacent to the Dead Sea, on the
east; and it rises in steep hills from the Negeb, and in the
neighborhood of Hebron ascends to a height of 3000 feet above
the level of the sea; and extends northward to Wady Beit
Hamina, above Jerusalem.
It contains many fruitful valleys lying between rugged
chalk cliffs, whose lower declivities are clothed with herbage:
— Shamir] a guard, perhaps Um Skannerah.
— Jattir] eminent, perhaps Attir.
— Socoah] defence; now Shawkelk.
— Kirjath-sannah] perhaps city of palm-branches, called
also Debir, and Kirjath-sopher; see Keil on x. 38.
50. Arab] abounding in grapes, n.s. of Sooch.
— Eshkonah] woman of renown; now Semnah, s. of
Sooch.
— Anim] two fountains; now El Ghweein, 8. of Sooich.
— Gilo] exile; the birthplace of Alithophel (2 Sam. xv.
12).
52. Arab] ambush.
— Dumah] silence.
— Zanoah] deliverance.
— Beth-tappuah] house of apples; now Teffah, five miles
w. of Hebron.
— Aphekah] strength.
54. Ithlud] place of lizards.
— Kirjath-arba] x. 3.
— Zior] smoothness.
55. Maon] habitation; residence of Nebal (1 Sam. xxiii.
21); now Tell Mains, ten miles s.e. of Hebron.
— Carmel] fruitful field; now Koran, n.w. of Masm.
— Ziph] now Zif; five miles n.e. of Hebron (1 Sam. xiii. 14).
— Juttah] from natach, to stretch out; now Jutta, five
miles s. of Hebron.
56. Jezreel] son of God; country of Alaimon (1 Sam.
xxiv. 43); different from the Jezreel in the plain of Esdraelon.
— Jokdeam] possessed of the people.
— Zanoah] noisome.
57. Cain] possession.
— Gibeah] hill.
— Timnah] portion; see Gen. xxxviii. 12.
58. Hallun] trembling; four miles n. of Hebron; still
called by the same name.
— Beth-zur] house of the rock; now Beth Zer, n.w. of
Hallun.
— Gedor] fortified; now Jadur.
— Maarah] barreness.
— Beth-anoth] place of echo.
— Eltekon] God the foundation.
Between verses 59 and 60 the Septuagint inserts eleven
other names of places.
(1) Θεοβ, Tekoa (2 Sam. xiv. 2. Amos i. 1); now
Tekbeh.
(2) 'Εφαθθα ανθγ υριοι Βαλθεγα, Bethlehem; now Beit
Lahm; the city of David, and birthplace of Cesheth; see Gen.
xxix. 19; xlviii. 7. Ruth i. 1; iv. 11. 1 Sam. xvi. 4. Micah
Also Φεθθα, και Αϊραν, και Κόλεα, και Βεθεθ, και Φεθθα,
(or Μαντι, Cod. Alex.), και Καρφ, και Καλνω, και Θεβρ και
Bathay, Cod. Alex.), και Μαινω.
Of these, Phagor is now Faghar, n.w. of Bethlehem.
Alian is Attan, between Bethlehem and Phagor.
Khulan is now Kalonieh, three miles n.w. of Jerusalem,
on the road to Ramleh.
Soreh, perhaps Sorais, ten miles e. of Jerusalem.
Karkar (now Karin, five miles w. of Jerusalem)
Biltiur, now Bittur, s.w. of Jerusalem.
Whether these eleven cities have been added by the
Septuagint without authority, or were really found in the earliest
Manuscript of this Book, is a question which is not easy to determine;
that they were inserted by the Sept. is maintained by Heng-
stenberg, Christol. i. 556. On the other hand it is affirmed
by Keil that they were part of the original text. S. Jerome, in
Mel. v. 50, says, “Uncertainty est et Judae tribu verba multissimis
erisenti; et Christum de tribu Judae ortum concedeunt”, an a
LXX Interpretation sit additis.” It seems most probable
that they are an interpolation: see Masius here, and Buxtorf,
Anterior, pp. 601, 608, 791; and Pfeiffer, Dubis, p. 177.
60. Kirjath-baal] see v. 5; and ix. 17.

61 In the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin, and Seacah, 62 And Nibshan, and the city of Salt, and En-gedi, with six cities, and their villages.

63 As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a the children of Judah could not drive them out: b but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.

XVI. 1 And the lot of the children of Joseph fell from Jordan by Jericho, unto the water of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goeth up from Jericho throughout mount Beth-ether, 2 And goeth out from Beth-ether to Luz, and passeth along unto the borders of Archi to Ataroth, and goeth down westward to the coast of Japhleti, b unto the coast of Beth-horon the nether, and to a Gezer: and the goings out thereof are at the sea.

4 a So the border of the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance.

5 And the border of the children of Ephraim according to their families was thus: even the border of their inheritance on the east side was a Ataroth-addar, to Beth-horon the upper; 6 And the border went out toward the sea to

Lot of Ephraim.

61. In the wilderness] or Midbar; a wild and rugged region which stretched from the northern boundary of Judah along the whole line of the border to the Dead Sea, and to the region of Moab Ziph and Bethlehem on the west.


Middin] measures.

Seacah] enclosure.


Salt] city of Salt] at the s. end of the Dead Sea.


Bethaven] the Jebusite city. and the cliffs on each side are full of natural caves and sepulchres; wild goats still abound there (Thomson, 602).

The Jebusites are not driven out of Jerusalem.

63. As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day, Caleb drove out the Anakim from Hebron (x. 15, 14), and Othniel took the land for his son Caleb (x. 19), but although Joshua had taken Adoni-zedek the king of Jerusalem, and routed the league of kings formed by him against the Gibonites (chap. x.), yet, doubtless through lack of faith and courage in doing the work of God, the men of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem: cp. I. Chron. xiv. 24. But David did drive them out. He who had been crowned king of Judah at Hebron, reigned as king of all Israel and Judah at Jerusalem: 2 Sam. v. 3, 6.

This is the condition of the Visible Church on earth. The World is God's field. He made all things very good; but Satan came and tempted man, and man fell. The World is Christ's field, and He sowed only good seed in it; but man slept, and the thorns and tares grew, and now the tares grow with the wheat till the harvest, which is the end of the world (Matt. xiii. 29). The Jebusites dwell in the Jerusalem of the Visible Church on earth, but the Son of David will come and drive them out, and reign supreme for ever and ever in the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. 21, 22).

So it is with every Christian. In the Jerusalem of the regenerate soul there remain some Jebusites, as long as we live upon earth (see Article IX.), "Vita omnis super terram est;" but at last the Son of David will come and deliver His elect from those enemies against which they struggle, and will reign for ever in their hearts.

It was objected by an English sceptic (Tindal) that the assertion here is inconsistent with Joshua's own declaration (Josh. iii. 10). "The Lord is among you, and He will not fail to drive out before you the Canaanites." (Cp. also Judg. i. 19, where it is said in our version, "Judah could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.") But God's promises presuppose human effort; and it was at last the Son of David who came and did not exert their power to the utmost for destroying the Canaanites, as God had commanded. They ought to have done it; but as they slipped the opportunity, through sloth, or avarice, or distrust of God's power, or other bad principle, they afterwards did not.

It is to be observed here, that Judah afterwards lost some of the cities specified in this chapter; which were taken away from this tribe, and were given to Simeon, "for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them" (xix. 9). Judah had not courage and strength to occupy it. "He that hath the ear, let him hear" (Isa. 61:10), and it shall be taken even by him that was not to have it "(Luke vil. 18).

Here then is a warning for every Christian Church and for every Christian soul.

Ch. XVI. 1. Joseph] Next after Judah; and in a very fruitful and beautiful region (Stanley, Sinai and Palestine, chap. v. p. 229).

Another confirmation of the truth of Jacob's prophecy (Gen. xlvii. 21, 22; xlix. 20): Manasseh and Ephraim being brethren, the half-tribe of Manasseh and the tribe of Ephraim had together one lot, in one region, of which the tribe of Ephraim had the southern part; and Ephraim is placed before Manasseh, another confirmation of the prophecy of Jacob (xlvii. 20).

—fell] out of the urn or vessel in which the lots were. Cp. Acts i. 26. "The lot fell upon Matthias."—unto the water of Jericho] or at the water of Jericho; now the well of the Sallan, a mile to the w. of Bik'a.

—unto the wilderness] or rather, the wildernes; in apposition with the word lot. This was the wilderness of Bethaven, which lay east of Bethel, and stretched between Wady Sawar and Muteb: cp. xviii. 12; and see Vendeeche's Map.

—throughout mount Beth-ether] rather, to the Mount Bethel; that is, to the mountaneous regions so called.

2. from Beth-el] to Luz] that is, from the southern ridge of the mountain district called Bethel, to the town of Luz: see Keil on Gen. xxvii. 19.

—Archæ] of which the site is unknown. David's friend Husain is called the Archite (2 Sam. xxv. 32; xvi. 16). Here is an instance of the minute knowledge of the Sacred Writer. He mentions places as well known, of whose existence we know nothing, except from the cognomen of one of their inhabitants.

—Atarōth] called Ataroth-addr, i.e. crowns of greatness, or of largeness, in xviii. 13; now Atara, two miles s. of Beeroth, or Birah, which is a little to the s.w. of Bethin, or Bethel. Cp. xviii. 25.

Japhletis] freed by the Lord.

—Beth-horon the nether] now Beil or Tabla: see x. 10.

—Gezer] precincts: cp. x. 33.

—En-gedi] at the sea; the Mediterranean.

5. border of—Ephraim] Joshua's own tribe; but he does not make it the limit of his territory, although he had the same right to one as Caleb had (see xiv. 6—15); but he said that the lot was reserved for (xix. 40), A lesson of disinterestedness to governors, civil and ecclesiastical.

—Ataroth-addr, unto Beth-horon] This is a comprehensive expression of what has been already stated in ver. 1—3.

The two Beth-herons were near to each other (x. 10).

6—8. And the border] the northern border of Ephraim.

—toward the sea] i.e. westward.

53

a Gen. 41, 51, & 46, 29, & 48, 18.
b Gen. 50, 23.
c Num. 26, 29, & 32, 29, 60.
d Num. 20, 29—32.
e 1 Chron. 7, 18.
f Num. 26, 31.
g Num. 26, 32.
h Num. 26, 25, & 27, 1, & 36, 5.

6. [Michmethath] hiding-place; not far from Sichem (xvii. 7).—[Taanath-shiloh] Ten miles to the east of Sichem; perhaps Ain Tuna.

7. [Janohah] rest, quiet; now Jannin, ten miles s.e. of Nakliah, or Samaria.

8. [Abaroth] Not the Abaroth-Addar in ch. 2, 5; but situated in the other (Keil).—[Naaraath] handmaidens, damsels; five miles from Jericho (Onom.), probably to the n.e. of it. Cp. 1 Chron. xvii. 28.

9. [Tappuah] apple; called En-tappuah in xviii. 7; probably w. of Shechem.

10. [rivers Kanah] or reed torrent; either Abu Zobarah (Thomson, p. 567) or Nahir el Kasab (Knobel).

11. And the separate cities] rather, and separate cities; that is, besides the collective inheritance of Ephraim in one region, that tribe possessed some cities intermingled with the inheritance of its brother tribe Manasseh; the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute. The Ephraimites allowed themselves to be tempted by worldly interest to disobey God's commands, recorded in Exod. xxiii. 31. Deut. vii. 2. Instead of serving God with all their heart, they desired that others should serve them. And yet they claimed from Joshua a larger inheritance for themselves. Cp. xvii. 14—18; and note above, xv. 63.

There was a remarkable retribution upon them for this covetous spirit. They were infected by the idolatrous spirit of the Canaanites, whom they retained as tributaries among them. They became enslaved by their idolatries. It is remarkable, that many centuries afterwards, the prophet Hosea describes Ephraim as synonymous with covetousness and idolatry (Hos. xii. 7, 8; iv. 15).

Here is an example of that selfish spirit which too often actuates Churches and individuals.

Some Christian States and Christian Churches even make a profit of those sins and lusts of the flesh which they ought to exterminate.

The Church of Rome (it is too well known) has derived a large revenue even from lupamaria; and she receives a vast income from lotteries. She resembles the Ephraimites allowing Canaanites to dwell among them, and receiving a tribute from them. May not the same remark be applied to those who speculate on human vanity and self-conceit, and employ them as instruments for raising money, and think that they are justified in employing such means as these, in order to advance works of piety and charity?

2. [firstborn of Joseph] to wit, for [Machir] the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had [Ephraim] and Baschan.

2. There was also a lot for the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families; for the children of [Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hepher, and for the children of Shamida: these were the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph by their families. But [Zelophehad] the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters: and these are the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. And they came near before [Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes, saying, The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren. Therefore according to the commandment of the Lord he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father. And there fell ten portions to Manasseh, beside the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side Jordan; because the

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Claim of Manasseh and Ephraim. JOSUA XVII. 7–15. Joshua's reply to it.

... daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons: and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.

7. And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethath, that lieth by the border of Zebulun.

7. Asher] probably Zayir, about fourteen miles N.N.E. from Sichem, on the way to Scythopolis.

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8. Now Manasseh had the land of Tappuah: but he did not drive out the inhabitants of Tappuah; because the land of Tappuah belonged to the children of Ephraim; and the coast descended unto the river Kanah, southward of the river: therefore it was Ephraim's, and northward it was Manasseh's; and the sea is his border; and they met together in Asher on the north, and in Issachar on the east. 11. And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher Beth-shean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Endor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, even three countries.

8. And Manasseh had in the West the inhabiting of these cities: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

12. Yet called the children of Manasseh, whom Joshua did not drive out, even those of Beth-shean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Endor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, called the Canaanites to a tribute; but did not utterly drive them out.

14. And the children of Joseph spoke unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people, forasmuch as the Lord hath blessed me hitherto? And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country, and cut out for a large portion for yourselves, in order that they might be enriched thereby.

9. It is an example of that self-idolizing and self-aggrandizing spirit in Nations and in Churches, which seek to extend themselves by colonization and conquest, and even by missionary enterprise, not so much that they may gain kingdoms for Christ, and win subjects to Him, but in order that they may have vassals and tributaries to themselves.

15. It may be worthy of consideration, whether the Sacred Writer in this history does not read a solemn warning to such Nations as England, which publicly and privately derives an immense revenue from her 200 millions of subjects in India, and yet has done little hitherto to bring them into subjection to Christ, from whom all Nations receive their power, and on whom all their happiness depends (Matt. xxviii. 18).

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down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the Ḥittites, if
mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee. 16 And the children of Joseph said,
The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of
the valley have ṣ ṣ chariots of iron, both they who are of Beth-shean and her
towns, and they who are of the valley of Jezreel. 17 And Joshua spake unto
the house of Joseph, even to Ephraim and to Manassesh, saying, Thou art a
great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot only: 18 But
the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and
the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites,
though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.

XVIII. 1 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled

— mount Ephraim[1] stretching from Kirjath-jearim to the
plain of Jezreel.

18. have chariots of iron[2] Though the Ephraimites had said,
"I am a great people," yet they are afraid; and though God
had said, "When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies,
and seest horses and chariots, and a people more than thou, be
not afraid of them, for the Lord thy God is with thee" (Deut.
xv. 1), yet they will not trust Him. The "chariots of iron"
were not wholly made of that metal, but strongly compacted with iron nails and cramps (Wilkinson, Manners of Egypt, l. 142. 318). It has been
supposed by some, who were armed with scythes, Talmud, b. B. d. i. 297; see also, Keil, p. 136.

There are now no carriages in Syria, nor roads for them.
When the wild Arabs of Mohammedan desolations became masters, wheeled vehicles sunk into neglect and contempt (Dr. Thomson).

— valley of Jezreel[4] the plain of Edroned (Judith i. 8); nearly twenty miles long in the E. to W., bounded on the W. by the southern range of Carmel, on the N. by the hills of Galilee, and on the E. by Gilboa and Little Hermon.

For a description of Jezreel, now Zerin, see Thomson, p. 459.

17. thou shalt not have one lot only[5] that is, if thou art, as
then sayest, a strong people, and if thou wert thy strength to cut
go down to thyself in the woody mountain, then its out-
goings shall be thine, and thou wilt drive out the Canaanites,
and so thou wilt acquire to thyself more than one lot by thine
own faith and courage, with the blessing of God. See the Sept., here,
and Vulg., and the Targum of Jonathan, which give this sense.
Do not therefore come to me for aggrandizement, but obey Him, and He will endend thee.

Here is a warning to those who seek glory for themselves
without obedience to God; and who think that they may even
attain an eternal inheritance without using those means of grace
which God has vouchsafed to them, and without listening
to the precepts of the Apostle, "Work out your own salvation with
fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 13); and who do not remember God’s promises in Christ: "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Rom. viii. 37); "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. xv. 57).

The Tabernacle is set up at Shiloh. Ch. XVIII.

A new era in the history opens with this chapter.
Joshua and the children of Israel remove themselves from
Gilgal, and set up the Tabernacle at Shiloh, and encamp there.
This was nearly the central point of their wilderness sojourn; and its
name means Peace-maker, or Peace: see above, on Gen. xlix. 10.
From this point Joshua begins the work of settling the tribes
who had not yet received their inheritance; and at Shiloh this work was finished, and all the land is divided.
The order, in which the twelve tribes received their inherit-
ance, is remarkable.

(1) Two tribes and a half (i.e. Reuben, Gad, and Manas-
seh) received a portion of inheritance on the east side of the
Jordan, and there were allotted to them the inheritance of the
Gentiles, and of the land of Ammon, Moab, and Syria: these tribes were allotted to them at Shiloh.

(2) The other five tribes were allotted to them at Gilgal.

(3) There remaineth seven without any inheritance assigned
to them. This assignment now is made at Shiloh; and so all
the land of Canaan is allotted, and all Israel is settled in its
inheritance.

These remarkable events have doubtless a typical signifi-
cance, and are foreshadowings of analogous events in the history
of the tribes of the spiritual Israel, that is, of the Church of
Christ Universal.

What do they prefigure?
If a conjecture may be offered on this subject, the fol-
oowing solution is submitted to the reader’s consideration:
(1) According to the ancient Christian Expositors, the two
tribes and a half (Reuben, Gad, and half Manassesh) whose
inheritance was designated by Moses, not in Canaan but on the
east of the Jordan, and was afterwards given them by Joshua
(xiii. 8. 32), represented the Pre-Apostolick Church; that is,
they typified the faithful Israelites who lived under the Law,
but could not be perfected thereby, and who receive their in-
heritance from Jesus under the Gospel (see above, notes on
Num. xxxvi. 6—33. Josh. xiii. 8—32).

(2) Judah, Ephraim, and the other half-tribe of Manassesh,
who were next settled in their lot, while the Tabernacle was in
transition at Gilgal, represented the Jewish Church, which was
appointed the inheritance under the Gospel, but before
Christianity was extended to the Gentiles.

(3) The Seven tribes (the number of competition) which
now receive their inheritance at Shiloh, and which fill up
the whole land, represent the fulness of the Gentiles, who began
to be evangelized when the Church attained its consummation.
This consummation was inaugurated by the ordination of St.
Paul and Barnabas at Antioch to the Apostleship of the Gentiles
(see below, on Acts xii. 1—9); and it is ever in course of at-
tention by the Church of Missionary labour in all lands.

When the Gentiles were brought in, the Church came
to Shiloh; it came to the true Peace-maker and to the true Peace.
For then, as St. Paul says, “Christ, who is our Peace, made both
one,” that is, He joined, in one mystical Body, the true Church of
the Gentile and the Jew; and He “brake down the middle wall of partition
between them, and made of twain one new man, preaching
peace to them which were afar off, and to them which were at home” (Eph. ii. 14—17. Is. lvii. 19. Micah v. 6. Zech. ix. 10).

There is something very impressive in the words here
used (v. 1), “The whole congregation of Israel assembled
together at Shiloh; they set up (literally) the tabernacle of
the congregation (or rather of meeting, i.e. with God) there.
And the land was subdued before them.”

Here was a pledge of the complete settlement and universal
extension of the tribes throughout the Land of Promise. They
all assembled together; and they assembled at Shiloh, and they
fixed the Tabernacle there.

It was a happy coincidence, that the place, where first the
Hebrew Church was fixed, was called Shiloh. For this was also
the tabernacle of the congregation, and the place wherein the
name of the congregation was set forth (see Gen. xlix. 10); and this identity of name foreshadowed the
unity of Christ and His Church.

The land was subdued before them. In the extension of the
Gospel to the Gentile, all the tribes of the family of man
(see Gen. xlix. 10); and this identity of name foreshadowed the
unity of Christ and His Church.

The “two tribes of Israel” represented the whole
Church of God holding the faith of the twelve Apostles, the
twelve Christian Patriarchs; and the settlement of the twelve tribes represented the settlement of the Church militant on earth, and the perpetuity of the Church triumphant in heaven. This is evident from the language of the Apocalypse: see below, on Rev. vii. 4—8.

The seven tribes which were settled from Shiloh, when the Tabernacle was fixed, represented the fulness of the Church Universal, extending itself by the preaching of the Gospel to the whole world. Let us observe that the work of the settling these seven tribes in Canaan began and ended in a remarkable manner.

The first two of these seven tribes that were settled, Benjamin and Joseph, were settled in the proximity to Judah. Benjamin had Jerusalem itself within its limits.

In like manner the Christian Church, when settled by the reception of the Gentiles within it (especially by the ministry of the Apostles of the tribe of Benjamin, who was "a Hebrew of the Hebrews"), did not lose Jerusalem—it was not severed from the Law and the Prophets. No, it was the true heir of the "promises made to the fathers;" for Christ is the Seed of Abraham, He is "the end of the Law," and all who believe and are baptized are "Israelites indeed," gentile Jews, citizens of the true Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all (see Gal. iv. 26).

Simeon, the second of these seven tribes, had its part within the limits of Judah. Simeon had before been disinherited (Gen. xlix. 5—7); so the Gentile world was. But Simeon is now admitted to share with Judah (xix. 1). Simeon is like the Gentile wild olive-tree, which is grafted into the true olive, and partakes of its fruitfulness (Rom. xi. 17).

Next followed four tribes which are settled far off from Judah—Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali—showing the extension of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Last comes Ephraim, who has an inheritance near Judah and partly in Judah, foreshowing the union of Gentiles and Jews in the last days of the Gospel, when the Jews will be converted to Christ (see xix. 40).

It has been already remarked that the first tribe settled by lot at Shiloh was the tribe of Benjamin; the tribe of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul.

When this had been done, then the trans-Jordanic tribes—Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh—were settled in their inheritance, which had already been designated by Moses. For "when the Tabernacle is first erected in Israel, it will be moved (Rom. xvi. 25, 26), and then will be the end.

CH. XVIII. I. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together. A happy aspect of the settlement of all the tribes now to be completed, and of its spiritual antitype, the diffusion of the Universal Church. See the Preliminary Note to this chapter; the Sept. has ἡ οἰκονομία αὐτῶν here.


— at Shiloh] peace, or peacemaker (see Gen. 818, and above on Gen. xlix. 10); expressive of the rest to which Israel had come after its Exodus and Wanderings, and a shadow of that "rest which remaineth to the people of God" (Heb. iv. 9). Shiloh was twenty miles N. of Sichem, and about twenty N. of Jerusalem, and is now called Seilun.

The Tabernacle remained at Shiloh (Judg. xxi. 12. 1 Sam. i. 3; iii. 3) till the Ark fell into the hands of the Philistines, in the days of Eli (1 Sam. iv. 11). Afterwards we hear of the Tabernacle at Nob, in the tribe of Benjamin, in the days of Saul (1 Sam. xxi. 1; xxiv. 11), and at Gibeon at the beginning of Solomon’s reign (1 Kings iii. 4. 2 Chron. i. 3), and God is Vol. II. Part I. 3. and page 57.
The seven lots for the
JOSHUA XVIII. 7—20. other seven tribes—Benjamin.

I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. 7 But the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance: b and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.

8 And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh. 9 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. 10 And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.

11 And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.

12 And their border on the north side was from Jordan; and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north side, and went up through the mountains westward; and the goings out thereof were at the wilderness of Beth-aven. 13 And the border went over from thence toward Luz, to the side of Luz, which is Beth-el, southward; and the border descended to Ataroth-adar, near the hill that lieth on the south side of the nether Beth-horon.

14 And the border was drawn thence, and compassed the corner of the sea southward, from the hill that lieth before Beth-horon southward; and the goings out thereof were at Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim, a city of the children of Judah: this was the west quarter.

15 And the south quarter was from the end of Kirjath-jearim, and the border went out on the west, and went out to the well of waters of Nephtoah: 16 And the border came down to the end of the mountain that lieth before the valley of the son of Hinnom, and which is in the valley of the giants on the north, and descended to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of Jebusi on the south, and descended to En-rogel, 17 And was drawn from the north, and went forth to En-shemes, and went forth toward Geliloth, which is over against the going up of Adummim, and descended to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben, 18 And passed along toward the side over against Arabah northward, and went down unto Arabah: 19 And the border passed along to the side of Beth-hoglah northward: and the outgoings of the border were at the nether bay of the salt sea at the south end of Jordan: this was the south coast.

20 And Jordan was the border of it on the east side. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the coasts thereof round about, according to their families.

9. the host] the camp.
11. Benjamin] Placed by Divine providence next to his brother Joseph. Benjamin, the tribe of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, who was typified in a special manner by the Patriarch Benjamin: see above on Gen. xxxv. 18; xlv. 14; xlix. 27; below, Acts ix. 1. 1 Cor. xv. 8.

The missionary work of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, appears to be represented in the inheritance of Benjamin: it combines Jericho, the city of the world, with Jerusalem, the city of God (cf. 21, 25). Benjamin is near Judah; the extension of the Gospel to the Gentiles, by St. Paul's ministry, and that of others in the primitive Church, was not a work of falling away from Jerusalem and the Law, but a work of love to Jerusalem, a work fulfilling the Law and the Prophets. Benjamin therefore has Jerusalem; for St. Paul and all his Christian disciples are the true Israelites, the sons of faithful Abraham, the citizens of the true Jerusalem, whose maker and builder is God, and which is the mother of us all: see Gal. iii. 26—29; iv. 26; and above, Preliminary Note to this chapter.

It may not be unworthy of remark, that the towns of Benjamin are fourteen (v. 28), coinciding in number with the Epistles of St. Paul.


15—19, the south quarter] or border, went from Kirjath-jearim to Nephtoah, now Lydda, and coincided with the northern boundary of Judah: cp. xv. 5—9.
21 Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their families were Jericho, and Beth-hoglah, and the valley of Keziz, 22 And Beth-arabah, and Zemaraim, and Beth-el, 23 And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrah, 24 And Chephar-haammonai, and Ophni, and Gaba; twelve cities with their villages: 25 Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth, 26 And Mizpeh, and Chephirah, and Mozah, 27 And Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taalah, 28 And Zelah, Eleph, and *Jebusi, which is Jerusalem, Gibeah, and Kirjath; fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

XIX. 1 And the second lot came forth to Simeon, even for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: a and their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah. 2 And b they had in their inheritance Beer-sheba, and Sheba, and Moladah, 3 And Hazar-shual, and Balah, and Azem, 4 And Eltolad, and Bethul, and Hormah, 5 And Ziklag, and Beth-marcaboth, and Hazar-susah, 6 And Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhen; thirteen cities and their villages: 7 Ain, Remmon, and Ether, and Ashan; four cities and their villages: 8 And all the villages that were round about these cities to Baalath-beer, Ramath of the south. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. 9 Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the inheritance of the children of Simeon for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them: c therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them.

10 And the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun according to their families: and the border of their inheritance was unto Sarid: d and their
border went up toward the sea, and Maralah, and reached to Dabbasbeth, and reached to the river that is "before Jokneam; 12 And turned from Sarid eastward toward the sunrising unto the border of Chisloth-tabor, and then goeth out to Daberath, and goeth up to Japhia, 13 And from thence passeth on along the east to Gittah-hepher, to Ittah-kazin, and goeth out to Remmon-\|methoar to Neah; 14 And the border compasseth it on the north side to Hamanath: and the outgoings thereof are in the valley of Jiphthah-el:

15 And Kattath, and Nahallal, and Shimren, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem: twelve cities with their villages. 16 This is the inheritance of the children of Zebulum according to their families, these cities with their villages.

17 And the fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their families. 18 And their border was toward Jezerel, and Chesolith, and Shunem, 19 And Haphraim, and Shilon, and Anaharath,

20 And Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abiz, 21 And Remeth, and En-gammim, and En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez; 22 And the coast reacheth to Tabor, and Shahazimah, and Beth-shehem; and the outgoings of their border were at Jordan: sixteen cities with their villages. 23 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.

24 And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families. 25 And their border was Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and Achshaph, 26 And Alummim, and Amad, and Mishal; and reacheth to

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11. Maralah] place of shaking; perhaps from an earthquake.
—— Dabbathesh] camel’s bough; perhaps from dabash, to be soft, round; cp. Isa. xxx. 6. Genen. 159.
—— the river] probably Kishion.
12. Chisloth-tabor] reliances; Thabor, i.e. fortresses; now Keel, or Kezlan, on a rocky eminence at the w. of Thabor.
—— Daberath] sheepwalk; now Deburch, on the w. of Thabor.
—— Japhia] bright, shining; now Khejfe, on the sea-coast.
—— Gittah-hepher] well of Gath; the birthplace of the prophet Jonah (2 Kings xiv. 25); now Mefesh, where the prophet’s grave is shown, four miles N. of Nazareth.
—— Ittah-kazin] season of the judge.
—— Remmon-methoar] rather, Rimmon reaching to, or drawn to; methoar is not a proper name, but the participle of taar, to stretch (see note on 1 Kings vi. 26). On the site of Remmon, see Thomson, p. 426, who places it at Rumanneh.
—— Yeal] wandering.
14. Hannahath] free gift. An expressive name for a city in Zebulum, a figure of the Gentile Church; perhaps it is the same as Cana of Galilee, the country of Nathanael, the scene of our Lord’s first miracle (John ii. 1. 11; iv. 46; xxi. 2); now Kana el Jelil (Keil). Cp. Thomson, p. 425.
—— Jiphthah-el] God will open. Another expressive name for a city in a heathen land, where a “door is opened to the Gentiles” by God (Acts xiv. 27). Now Joful, seven miles N. of Saourieh; it is supposed by some (e.g. Keil) to be the same as Iotapata, celebrated in the personal history of Josephus (B. ii. 7. 9). Cp. Thomson, 425. 427.
15. Kattath] small; probably the same as Kitron (Judg. i. 30).
—— Nahallal] pasture; perhaps Maalath, s.w. of Nazareth (Sevarets).
—— Shinaron] guardian; perhaps now Soumich: xi. 1.
—— Idalah] perhaps Gala.
—— Beth-lehem] house of bread. Still retains its name in a village n. of Jala and Soumich.
—— twelve cities] It is not easy to decide how these cities are enumerated. In xii. 34 two other cities are mentioned which are not named here; the sum of the “cities with their villages” is specified, but it is not therefore to be concluded that all the “cities” are named, or that all the places, mentioned as lying on the borders, were included in Zebulum.
17. Issachar] bounded by Zebulum on the N., by Jordan on the e., and by Manasseh on the s. and w. It contained the noble plain of Esdraelon on the w.; and comprised within itself Jezerel, Tanach, Megiddo, Enod, Mount Gilboa, and Shunem.
18. Jezerel] See xvii. 16. The summer residence of Ahab and his family (1 Kings xvii. 45); now Nazia.
—— Shunem] two resting-places; four miles N. of Jezerel (see 1 Sam. xxviii. 4. 2 Kings iv. 5); now Salum... May there be a reference in its name to the “two burdens” in Jacob’s prophecy? (Gen. xlix. 14.)
19. Haphrains] two wells; perhaps Afula, w. of Salem, and five miles N. of Lodja (Keil); Dr. Thomson (p. 323) places it at Sheferani.
—— Shikon] destruction; near Mount Tabir.
—— Anaharath] roaring; perhaps at Naassah (Knobel), or Aruach (Robinson).
20. Bethlehem] greatness; perhaps Arubonb, s. of Gilboa.
—— Kishion] rough.
—— Abiz] The site is unknown, as is the case with many of the cities here mentioned. So it is with many of the Gentile Churches, once celebrated for their piety and good works. Their sites are unknown to us, but they are written in the book of God’s remembrance; they are well known to Him; and at the Great Day their deeds will be rewarded, and they will be glorious for ever.
—— Eu-haddah] front of speed, from its rapid flowing forth.
—— Beth-pazzez] house of dispersion.
22. Tabir] stone-quarry, or lofty place (Genen); the city situated on the hill of that name.
—— Shabazimah] lofty.
—— Beth-shehem] house of the sun.
23. Ashkelon] On the Mediterranean Sea, from Carmel to Sidon; and bounded on the e. by Zebulum and Naphtali.
25. Helkath] portion; now perhaps Jelka, seven miles e. of Akko.
—— Hali] polished, ornament; now perhaps Jule, between Jorka and Akka.
—— Beten] center.
—— Achshaph] enchantment; near Wady Malek, which runs into the Kishon.
26. Amad] probably from amad, to stand firm.
—— Mishal] prayer; perhaps Masen, on the sea-coast near Carmel.
The lot of Naphtali. JOSHUA XIX. 27—41.

Carmel westward, and to Shihor-libnath; 27 And turneth toward the sunrising to Beth-dagon, and reacheth to Zebulun, and to the valley of Jiphthah-el toward the north side of Beth-emek, and Neiel, and goeth out to Cabul on the left hand, 28 And Hebron, and Rehob, and Hammon, and Kanah, 4 even unto great Zidon; 29 And then the coast turneth to Ramah, and to the strong city Tyre; and the coast turneth to Hosah; and the outgoings thereof are at the sea from the coast to * Achzib:

30 Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob: twenty and two cities with their villages. 31 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.

32 The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, even for the children of Naphtali according to their families. 33 And their coast was from Heleph, from Allon to Zaanannim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum; and the outgoings thereof were at Jordan: 34 And then the coast turneth westward to Aznoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok, and reacheth to Zebulun on the south side, and reacheth to Asher on the west side, and to Judah upon Jordan toward the sunrising.

35 And the fenced cities are Ziddim, Zer, and Hammath, Rakkath, and Chimnereth, 36 And Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor, 37 And Kedesh, and Edrei, and En-hazor, 38 And Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh; nineteen cities with their villages. 39 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, their cities and their villages.

40 And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. 41 And the coast of their inheritance was Zorah,
and Eshtaol, and Ir-shemesh, 42 And I Shaalahbin, and Ajalon, and Jethlah, 43 And Elon, and Thimmathah, and Ekron, 44 And Eltekeh, and Gibbethon, and Baalah, 45 And Jehud, and Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon, 46 And Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, with the border || before || Japho. 47 And the coast of the children of Dan went out too little for them: therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father. 48 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.

When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them: 50 According to the word of the Lord they gave him the city which he asked, even "Thimnath-serah in mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein.

Thimnath-serah means a portion that is over, and an abundant portion. It remained over and above the other portions of Israel, and it was regarded as an abundant portion by him. He was satisfied with it; he was content to live and die in it.

There is a notable example of dishableness shown by Rulers, civil and ecclesiastical (Theodoret, Qu. 18). Joshua was the successor of Moses, and led Israel into the Land of Promise, and overthrew the kings of Canaan, and gave an inheritance to Judah and to Ephraim, and to Caleb himself. Joshua sent the three men to describe the land in a book, and to return to him; Joshua cast lots for all; and made himself to be the last of all. Why was this? Why asks Origens did he desire to be last? In order that he might be first (see Matt. xx. 27); and he did not give himself an inheritance, but he received it from the people. "The greater thou art, the more humble thyself, and thou shalt find favour of the Lord" (Ezech. iii. 18). "Aceptest pieturriculum a populo populi Dux," and he built there a palace for himself.

But, as Origens adds, there is something here more than this—Joshua was a figure of Christ. Joshua showed in a figure the might and valour and victories of Christ; and Joshua showed also, as in a figure, the meekness of Christ, who says, Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart (Matt. xi. 29), and who had not where to lay His head (Matt. viii. 20). Cp. Theodoret, Qu. 18. Jesus Christ, who was rich above all earthly riches, became poor for our sakes, that we by His example might be rich (2 Cor. viii. 9). We that are strong (says the Apostle), ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification, for even Christ pleased not Himself (Rom. xv. 1–9). He came into the world to procure for us an eternal inheritance in the heavenly Canaan, and to settle us for ever there (Eph. i. 11. 18. Heb. ix. 15. 1 Pet. i. 4); and when He had purchased this inheritance with His own blood, He saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied (Is. lii. 11). He received a Thimnath-serah—an abundant possession. It might seem poor and mean in the sight of man; and so it was, as far as earth is concerned; but as Joshua, who was buried in his own land, Thimnath-serah, has entered into a blessed inheritance in the heavenly Canaan, so it is with our Joshua. Because he was obedient unto death, even unto the death of the Cross, therefore God has highly exalted Him, and has given Him the name (vii evouna, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow (Phil. ii. 10, 11).

But further: observe here that Joshua receives an inheritance from the children of Israel, and comes and builds an abode for himself, and dwells there. Does not this mean (as Origens suggests), that we are to be obedient to our part, and that Jesus desires to receive a place within us, and that He will deign to come and make His abode with us? See John xiv. 23, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make His abode with him." He says to us, "Give Me thy heart."" Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he will sup with Me" (Rev. iii. 20). Does not our Jesus deign to receive a Thimnath-sera for Himself in the heart of all true Israelites, specially at His own Table, in the Communion of his own Body and Blood?"
51. These are, the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, divided for an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. So they made an end of dividing the country.

XX. 1 The Lord also speak unto Joshua, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying, 

Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I speak unto you by the hand of Moses: 3 That the slayer that killeth any person mawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. 

And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforehand.

And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and Shechem in mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah.

And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the hill country of Judah.

The Cities of Refuge.

CH. XX.] After the completion of the settlement of all the tribes by the allotment at Shiloh, God (speaking probably from the Oracle in the Tabernacle), by a direct command to Joshua, orders the appointment of the Cities of Refuge.

God had commanded Israel by Moses in the plains of Moab, that when they had crossed the Jordan into Canaan, they should appoint cities to be cities of refuge; six cities, three on one side of Jordan, and three on the other: see Num. xxxv. 9-15.

This command is now executed by Joshua (v. 6-9). Here is another proof of the harmony between the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua. The one confirms the veracity and genuineness of the other. Cp. above, on the history of the altar at Shechem, viii. 30—35.

The legal, historical, and geographical details of this provision of Cities of Refuge have been already considered: see above on Num. xxxv. 6—25.

The great spiritual truth proclaimed thereby to the Church Universal was—that the one great doctrine to be preached to all nations, as the true Refuge of the soul of the sinner, and as his true restorative, is the doctrine of Christ crucified: see on Num. xxxv. 25-28.

It may now also be remarked, that the provision of Cities of Refuge, so situated as to be accessible to all the inhabitants of all the tribes of Israel (see v. 7, 9), representing the Church Universal even to the end of time, was immediately consequent, as we see in this chapter, on the setting up of the Tabernacle at Shiloh, the City of Peace, and on the distribution of the Land of Canaan to the tribes of Israel.

This then is the sum and substance of the "Everlasting Gospel" (Rev. xiv. 6), which is to be preached to all nations of the world, that "in Christ Jesus, they who were sometimes far off, have been brought nigh by the blood of the covenant" (Eph. ii. 13), and that in Him we have a strong consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us (Heb. vi. 18).

1. They appointed. Literally, they sanctified, a word which suggests the spiritual meaning of these cities of refuge; they were set apart for holy use, for religious intercourse with God's Ministers, who were domiciled in them; and for meditation on the Divine promises of the true refuge in Christ, whose Death was prefigured by them.

— Kedesh] See xii. 22. One of these three cities was in the north; one in the centre; and the third in the south; so that all might have easy access to one or other of them: see on Num. xxxiv. 14.

Kedesh was near the scene of Joshua's great victory over the confederate kings of the north, which was a figure of the final triumph of Christ: see above on chap. xi.

— Galilee] Heb. Galli, literally, a wheel, or circle, from galiil, to roll, hence a region; cp. the word gilead, xxvii. 10, 11. This etymology confirms the conjecture offered on Deut. xi. 30, that the meaning of the cognate word gilgal there, is a region, properly, a circular area. Cp. Forest, Concordance, p. 258.

Shechem] where God first appeared to Abraham in Canaan, and where he built his first altar; and where Jacob built an altar; and where Joshua read the Book of the Law to the people, and pronounced the blessings and the cursings; and where afterwards Christ declared Himself the Messiah to the women of Samaria. Shechem is also thus described, may be regarded as showing forth God's blessings in Christ to all nations: see above on Gen. xii. 6; and Josh. viii. 30—35.

— Hebron] What Shechem was to all the World, that Hebron was specially to the faithful Jew: see above on Gen. xii. 6. Josh. xiv. 9—14. There is one and the same refuge both to Jew and Greek: see Acts iv. 12. Gal. iii. 23.

8. On the other side Jordan] See Num. xxxiv. 14. As has been already observed (see Num. xxxii. 20—33; and Prelim. Note above on chap. xvii.), the two and a half trans-jordanic tribes (Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh) represented, in a spiritual sense, the faithful Jews who lived under the Law; and in a spiritual sense, this appointment of cities of refuge among them, may be interpreted by the blood of the truth, that there was but one and the same refuge for all, whether before or after the Gospel,—namely, the Death of Christ. Abraham believed in Christ, who was to come; we believe in Christ, who is come. "Tempora mutantur, non varietas fidelis."
the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

9 These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unwares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

XXI. 1 Then came near the heads of the fathers of the Levites unto Eleazar the priest, and unto Joshua the son of Nun, and unto the heads of the fathers of the tribes of Israel; 2 And they spake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, The Lord commanded by the hand of Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle.

And the children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the commandment of the Lord, these cities and their suburbs.

4 And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites; and the children of Aaron the priest, which were of the Levites, had by lot out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities.

5 And the rest of the children of Kohath had by lot out of the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the tribe of Dan, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh, ten cities.

6 And the children of Gershon had by lot out of the families of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

7 The children of Merari by their families had out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

APPPOINTMENT OF CITIES FOR THE PRIESTS AND LEVITES.

Ch. XXI.] After the settlement of the Twelve Tribes in their inheritances, and after the appointment of the Cities of Refuge, certain cities are taken out of the inheritances of the tribes, and are given to the Priests and Levites.

The design of this appointment was that the knowledge of True Religion should be diffused and maintained among all the Tribes. The Priests and Levites were to be like holy leaven leavening the whole nation.

Here is a divine command, that the truth of God, as now revealed in the Gospel, should be spread throughout all the world, by the planting of a settled Ministry in every region of the globe; and the provision of the same form of Church government and sacred ministry for all the tribes, confirms the proof that God did not intend that different forms of Church regimen should be devised by man, but that one and the same form of ecclesiastical government, which He Himself has prescribed in Holy Scripture, and by the agency of His Holy Apostles, for the preaching of His Holy Word, and for the ministry of the Sacraments, should be thankfully received by all; and that it should be carefully guarded and zealously propagated in all parts of the Universal Church of Christ.

It has been alleged by some, that the number of cities given to the Levites was exorbitant, and out of all proportion to the numbers of the tribe of Levi, which consisted of only 23,000 men, as numbered at the last census (Num. xxi. 62). But it is to be remembered, that this provision was made not only for present circumstances, but with a view to their future increase; and that the assignment of these cities to the Levites did not involve the exclusion of other Israelites from dwelling in them, any more than the assignment of any particular region to a Ruler excludes the residence of his subjects within it; and that the Levites had only an area of 2000 cubits attached to their cities.

A similar reply may be made to the objection of those who allege that the thirteen cities assigned to the Priests could not have been occupied by them, on account of the fewness of their number. For a fuller consideration of these objections the reader may refer to Keil's note, p. 156.


4. the lot came out ... Kohathites] Here was a divine testimony to their prerogatives. Amram, the father of Moses and Aaron, was the son of Kohath (Exod. vi. 16—20). The priesthood was limited to the descendants of Aaron (Num. xviii. 1—7); the other descendants of Amram were not priests, but simply Levites (Num. iii. 27. 1 Chron. vi. 31—48). The first lot came out for the descendants of Kohath, and these comprised the descendants of Aaron, i.e. the priests.

Judah—Simeon, and—Benjamin] By divine appointment, disposing and regulating this allotment, it came to pass that the linear descendants of Aaron, i.e. the priests, were settled near one another in the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, i.e. in those three tribes which were nearest to the site on which the Temple, in which they were to minister, was afterwards to be erected. Here was a divine pre-adjustment to a future event foreseen by God (Theodore). The proximity of the Priests to that city, which was afterwards to become the capital, viz. Jerusalem, had probably the effect of keeping up their loyalty to the kings of Judah, and of strengthening their devotion to the true worship of God, during the time when the ten tribes of Israel were severed from Judah by the rebellion of Jeroboam, and by his idolatrous worship.

Here, therefore, we recognize another preparatory adjustment to a future event.

We may observe here, also, a contemporaneous and fuller development of a divine arrangement begun in the wilderness at the erection of the tabernacle. There the sons of Aaron, the priests, were stationed at the east end of it, i.e. at the door of the tabernacle (Num. iii. 38), and Moses, the Ruler of Israel, encamped near them. There was the same Divine mind working in the organization of the encampments in the wilderness, and in the ordering of the minute details of the marches there, as there was in the disposal of the lots of the tribes in Canaan under Joshua, and in the choice of Jerusalem as a capital by David, and in the building of the Temple there by Solomon. The elements of our Divine plan are traceable in all these. Is not this a proof of God's presence in the history of the Hebrew nation?
And the children of Israel gave by lot unto the Levites these cities with their suburbs, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses. And they gave out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, these which are here mentioned by name, Which the children of Aaron, being of the families of the Kohathites, who were of the children of Levi, had: for theirs was the first lot. And they gave them the city of Arba the father of Anak, which is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it. But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, gave they to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for his possession. Thus they gave to the children of Aaron the priest Hebron with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Libnah with her suburbs, Jattir with her suburbs, and Eshtemoa with her suburbs, Holon with her suburbs, and Debir with her suburbs, Anathoth with her suburbs, and Almon with her suburbs; nine cities out of those two tribes. And out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibion with her suburbs, Geba with her suburbs, Anathoth with her suburbs, and Almon with her suburbs; four cities. All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen cities with their suburbs. And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites which remained of the children of Kohath, even they had the cities of their lot out of the tribe of Ephraim. For they gave them Shechem with her suburbs in mount Ephraim, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Gezer with her suburbs,
22 And Kibzaim with her suburbs, and Beth-horon with her suburbs; four cities. 23 And out of the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with her suburbs, Gibbethon with her suburbs, 24 Ajalon with her suburbs, Gath-rimmon with her suburbs; four cities. 25 And out of the half tribe of Manasseh, Tanach with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs; two cities. 26 All the cities were ten with their suburbs for the families of the children of Kohath that remained.

27 And unto the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, out of the other half tribe of Manasseh they gave Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Beesh-terah with her suburbs; two cities. 28 And out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishon with her suburbs, Dabarch with her suburbs, 29 Jarmuth with her suburbs, En-gannim with her suburbs; four cities. 30 And out of the tribe of Asher, Mishal with her suburbs, Abdon with her suburbs, 31 Helkath with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs; four cities. 32 And out of the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Hammoth-dor with her suburbs, and Kartan with her suburbs; three cities. 33 All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families were thirteen cities with their suburbs.

34 And unto the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with her suburbs, and Kartah with her suburbs, 35 Dimnah with her suburbs, Nahalal with her suburbs; four cities. 36 And out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with her suburbs, and Jahazah with her suburbs, 37 Kedemoth with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs; four cities. 38 And out of the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Mahanaim with her suburbs, 39 Heshbon with her suburbs, Jazer with her suburbs; four cities in all. 40 So all the cities for the children of Merari by their families, which were remaining of the families of the Levites, were by their lot twelve cities.

41 All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel were forty and eight cities with their suburbs. 42 These cities were every one with their suburbs round about them: thus were all these cities.

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Johanan 622. And Kibzaim with her suburbs, and Beth-horon with her suburbs; four cities. 23 And out of the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with her suburbs, Gibbethon with her suburbs, 24 Ajalon with her suburbs, Gath-rimmon with her suburbs; four cities. 25 And out of the half tribe of Manasseh, Tanach with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs; two cities. 26 All the cities were ten with their suburbs for the families of the children of Kohath that remained.

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27 And unto the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, out of the other half tribe of Manasseh they gave Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Beesh-terah with her suburbs; two cities. 28 And out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishon with her suburbs, Dabarch with her suburbs, 29 Jarmuth with her suburbs, En-gannim with her suburbs; four cities. 30 And out of the tribe of Asher, Mishal with her suburbs, Abdon with her suburbs, 31 Helkath with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs; four cities. 32 And out of the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Hammoth-dor with her suburbs, and Kartan with her suburbs; three cities. 33 All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families were thirteen cities with their suburbs.

34 And unto the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with her suburbs, and Kartah with her suburbs, 35 Dimnah with her suburbs, Nahalal with her suburbs; four cities. 36 And out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with her suburbs, and Jahazah with her suburbs, 37 Kedemoth with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs; four cities. 38 And out of the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Mahanaim with her suburbs, 39 Heshbon with her suburbs, Jazer with her suburbs; four cities in all. 40 So all the cities for the children of Merari by their families, which were remaining of the families of the Levites, were by their lot twelve cities.

41 All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel were forty and eight cities with their suburbs. 42 These cities were every one with their suburbs round about them: thus were all these cities.
42 And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein.

43 And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers; and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; but the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.

44 the Lord gave them rest. If therefore those enemies afterwards oppressed them, as they did in the days of Joshua, this was not due to any falling on God's part, but to the degeneracy of Israelites.

45 So, if the Christian Church of God has been corrupted by heresy, rent by schism, and oppressed by the powers of this world, this is not to be ascribed to any lack of power or love on Christ's side, but to the lukewarmness, and negligence, and evil passions of those who ought to have maintained "the faith once for all delivered to the saints."
the tribe of Manasseh. And said unto them, Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you: Ye have not left your brethren these many days unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the Lord your God.

And now the Lord your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them: therefore now return ye, and get you unto your tents, and unto the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave you on the other side Jordan. But 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.

So Joshua blessed them, and sent them away: and they went unto their tents. Now to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given possession in Bashan: but unto the other half thereof gave Joshua among their brethren on this side Jordan westward. And when Joshua sent them away also unto their tents, then he blessed them, and he spake unto them, saying, Return with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment:

And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereto they were possessed, according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

The true Jews know but of one true altar, at which all true sacrifices are to be offered, the altar at which Christ stands, the true High Priest, who offers the only sacrifices which are pleasing unto God, and to which all the sacrifices of the Tabernacle and the Temple were subordinate. The faithful under the Law regarded their own altar as "a great altar to see to," that is, as an altar to be looked at with the eye of faith; they considered it as a pattern and a witness of the true altar which is set up by the Christ in His Church, and all the sacrifices which they offered were but types and shadows of "the good things to come" which have now been revealed in the Gospel (Heb. viii. 5; x. 1).

We believe in the communion of saints. The spirits of just men made perfect have a holy fellowship of hope and joy with the saints on earth. The place of the disembodied spirits of the righteous is Abraham's bosom (Luke xvi. 22); and we may well believe that the preaching of the Gospel, and the Death and Victory of Christ, exercised a blessed influence on the souls of the faithful who had died under the Law, and that the coming of Christ's human soul among them, when He went and preached to the spirits in prison, was hailed by them with exceeding joy (see on 1 Pet. iii. 19). And the Apostle to the Hebrews says to the faithful Christians at Jerusalem, "Ye have come unto Mount Sion, the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant" (Heb. xii. 22, 24).

Well therefore might an ancient Father say, when describing the offering of those two Tribes and a half, and their Altar, "They explained the cause of its erection and said, We know that the true Altar is with ye when Jesus (or Joshua) dwells; and we have built our Altar to be a resemblance of yours, in order that we may have a type and image of the true Altar, lest you should despise us. Consider the mystery of these words. These two tribes and a half—Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh—were all first born sons; and they were figures of the Jews, the elder sons of God. The river Jordan flowed between those tribes and Canaan, but there was no division of faith and hope between them and the other tribes. So there is no separation between us Christians and those who died in faith before the Coming of Christ.

They had an altar, but they knew that their altar was not the true altar, but was the figure and image of that true altar which we now have. They knew this, because true sacrifices, which can really take away sin, could not be offered on that altar which the people had (Gen. xviii. 3, 4), nor possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin, (Heb. x. 4); but only at that altar where Jesus is, are heavenly victims offered and true sacrifices accomplished. Thus there is 'one flock and one Shepherd' (John x. 16), and God's ancient people, the faithful Jews, are joined together with us." Orig. Hom. 26.

The Jews of our day ought therefore to know and confess that the altar of their fathers was not the true altar, but prefigured that altar which is the true (see Theodoret, Qu. 10, 24. testa) A word repeated three times; as if in contrast with the cities just described on the other side of Jordan, in Canaan. The spiritual habitations of the Jews were only like migratory tents, in comparison with the settled abodes to which Christ has brought us, and in which He has settled us in His Church.

10. borders] Heb. geliloth, the circuits; the ciecar (Gen. xiii. 10) of Jordan; el Ghor (Geens. 172). The word Gallees is from the same root, galt, to circle, and signifies literally, περικύκλος, circular region; an arrangement (see xx. 7); a great altar to see to [μέγαν ὑπερ θεόν, Sept.] Such was the altar of those who lived under the Law; a great altar to see to; to be looked at with the eye of faith; a "Jehovah-jireh." (Gen. xxi. 14); but when no true sacrifices, able to take away sin, could be offered, but only such as were figurative of the one True Sacrifice, and such as would draw the eye outward to look to that Sacrifice.

Many learned Expressions (A Lapide, Muenchius, Drusch, Bonferroni, Keil) are of opinion that the altar was on the west side; and perhaps the text may admit of this construction. In this ambiguity it is important to know how the text was understood by Hebrew readers. On this point no doubt can be entertained. Josephus thus writes (Antit. v. 1, 26), "The tribes of Reuben and God, and half-tribe of Manasseh, crossed the river and built an altar on the bank of the Jordan, as a memorial to future generations, and as a token of their affiliation with those.
on the other side." He then adds, that Phinehas and the representatives of the other tribes crossed the Jordan and exulted with them. This interpretation seems most reasonable. It is not likely that the two tribes and a half would have built an altar on land which did not belong to them; and if they had done so, this would have formed part of the accusation of the other tribes against them. But there is no mention made of such an encroachment. Besides, an altar on the western side, constructed so as to resemble another altar on the western side, would have been no memorial of the connexion of the eastern tribes with the western.

Further, in v. 19, Phinehas appears to imply that the altar was on the east side, and that it had been set up there by the trans-Jordanic tribes, in order that their land might "not be uncircumcised," an observation which could not apply to the western side, where the altar, at which he himself ministered, had been set up in the Tabernacle at Shiloh. Cp. Joseph Mede (Disc. on the Reverence of God's House). Fuller, Pigtash Sight of Palestine, p. 244.

A spiritual Jordan flowed, as it were, between the Law and the Gospel; but Jesus has crossed the Jordan, and those who dwelt on the eastern side, look to Him as the True Priest and Sacrifice, and are united in spiritual communion with their brethren, the seed of Abraham, gathered from all Nations, and are joined together as the Israel of God, in Him.

11. over against the land of Canaan] That is, on the eastern bank of the Jordan, in front of the land of Canaan; see Gesen., p. 456; and the foregoing note.

— at the passage of the children of Israel] Rather, at the opposite region to the children of Israel: see Gesen, 603; and cp. xxiv. 3.

The phrase of the original, el cher, must be determined by the context. Hengstenberg, Authent. ii. p. 320; cp. above, Deut. 1. 1.

The cis-Jordanic tribes, who dwelt in "the land of Canaan," are called specially and by distinction "the Children of Israel." They who have passed with the true Joshua into the spiritual Canaan, the Christian Church, and dwell there by faith, are "the true Israel of God" (Rom. ix. 6-8). Gal. vi. 16.

17. the iniquity of Peor] It was very natural for Phinehas and the deputation of others with him, to refer to the iniquity of Peor, in punishing which he had taken so prominent a part: see Num. xxv. 7-11.

The Lord of gods] El Elohim Jehovah, El Elohim Jehovah. The repetition of these three Names of God gives greater solemnity to the asseveration (cp. Exod. vi. 3); and consequently cannot be supposed to be guilty of rebellion against Him.
The purpose of the Altar. JOSUA XXII. 25—34. XXXIII. 1—4. Joshua's speech to Israel.

not rather done it for fear of this thing, saying, †In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel? 25 For the Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad; ye have no part in the Lord: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the Lord. 26 Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice: 27 But that it may be a witness between us, and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the Lord before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the Lord. 28 Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should so say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say again, Behold the pattern of the altar of the Lord, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us and you. 29 God forbid that we should rebel against the Lord, and turn this day from following the Lord, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for meat offerings, or for sacrifices, beside the altar of the Lord our God that is before his tabernacle.

30 And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation and heads of the thousands of Israel which were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the children of Manasseh spake, † it pleased them. 31 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, This day we perceive that the Lord is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the Lord: † now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the Lord. 32 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again. 33 And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel blessed God, and did not intend to go up against them in battle, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt.

34 And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar ||Ed: for it shall be a witness between us that the Lord is God.

XXXIII. 1 And it came to pass a long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age. 2 And Joshua called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age: 3 And ye have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the Lord your God is he that hath fought for you. 4 Behold, I have divided unto you by
lo these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward.

5 And the Lord your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the Lord your God hath promised unto you. 6 a Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; 7 That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: 8 a But cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day. 9 a For the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day. 10 a One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.

11 a Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God. 12 Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: 13 Know for a certainty that "the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you.

14 And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof. 15 a Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you; so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you. 16 When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

XXIV. 1 And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and...
Joshua recapitulates their history JOSUAH XXIV. 2—14. from the days of Terah.

b ch. 23. 2.
1 Sam. 13. 19.
b called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.

2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, 3 Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.

3 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac. 4 And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto

1 Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. 5 I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them: and afterward I brought you out. 6 And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red sea. 7 And when they cried unto the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.

8 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them before you. 9 Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you: 10 But I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand. 11 And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgasites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand. 12 And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow.

13 And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat.

14 Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him with sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the

countries of Canaan, which ye shall possess; and serve the Lord your God.

How many reflections therefore are suggested by this gathering of all Israel by Joshua at Shechem at the end of his career! His thoughts went backward to Jacob and Abraham, and their communings with God there: and did they not also go forward to the days of Jesus Christ? Was he not enabled by God's Spirit, illuminating his mind, to see Him with the eye of faith? See Heb. xi. 13.

Little reason therefore is there, with some modern expositors, to allege, that this history of the gathering of the people at Shechem is inconsistent with the statement of xviii. 1, that the Tabernacle was fixed at Shiloh. The Sept. has Shiloh here, and in v. 25. But this is at variance with the original, and with the Sept., and Vulg., and the Chaldee Targum:

— they presented themselves before God] Remarkable words, in connection with Shechem. Being there near the site of the altar erected by Abraham, and the altar erected by Jacob, and called El-Elohe-Israel, they might well be said to be in the presence of God: see the foregoing note, and Hengstenberg, Authent. ii. pp. 13—16, who questions the decision, why Joshua summoned them to Shechem for this solemn occasion, the closing scene of his life.

3. I took your father Abraham] first out of an idolatrous land; do not therefore fall away to idolatry, and frustrate God's purpose in bringing Abraham hither.

Very appropriate here at Shechem was this recapitulation of mercy to Israel during a period of 300 years, ever since the

call of Abraham. For, as was noticed before, Shechem was the first place in Canaan where God revealed Himself to Abraham, and Abraham built his first altar. Thus Shechem connects Abraham's first act of worship with Joshua's farewell charge to Israel.

4. went down into Egypt] in order that they might be preserved together there, till "the iniquity of the Amorites was full" (Gen. xv. 16) and till the time had arrived when they might take possession of Canaan according to God's promise; and in order that they might be witnesses of His power over the false gods of Egypt, and might thus learn to shun idols, and to serve Him.

10. But I would not hearken unto Balaam] I turned his cursing into blessing, and delivered him into your hands (xiii. 22). Therefore do not fear the incantations and witchcrafts of the soothsayers and diviners of the false gods of Canaan—such as Ashtoreth and Baalim; they will not be able to harm you if you cleave to God, but their curses will be turned into blessings. Remember only the Law of God, and the blessings and the cursings which you have heard here at Shechem from His mouth (viii. 30—35).

14. put away the gods] as your father Jacob commanded his household to do in this place (Gen. xxxv. 2—4). It has been alleged, that this command is inconsistent with the possession of the Ark and the Tabernacle, as if it were not possible to serve God with idols: see the next note.
flood, and 'in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; 17 For the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed: And the Lord drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the Lord; for he is our God.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. 20 If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the Lord.

22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that y'e have chosen you the Lord, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses.

23 Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel.

24 And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. 26 And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. 27 And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for he hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us: it shall be

15. choose you this day whom ye will serve] Joshua states here a most important moral truth—viz., that if men will not choose to serve God, they will still be servants—that is, they will be enslaved by Satan. "We have not the liberty to choose whether we will serve or no; all the liberty we have is to choose our master" (Bp. Sanderson, iii. 314).

Joshua also here states another important truth—viz., that God will not be served with any thing else. The Israelites did not intend to forsake God; but they imagined that they might serve "strange gods," the gods of Canaan, with God, the God of Israel. Joshua warns them that God is a jealous God (v. 19), and will have no rivals or partners with Himself.

Here is a warning to the Christian Church not to associate any creature with the Creator in worship. Let all those consider this who are beguiled by the creature-worship in the churches of Rome (cp. Matt. iv. 10. Luke iv. 8).

— as for me and my house] Joshua does not appear to have been married; and this declaration must therefore apply to his servants. He probably remembered what God had said concerning Abraham,—"I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." (Gen. xviii. 19).


24. The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey] On the double character of obedience, active and passive, see the excellent remarks of Bp. Sanderson, iii. 320, on 1 Pet. ii. 16.

26. under an oak] Rather, under the oak, or the tereth (Sept.), probably the same tree as that under which Jacob had buried the strange gods of his household: see Gen. xxiv. 44.

Places of patriarchal abode are often found associated with trees or wells. Abraham dwelt under the oak or terebeth at Mamre. Isaac dwelt at the well Lahai-roi. Jacob hid the idols under the oak or terebeth at Shechem; and long after Joshua took a great stone and set it up under the oak, as a national witness. Deborah dwelt under the palm-tree of Deborah. The angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak at Ophrah. Saul tarried under the pomegranate at Migron; and it is yet very usual to find in Palestine a village better known by some remarkable tree or bourn than by its proper name: see Dr. Thomson, Land and Book, p. 560.

— by the sanctuary of the Lord] perhaps near the altar of Abraham, and the altar of Jacob: see on v. 1 (Moses, Michaelis, and especially Joseph Mede's Discourse, xviii. p. 63, on this text).

27. shall be a witness unto us; for he hath heard all the words of the Lord] How could the Stone hear? Was not this like an encouragement to that very sin which Joshua was then denouncing—the sin of idolatry—the sin of those who addressed their prayers to stocks and stones which have ears, and hear not (Ps. cvx. 6)? Here then is a mystery. Remember the solemnity of this occasion. Joshua was at Shechem, the place to which Abraham had come, and where God had appeared to him, and where Abraham had worshipped, and Jacob had built his altar El-Blohe-Israel; and to Shechem, in the fullness of time, the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father came in human flesh, and declared Himself to be the Christ.

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1 Judg. 2. 6. 1 ch. 10. 50, Judg. 2. 9.
2 k Judg. 2. 8.
3 l Heb. prolonged their days after Joshua, n See Deut. 11. 2.
4 Gen. 50. 25, Ex. 13. 19, p Gen. 23. 19.
5 q Ex. 6. 25, Judg. 26. 28.

And this was Joshua's farewell address to Israel, just before his death. Was he not then endued with the spirit of prophecy, as Isaac was, and Jacob was, and as Moses was? May he not (in speaking of the stone set up near the oak of Jacob, near the sanctuary of the Lord, to be a witness between Him and His people, and in saying "this stone hath heard all the words of the Lord") have made, perhaps unconsciously, a prophetic pre-announcement of Him who is "The Stone, the Corner Stone," elect, precious to the faithful (Ps. cxviii. 22. Isa. xxviii. 16. Eph. ii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 6), and yet a stumbling-stone to the ungodly (Isa. vii. 14. Rom. ix. 32. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8), and who is set for the fall and rise of many in Israel (Luke ii. 34); and who is also the true and faithful Witness (Rev. i. 5; iii. 14); and who hears all the words of the Lord, and declares them to the world (John xv. 15; xviii. 20)? Did he not speak of Christ? Cp. S. Augustini, Qu. 30, who says, "Per hunc Lapidem pro- fecto ILEUM significavit Quia fuit Lapis offensionis nec crenu- tinus Judaeus, et factus est in eapsa angui, Quem praefigurabat et illa Petra, quem petra siticiabat Papalo, ligno percursa, pro- fulit, de quo dicit Apostolus 'bivohan de spirituali ascensae Petri, Petra autem erat CHRISTUS' (1 Cor. x. 4), unde et cutellis petraeis populum circumcinctit isto ductore egregius?" see above, v. 2, 3.

29 Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died) but Jesus, the Son of God, liveth for evermore. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8).


The Septuagint (ed. Vatican) inserts here the following narrative. "And they placed there in the tomb, in which they buried him, the knives of stone, with which he circumcised the children of Israel at Gilgal (see v. 2), when he led them out of Egypt, as the Lord commanded them; and they are there until this day." And so the Arabic Version. And in chap. xxxi. 40 the Sept. has these words: "And Joshua took the knives of stone with which he circumcised the children of Israel who were born in the wilderness, and he placed them in Timnath-serah" (see Walton, Polygl. p. 74). Origen (Hom. 26) comments on this incident; and S. Augustini says (Qu. 30), "Cel- tres petrini cum illo sepulti sunt." There was, it would seem, a symbolical meaning in these knives of stone (see v. 2); and it may be that they were preserved as a record of the covenant into which the new generation of Israel had entered with God; and they may have served a like purpose with that stone which Joshua set up beneath the oak at Shechem: see above, v. 26.

31 And Israel served the Lord] An image of the purity of the faith of the primitive Church of Christ.

32 the bones of Joseph) See above on Gen. 1. 25, 26. in Shechem] See below on Acts vii. 16; and Preliminary Note to that chapter, p. 68. The place of his burial is still pointed out at the foot of Eleaz (Dr. Thomson, 473).

33 Eleazar the son of Aaron died, and succeeded by his son Eleazar; and now Eleazar died, and is succeeded by his son Phinehas (cp. Judg. xx. 28).

In the Levitical dispensation there were many priests in succession, "who were not suffered to continue by reason of death" (Heb. viii. 23). But in the evangelical covenant, "this Man," the true Aaron, the Divine Eleazar, because He continues for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood; "wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii. 25).

Eleazar's death is mentioned together with Joshua's death. Eleazar and Joshua together make a type of the union of the Priesthood and Government in Christ. The types die, because they are types; but the Divine Antitype liveth for evermore; to Whom be all praise, and glory, and dominion, world without end. Amen.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

Among the sacred writings of the Old Testament none is more interesting and instructive to the Church of these latter days than the Book of Judges.

The Book of Judges is to the Old Testament, what the Acts of the Apostles and the Book of Revelation are to the New.

The Book of Judges follows next after the Book of Joshua,—the figure of Jesus, whose acts are described in the Gospels, which are followed by the Acts of the Apostles.

In the New Testament the Acts of the Apostles display the wonderful working of the Holy Ghost in the Apostles, who were set up like Judges in the Israel of God, and to whom our Lord Himself assigns the office of judging the tribes of Israel.

The Book of Judges exhibits the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit in some of those who were raised up from time to time to deliver Israel, and who are called saviours (see below on ii. 16), not without some prophetic reference to the great work of the one Supreme Judge and Saviour, Who was filled with the Holy Ghost; and Who, when He had ascended into heaven, sent the Holy Spirit to His Apostles to enable them to overcome the spiritual enemies of the Christian Israel, and to extend the inheritance of the Universal Church of Christ.

Thus the Book of Judges, like the Acts of the Apostles, is a book of encouragement to the Christian Church in every age and country.

In another respect also the Book of Judges is like the Acts of the Apostles. It resembles the Acts of the Apostles not only in what it does say, but also in what it does not say.

The Book of the Acts does not record the doings and sufferings of all the Apostles. It relates little more than only the doings of two of the Apostles—St. Peter and St. Paul—selected for special reasons as specimens of the rest. The acts of almost all the other Apostles are left untold.

There is inspiration in this silence. It reminds the reader that men are only instruments in the hand of God; and that this world’s fame is not to be coveted, but that what is to be desired is the approval of God, who has before His eyes an “Acts of the Apostles” in which every act of every Apostle is recorded; and not one of those acts will lose its reward at the Great Day.

So it is with the “Book of Judges.” The acts of a few only of the Judges are chosen as specimens of what God the Holy Ghost wrought by them all. Many of the Judges are known to us only by name, as many of the Apostles are; and we know very little of their acts. Such were Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon. There is a moral in this, an important spiritual meaning.

Yet further, some who judged Israel are not mentioned in the series of Judges at all. Such, it would seem, was the Judge named Jacl; and such was Bedan. There is a moral here also.

The Book of Judges resembles the Acts of the Apostles in these respects. It is a book of encouragement and instruction; it raises the eyes from the human instrument to the Divine Agent; it weans the mind from doting on worldly fame, and elevates it to nobler views of everlasting glory. It is also, like the Book of Revelation, a Book of solemn warning to the Church of God.

The Apocalypse reveals decline, degeneracy, and downfall in a large part of the Christian Church. It exhibits the abuse of God’s spiritual gifts; it displays the perversion of those gifts to evil purposes;

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1 Bede says truly (Quaest. c. 1), “Historia Judicium non parva mysteriorum indicat sacramenta; primium quid post Josuam sucedunt Judices, sic post Christum sucedunt Apostoli.”
2 It will be remembered that the Greek words σπερμα and σπερματος, like the Hebrew shaphat and shophethim (whence the Carthaginian magistrates, “suffetes”), do not signify simply to judge, but to rule; and accordingly our Lord adds the word “thrones” in His words to His Apostles. Matt. xix. 28. Luke xxii. 30.
3 Perhaps it is not altogether a fortuitous coincidence that the number of the Judges, whose acts are related in this Book, corresponds to the number of the Apostles; not as if the Judges were types of the Apostles severally, but their history is a foreshadowing of the history of the Apostolic Church of Christ.
5 See below, on x. 1–5; and on xii. 8–15.
6 See below, on v. 6.
7 See below, on 1 Sam. xii. 11.
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to the worldly designs of human pride and ambition; to the setting up of the idols of the human will in opposition to the Divine Word; to the glorification of the creature instead of the Creator; in a word, to the aggrandizement of Anti-christianism in the Church of Christ. The Apocalypse also reveals the consequences of these principles and practices; it discloses the dissolution and ruin which they will bring on those who abet them; and it also reveals the full and final triumph and exaltation of Jesus Christ.

A similar picture is presented in the Book of Judges.

It unfolds to the view the defection of Israel after the death of Joshua. It discloses the cause of that defection. The human will struggled against the Divine Will and Word. It craved to be wiser than God; to live a life of its own; and to use His gifts for its own grandeur and glory; and it fell a victim to its presumptuous ambition. And God displayed His own supremacy even in the punishment of Israel by means of His enemies and theirs; a punishment relieved occasionally by acts of national repentance, and by merciful interventions on the part of God, delivering them from their enemies, to whom they enslaved themselves by their sins.

Thus, then, while the Book of Judges is full of cheering assurance and encouragement to the Church, as showing that the gifts of the Spirit were never wanting to Israel even in the worst times, and will never fail His Church in the darkest days; yet it is also fraught with solemn warnings and alarms against the abuse of those gifts by vain-glorious self-conceit, self-love, self-seeking, self-will, self-confidence, and self-idolatry. It displays a dark picture of their miserable consequences. The Book or Judges is a record of God’s power and of man’s weakness; of God’s love and of man’s unthankfulness. It shows that to serve God is freedom, and that servanthood from God is slavery. It is an exhibition of the two antagonistic principles which are ever struggling with each other in the Church of God, and which will have their full development when Antichrist will stand up in open rebellion against Christ, and when he and all his allies will be utterly routed by Him.

In illustration of these statements let us take a brief survey of the Book of Judges.

It opens with a specimen of God's power in the victories given to the Tribe of Judah. That tribe overcomes the Canaanites and the Perizzites, and takes Jerusalem, which we afterwards find in the hands of its old inhabitants. Judah also takes the cities of the Philistines, Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron, which also were afterwards re-occupied by them.

Here then is an example of what Israel might have done with God’s help, if they had been obedient to Him. But this was not the case. They sought their own interest. Instead of obeying God, and driving out the Canaanites, they put them to tribute, and allowed them to remain among them. They forgot that they themselves were His subjects, and owed Him the tribute of allegiance. They sought worldly gain for themselves, instead of promoting God’s glory by advancing His kingdom. Their tributaries became first their snares, and then their foes, masters, and tyrants. Israel intermarried with them, and were seduced to serve their gods; and God punished Israel by their hands for disobedience to His will.

“An angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim”—emphatic words—from the place of victory to the place of mourning. He rebuked them for their sins; they shed tears, but did not repent. Rather, since their sorrow was not a godly sorrow, it worked death; they became worse than before; “they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashhtaroth.” And the Lord sold them into the hands of their enemies round about; and whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil.”

Yet the Spirit of God mercifully strove with them; and when they cried to Him, He “raised up Judges” to save them; and “the Lord was with the Judge,” and delivered them; but when the Judge was dead, they returned and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them.

“In Judicium libro, quot principes populi, tot figure,” says an ancient Father of the Church; "in the Book of Judges there are as many types as there are leaders.” Without subscribing implicitly to this assertion, we need not hesitate to say that the Enemies of the literal Israel, such as Assyria and Moab, are figures of the spiritual foes of the true Israel of God, the Christian Church. All ancient expositors concur in this opinion.

If we read the history of the first two Judges, Othniel and Ehud, who delivered Israel from the
oppressive rule of the kings of Mesopotamia and of Moab; and if in reading that history we do not raise our thoughts from them to other adversaries, we are without the proper key which unlocks the spiritual instruction to be derived from this history. We read it “with a veil on the heart;” we are the slaves of “the letter which killeth;” and we shall be perplexed, staggered, and revolted by such details as occur in the history of Ehud; and perhaps we may be tempted to join with those who ask in the language of scorn, Are such incidents as these worthy to be recorded by the Holy Ghost? Can these narratives be parts of Holy Scripture? and if so, can it be true, that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God?” Can “all Scripture” be said to be “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness?” Can it be said to be written “for our admonition?” Can it be true that “whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope?”

To such questions it must be replied, that the letter of these narratives is historically true; and that they who did what is here recorded, were raised up in evil days by that Spirit whose sudden outbursts and extraordinary gushings-forth are to be expected, in times when the ordinary means of grace have fallen into disuse or contempt, through the degeneracy and unworthiness of the Priesthood, and through the apathy and ungodliness of the People. God is the sole Giver and Lord of human life, and is the only Righteous Judge of all human actions, and He sometimes interferes in a marvellous manner to assert His own supremacy, by suddenly cutting off the oppressors of His people by means of weak instruments whom He is pleased to employ for that purpose.

But this is not all. In the kings of Mesopotamia and of Moab we must see something more than the earthly oppressors of Israel. With all the Ancient Expositors of this Book we must recognize types and shadows of spiritual enemies and tyrants of the soul. We must see our own enemies. And in the acts of Othniel and Ehud we must see incitements to our own righteous zeal and holy indignation against our carnal lusts, the ghostly Moabites which are ever warring against us in our own selves. We must be Othniels and Ehuds to ourselves. Then, and not till then, shall we read these histories aright. They offer no encouragements to cruelty or treachery. God forbid! But they remind us of God’s Omnipotence, and of His anger against sin, and of our own duty to crucify our sinful affections, and to fight the good fight against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

The same remarks may be applied to other actions in this Book; such as that of Jael; which is praised by Deborah, the Judge and Prophetess of Israel.

It is a truth never to be forgotten, that whatever was done by the Apostles was effect by Jesus Christ, working in them by the Holy Spirit. In like manner, the persons whose mighty acts are recorded in this Book, derived their power of doing what they did well, from the Holy Spirit of God. Their gifts were from Him. And those gifts were bestowed upon them for the purpose of promoting God’s glory, by vindicating His supremacy over the gods of the heathen, and by delivering His people, who called upon Him, from the hands of their enemies.

In this respect these Judges, or Saviours, as they are called, were forerunners and figures of our Great Deliverer Jesus Christ, who was full of the Holy Ghost, and who has saved His people from their sins. The actions of those who are presented to us by the Holy Spirit in this Book, and “who” (as the Apostle says) “through faith subdued kingdoms,” such as Barak, Gideon, and Jephthah; “wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions” (as Samson), “escaped the edge of the sword” (as Gideon and Samson), “out of weakness were made strong” (as Deborah and Jael), “waxed valiant

1 2 Cor. iii. 6, 15. 2 See ch. iii. 20—29. 3 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16. 4 1 Cor. x. 11. 5 Rom. xv. 4.
6 It is the practice of modern criticism to condemn Ehud misleadingly as a crafty and treacherous assassin. Undoubtedly Ehud’s conduct, as described in ch. iii. 15—20, was base and traitorous, if he was not raised up by God (see v. 15), and if he had not an impulse and direction from God to do what he did. But let it be remembered, that it was the universal opinion of the Ancient Expositors, and of such judicious critics and sound moralists as Bp. Sanderson and Dr. Waterland (see below on that history), that Ehud, the saviour of Israel and Judge (see v. 15), not a private person, but a public Magistrate—was stirred up and commissioned and empowered by God Himself. Who is the supreme Arbiter of all things, and Who may, if He pleases, take away His enemies by the sword as well as by a fever, a fire, or an earthquake. It is futile and worse, to say with some, that God cannot prompt His accountable creatures to do any thing contrary to His immutable perfection; and that He cannot suggest to a rational creature to do any thing expressly condemned in the moral law.” Such language proceeds on the presumption that God is not the Author of Law; that He is not the “only Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy” (James iv. 12). According to such allegations, Abraham’s faith and obedience in going to Mount Moriah to offer up his son Isaac ought to have been condemned as criminal, rather than to have been commended from heaven by the Angel of the Lord (Gen. xxii. 15—18), and to have been represented in Scripture as the crowning act of his life by which he won for himself the title of the “Father of the Faithful.”

In such cases as those of Ehud, it would seem to be more modest and reverent to suspend our judgment, and to consider what spiritual instruction may be derived from these histories. The wise caution of S. Irenaeus may be applied here, as in many other instances, “non opinet judicium sed tyrannum querere.”

7 See below, note on the Acts of Othniel and Ehud, chap. iii.
8 See below, on ch. iv. 21. 9 ch. iv. 4.
10 See below, the Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles.
11 See ch. ii. 16, 18; iii. 9; and Sscrarius in Jud., p. 56.
12 Matt. i. 21. On the typical character of the Judges see S. Augustine c. Faustum, xili. 32; and Corpus, Introduction in V. T. pp. 176, 177, and the work of Mather on the Types, p. 103.
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in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens;" display to us more or less clearly some prophetic glances of the working of the Divine Judge and Saviour of Israel; and cannot be profitably read without reference to Christ.

In modern times, many readers of the Bible, and even many commentators on it, and many writers of Jewish History, appear to consider the Book of Judges as a more secular narrative, and as having no spiritual reference to Christ and the Gospel.

But let us ask this question—What ancient expositor of this Book ever thought of commenting on the history of Jael, a woman pointed out by the voice of prophecy as the future destroyer of Sisera (the captain of the hosts of the aliens arrayed against the armies of the God of Israel), and endowed with supernatural power to accomplish the purpose, which she was stirred up by a supernatural impulse to attempt, and executing that purpose by driving through his head the nail of wood by which her tent was kept firm—Who (I ask) in ancient times ever dreamt of expounding this marvellous history, without reference to the deed done, according to ancient prophecy, by the Seed of the woman, bruising the head of our spiritual Sisera, by the wood of His Cross; and to the spiritual work of the Christian Church, by the preaching of the doctrine of the Cross, by which the tent of the Church is settled in the truth, and is able to overcome her enemies? Who among the ancient readers of this Book thought that he could understand the history of Gideon aright, except he saw in the history of Gideon’s fleece, and of the threshing-floor around it, an image of the Jewish Church, and of the Church Universal? As the dew was first on the Fleece, and not on the Floor, so the dews of God’s Spirit were first on the Jewish People, and the World around it was dry. But afterwards the dews of the Spirit fell on the floor of the World, and the Jewish Fleece is now dry. What ancient expositor ever supposed that he had communicated the true meaning of the history of Gideon to his hearers, or his readers, without profiting by the suggestions of the Spirit of God, speaking by the prophet Isaiah, connecting the “day of Midian” with the victory of God Incarnate; and without pointing their thoughts to a greater Gideon, who is the true Jerubbaal, and who has destroyed the idolatrous altars of this world, and who has routed the immense hosts of the spiritual Midians by the sound of the trumpets of His Gospel, and by the breaking of the earthen pitchers, in the martyrdoms of His servants—shattered in death for His sake; and by the flashing forth of the light of the Gospel from those earthen vessels, by their sufferings in life and death? Who among the ancient expositors ever commented on the history of Abimelech, usurping the throne of Israel at Shechem, in the very sanctuary of God, and falling at last by means of his own usurpation, without seeing there a foreshadowing of Antichrist? Who, in the better days of the Church, ever read the history of Jephthah and of his rash vow, and of the meekness and self-sacrifice of his daughter, without seeing there a marvellous and mysterious adumbration of a better sacrifice of another soul, of an Only Child, perfectly free and voluntary, and of virgin holiness and heavenly purity, and yet in a certain sense necessary, as due to the sins of those who nailed it to the Cross, the sacrifice of Christ, who gave His spotless soul to death for our sakes? Who ever preached a homily in the ancient churches of Christendom on the wonderful feats of Samson, without reminding his hearers that they ought not to be surprised into unbelief by those marvels? And wherefore not? Because a greater than Samson is here. A Samson, and more than a Samson, in strength and spiritual gifts; One who shines forth as a perfect example of the right use of spiritual gifts, whereas Samson stands out to the world as a solemn warning against their abuse. Who ever preached a sermon in ancient times on the history of Samson, without reminding his audience of One who did not despise His own Nation as Samson did, but was despised by it; One who did indeed espouse a Bride from the Heathen as Samson did, and One who never lost her, as Samson did; One who encountered the Lion, as Samson did, even that roaring Lion who is ever going about to devour us, and who gathered honey out of his carcass, and is ever giving that honey to us; One who gathered the honey of Divine Truth out of the carcass of vanquished Error; One who gathered the honey of Life eternal out of His conflict with Death; One who, by dying, gave Immortality to man; One who out of the prostrate bodies of Sin, Satan and the Grave, gathered for us the honey of spiritual

1 Heb. xi. 32—34, where the Sacred Writer is referring to the Book of Judges.
2 See below, notes on ch. iv. 21; and v. 26.
3 See below, on ch. vi. 36—40.
4 Isa. ix. 4. 6. The lesson appointed for Christmas-day; “Thou hast broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.” See also Isa. x. 26.
5 See ch. vii. 16—20.
6 See note, ch. ix. 0.; and note at the end of chap. ix.
7 See below, note at end of ch. xi.
8 See below, on ch. xiv. 3.
9 1 Pet. v. 8.
10 1 Pet. v. 8.
sweetness and heavenly joy; One who was meek and lowly, as Samson was in his modest beginnings, and who never degenerated, as he did, but continued meek to the end, even though His acts became more and more glorious as He approached that end; One who overthrew his thousands and tens of thousands by the foolishness of preaching, as Samson slew the Philistines by a despised instrument, the jaw-bone of an ass; One who sought not honour for Himself, but for His Father; One who did not glorify His own arm, as Samson did; One who never did a single act with a view to personal revenge, as Samson did his deeds of valor, but did all for the public good of the world and for the glory of God; One who awoke at midnight from sleep—even from the sleep of death—in the strong city of a spiritual Gaza, even in the fortress of Satan, even in the fortress of Death and the Grave, and broke asunder its iron bars and brazen bolts, and carried them away on His shoulders toward the top of a heavenly Hebron and proclaimed Victory and Resurrection to the world; One who was a Nazarite indeed, sanctified to God from His mother’s womb! One who “was in all points tempted like as we are,” but who never allowed the seven locks of His head—the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit—to be woven by any Delilah of sensual delight into the web of voluptuous ease, or to be shorn by an unhallowed hand while He lay in the lap of worldly allurements or earthly fascinations, but who preserved those spiritual locks unscathed and holy to the end; Who had never His eyes put out, but who is the Light of the world; and who entered the Prison of the Grave in order to disarm the jailor, and to deliver the world out of prison, and who, though He overthrew more at His death than in His life, yet it was not that His own body might remain buried in the confused heap of ruins of some Dagon’s Temple amid the bodies of Philistines, but that it might arise again from the grave to glory, and ascend in triumph to heaven, and sit down on the right hand of God, and bring us to that glorious altitude where He Himself is, and that we might be ever with the Lord?

We have here a striking example of that which meets us continually in this book, and indeed throughout the Old Testament. The Antitype corrects the Type. Wherever Samson diverges from the right line of obedience, there the example of Christ comes in to rectify the aberration; and wherever the weakness and wilfulness of Samson bring him down to defeat and shame, there the steadfastness and obedience of Christ raise Him up to victory and glory. Both the Type and the Antitype cheer the Church in days of sorrow and distress, with assurances of the power of the Spirit; and while the Type in Samson warns her against the abuse of spiritual gifts, the Antitype in Christ teaches her how to use them aright.

This remark may be extended further. The Judges of Israel were types of Christ in all they did well, but in nothing that they did ill. In this latter respect they are contrasts to Christ. And it will generally be found that wherever they acted amiss, Christ’s example supplies the antithesis and antidote (if we may so speak) to their sins. Gideon’s polygamy and his Ephod find their correctives in Christ’s love for His Church, which is One, though formed out of all nations; and in His Priesthood confirmed to the Father, who said, “Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.” Wherever the Types err, the Antitype rises up in a noble and sublime contrast, like some bold cliff and lofty rock over against a dangerous quicksand, to point out the error and to establish the opposite truth.

If these principles of exposition (which are adopted in the following notes) are incorrect, then the whole ancient Church was in error; for they were her principles. But if they are sound and solid, then surely they ought to be applied to the interpretation of this Divine Book; and is it too much to say that modern Exegesis has lost much by neglect of these principles, and that the Book itself gains a hundredfold in interest and value to the Christian student from such expositions as these, and that thereby it becomes a manual for the Church in these latter days?

In the Church of God, lack of zeal in the Priesthood is the grief and trial of the people. In
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the Book of Judges, no Priest is seen rising up to bring back the people from idolatry, and to restore the worship of God. The Ark of God was still at Shiloh; but the Priesthood seems to have lost its hold on the respect and love of the people.

Gideon was a brave soldier, and used his victories well. He refused the proffered kingdom, and put away the crown, and said, “The Lord shall rule over you.” But he seems to have been tempted to impatience by the degeneracy of the priesthood. He aspired to be his own priest, and to have a church in his own household at Ophrah. He became a separatist, and gave occasion to idolatry. He made an Ephod for himself, “and all Israel (we read) went a whoring after it; which thing became a snare unto Gideon and to his house.”

The vicious actions of good men are most fertile in evil. Gideon gave countenance to secessions from the appointed ordinances of God Himself. This work of spiritual harlotry, for such it was, was connected in his case with the desecration of marriage. Gideon had many wives at Ophrah, and he had a concubine at Shechem. His sins in these respects reproduced themselves with intense virulence in the son of his concubine, Abimelech. Abimelech was a fratricide, an idolater, and an usurper—a forerunner of Antichrist. Nor did the evil stop there. The will-worship of Gideon’s Ephod was followed by other idolatries,—the worship of Baalim and Ashtaroth and of the gods of Moab, who were served by human sacrifices. And these idolatries were punished by God, delivering Israel to be slaves to those nations, whose gods they chose to serve instead of Him. And though Jephthah was raised up to deliver the people from the Ammonites, yet this valiant conqueror was like a second Gideon in will-worship. Gideon’s will-worship was in the making of his Ephod; Jephthah’s will-worship was in the sacrifice of his daughter. So bitter are the fruits which are produced by that spirit which disobeys the letter of God’s law, and forsakes His regular appointments in His Church, and sets up religious ordinances for itself, contrary to His Will and Word.

Here is a solemn lesson to the Christian Priesthood.

If through lack of faithfulness, zeal, and courage, or by lukewarmness and indifference, or by neglect of sound learning, the Clergy of a Nation lose their hold on the Nation’s heart, mind, and soul, then they may expect to see various forms of separatism: a Gideon and a Jephthah may be expected to arise, and to multiply themselves in infinite diversity. And what will the end be?

Let us pass to another point.

The Book of Judges displays in a clear light the disastrous condition of a Nation when it forsakes God. “Every man did that which was right in his own eyes,” is the sentence by which the sacred Historian characterizes the social state of the Hebrew people at the time described in his narrative; and the bitter fruits of that so-called freedom were national demoralization and national ruin.

In modern times much benefit seems to be anticipated by some, from what is called the “separation of Church and State.” It is supposed by many, that a Nation may flourish without religion; and that even a Nation like our own, which has solemnly professed itself to be a Christian Nation, may abdicate its Christianity, may cease, as it were, the cross of Christ from its forehead; that it may apostatize from the faith, and from being a Constantine may become a Julian, and yet be great, and peaceful, and happy, in defiance of Him whose sovereignty it disowns, and who is the Arbiter of the destinies of nations, and who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

The Christian Church is founded on a rock, and the gates of hell will never prevail against it. It will stand secure when thrones totter and dynasties fall. Christianity does not need Kings and States; but Kings and States need Christianity; and when they cast it off they may read their own doom in the miserable condition of the Hebrew nation, as described in the Book of Judges.

If therefore we love our country, let us labour and pray that it ever may remain a Christian country. Let us do nothing to precipitate the separation of Church and State. Let us do all in our power to strengthen and sanctify their union. Let us imitate the spirit of Samuel, who wept

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1 See ch. viii. 3. 2 ch. vii. 23. 3 ch. viii. 27. 4 ch. vii. 30, 31. 5 ch. ix. 1—6. 6 ch. x. 6.

7 The moral, social, and political uses of the Book of the Judges have been pointed out by the wise son of Sirach (Eccles. xvi. 13), “Concerning the judges, every one by name, whose heart went not a whoring nor departed from the Lord, let their memory be blessed;” and by S. Augustin de Civ. Dei, xvi. 43, “Tenetores Judicium, sienit se habetant peccata populi, et miseror Dei, alternabat prospera et adversa bellorum;” and Iblid. xviii. 13.

It is well said by another ancient Father, “In the Book of Judges we have a record of what they did well and of what they did ill. And why were their actions written? In order that the Rulers of the Church may imitate their good deeds, and shun what they did amiss. We have now judges in Christendom who have care of souls, as well as jurisdiction in things spiritual. These things are specially written for them.” See Origens, Hom. 3.

* Matt. xvi. 18.

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over the apostasy of his nation, and of its king, and did all that he could to bring them back to the service of God. Let us show forth our religion by our patriotism, and consecrate our patriotism by our religion.

Christianity teaches that “no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself;” and that “we are all members one of another.” But again, it is often said in modern days that a man’s religion is only a matter between God and his own conscience. Doubtless it is a matter between man and God; but assuredly it is something more.

The religion of every household, and of every individual in it, affects the welfare of the whole Church and Nation. This truth is remarkably exemplified in the Book of Judges. In the last five chapters of this Book the sacred Writer has presented to us, as in an illustrative picture, two histories, as characteristic specimens of the temper of those times, and as revealing the secret springs of the evils which made them so disastrous to Israel.

It is remarkable, that in both these cases a single household is represented as the origin of the sin and misery.

In the first case, it is the household of Micah, in Mount Ephraim, formerly the dwelling-place of Joshua himself. Micah’s mother, in her professed zeal for the Lord, had, she said, set apart some money for the making of images. Micah steals the money, but restores it, in religious dread of his mother’s curse, and promotes his mother’s design. Micah is a covetous, worldly-minded man, and tries to lull his conscience to sleep by means of religion; but it must be a religion of his own choice and of his own making. It is a religion of compromise: he seeks to ingratiate himself, by dexterous and plant accommodations, into the favour of Jehovah, without losing the good-will of other gods. He makes to himself a private oratory, a domestic pantheon, and he takes upon himself to consecrate his own son to be its priest in Mount Ephraim.

In course of time a vagrant Levite comes that way, and is tempted, by an offer of food, raiment, and wages, to serve in this idolatrous chapel, and he is consecrated by Micah to be its priest. And Micah flatters himself that he is now sure of prosperity; his worldly affairs, he thinks, must go well, for he has managed to unite, by a happy syncretism, the worship of Jehovah with that of the gods of Syria and Canaan. He has a Levite for his priest; and if he has set up a private Tabernacle of his own, it is no more than had been done by Gideon before him.

In course of time a colony of the tribe of Dan goes forth from their original settlement in the south-west of Canaan, and comes to Mount Ephraim in their way to the city of Laish, in the farthest north of the land, in quest of a new abode there, which had been discovered by five of their emissaries, who assured them that it would be an easy prey, and who now led them thither. They too, like Micah, desire to have a religious sanction for their worldly enterprises. And they come to Micah’s house, spoil his domestic oratory of its idols, and set up his graven image in the city which they seize, and which they call Dan from their father; and Jonathan, the grandson of Moses, he and his sons become priests to the tribe of Dan, even to the days of Eli and the taking of the Ark.

Thus idolatry spread from the household of Micah to the Tribe of Dan, and took root there; and the name of Dan became a by-word for idolatry, and is treated as such by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures of the New Testament, even in the Apocalypse.

Thus in this history we see idolatry conceived in the mind of a woman on a plea of extraordinary zeal for God Himself (such is usually the beginning of creature-worship in the Church), and caught up eagerly by her son, and established in his household; and at length eating as a canker into a whole Tribe, and becoming inveterate there, and poisoning the whole Nation.

Here is a warning to the Church of God in these latter days. When men do “what is right in their own eyes,” and deviate from the plain words of Holy Scripture, and “will not endure sound doctrine;” and when they set up idols for themselves in their own hearts, according to their own imaginations, in the various forms in which idolatry accommodates itself to the human heart; whether it be in the alluring creature-worship of a corrupt Christianity, or in the mysterious sorceries of a diseased spiritualism, or in the specious illusions of popular fallacies, or in the reckless self-immolation of a sordid secularism; who can say what influence may be exercised, silently and secretly, but steadily and surely, on the whole Nation, and on the universal family of Man?

Of the two specimens exhibited in this latter part of the Book of Judges, the former is one of

1 Rom. xiv. 7. Eph. iv. 25. 2 ch. xvii. 4, 5. 3 ch. xvii. 13. 4 If this is the true reading: ch. xviii. 30. Vol. II. Part I.—81. See below, on ch. xviii. 30, 31. 5 2 Tim. iv. 3.
INTRODUCTION

corrupt religion, and the latter is one of corrupt morality. A private family is the germ of each. On the other hand, the blessed consequences flowing to future generations from domestic virtues, in a single household, even in humble life, are displayed in beautiful colours in the Book of Ruth, which forms a bright contrast to the dark histories that close the Book of Judges.

The source of domestic happiness is in the Divine institution of Marriage; and the desecration of Marriage is a sure precursor of the ruin of the peace of households, and eventually of the Nation.

This is what is presented to us in the latter history, at the close of the Book of Judges. A Levite sojourning in Mount Ephraim takes to himself a concubine. He who was bound to know God's law and to teach it, disobeys it. He will not make her his wife, and she plays the harlot; and as the story proceeds to tell, after reconciliation with her, when he ought to have defended her, he basely betrays and exposes her to shame and death for his own selfish purposes, and leaves her for a whole night to the mercy of savage miscreants and ruffians. And instead of repenting of his sin, and praying to God for pardon and guidance, he barbarously mutilates and mangles her body, which he ought to have loved and cherished as his own flesh, and he sends it piecemeal into the twelve Tribes of Israel, to cry aloud for indignation and vengeance on those who had perpetrated a sin in which he himself was an accomplice; and thus he publishes his own shame as well as the sin of the murderers. The sacred Historian expresses the feeling of horror produced by these transactions,—"It was so, that all that saw it, There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt."

The results of these desecrations of Marriage, and of this base treatment of Womanhood, are seen in the self-identification of a whole Tribe, the Tribe of Benjamin, with the iniquity of the men of Gibeah, and in the almost total extinction of that Tribe, and in the civil bloodshed which preceded and followed that catastrophe. On the other side, the other Tribes are almost equally guilty. In their hasty and ungovernable rage for vengeance, they bind themselves by oath never to give any of their daughters in marriage to men of Benjamin. And no solution is found for the difficulties in which the Nation is plunged but in another act of cruelty, the war against Jabez-gilead, and also in another act of violation of woman's modesty, at the very threshold of the Tabernacle of God at Shiloh, and at the time of a religious solemnity. And this act of violence was coupled with equivocation.

No wonder, that, when the elders of the Tribes of Israel united at a council in proposing such an act of licentiousness, we should afterwards hear that the door of the same Tabernacle became the scene of lewdness perpetrated by priests themselves, Hophni and Phinehas, and that God loathed their offerings, and permitted the Ark to be removed from Shiloh, never to return thither, and allowed the glory of Israel to fall into the hands of the Philistines.

Such are the warnings, which the Holy Spirit utters in the Book of Judges to the Church of God. And since Christian Nations enjoy far clearer light than ever shone upon Israel in those days; since the Son of God Himself has now declared His hatred of idolatry, in whatever form it may appear, and has revealed the punishments which await it; since He has also consecrated Marriage anew, and has raised Woman to a higher dignity than she ever possessed in Paradise; what evils are too great to be apprehended for those Churches and Nations, which encourage or connive at idolatry, and which also facilitate Divorce, and despoil Marriage of the sanctity with which it has been invested by Christ? May God raise up among us some, who may be enabled by His grace to restore Woman to her rightful place in Christendom, and to recover for Marriage those glorious prerogatives, with which it was endowed by Him who has united our nature to the Nature of God in His own Person, and has espoused to Himself the Bride, and has given Himself for her, and has cleansed her with His own blood, that she may be a glorious Church, without spot or blemish, blessed for evermore.

In both these melancholy histories the principal actor is a Levite, a minister of God's house, who is connected with Bethlehem, and, as we shall see, the acts of these two Levites exhibit a striking contrast to those of Him who was born in our nature at Bethlehem; and these histories will be most profitably read by those who bear in mind that contrast.

1 ch. xix. 1. 2 ch. xix. 25, 26. 3 ch. xix. 30. 4 It is remarkable that the sin of Gibeah was regarded in after ages by the prophets as one of the principal starting-points of the iniquity and misery of Israel: see Hosea x. 9. 5 ch. xxii. 22. 6 1 Sam. ii. 22. 7 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22. Ps. lxviii. 61. 8 Rev. xxii. 8; xxiii. 15. 9 Eph. v. 27.
ON THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

The chronology of this Book cannot be exactly settled. The following calculations are set down only as probable. The principal statement in Holy Scripture, which serves as a groundwork for arranging the chronology of this period, is that which relates that the Temple of Solomon began to be built in the 480th year after the Exodus (1 Kings vi. 1)

In regular order, the events of the period may be represented as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wanderings of Israel in the Wilderness</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victories of Joshua</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chushan-rishathaim oppresses Israel</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Othniel, Judge, and Rest</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moabitishe Oppression</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ehud and Rest</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shamgar and Jabin</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deborah and Rest</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midianishe Oppression</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gideon and Rest</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Abimelech</td>
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<td>Tola</td>
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<td>Jair</td>
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<td>Eli Judge</td>
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<td>Samuel Judge</td>
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<td>Saul King</td>
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<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solomon to beginning of Temple</td>
<td>3</td>
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480

Some of these dates are only approximations; and some of them are founded on the supposition (which is indeed generally accepted) that some of the Judges of Israel were Judges of only portions of Canaan, and that the years run parallel to those of other Judges in other districts of the same country. Thus there is reason to believe that Samson and Jephthah were partly contemporaries; the one in the west, the other in the east of Israel; and that Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, succeeding one another as judges, may have lived in the days of Samuel; and that after that time the oppression of Israel by the Ammonites on the east, is to be regarded as synchronizing with their oppression by the Philistines in the west; and that the eighteen years of the Ammonite oppression and the rule of Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (x. 8; xii. 7—14), fall into the period of the forty years of the Philistine oppression of Israel; during which Samson began to deliver Israel from the Philistines (xiii. 5; cp. xv. 20; xvi. 31); but Samuel completed their deliverance (1 Sam. vii. 1—14).

ON THE DATE OF THE BOOK.

With regard to the time at which the Book of Judges was written, it has been justly inferred from the phrases frequently occurring in it, "In those days there was no king in Israel," and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," that it was composed at a period in which the Hebrew Monarchy was not settled. The duration of the oppression of Israel by the Philistines is stated as extending to forty years, and was brought to a close by Samuel. It is remarked in this book that the Jebusites remained in possession of Jerusalem "even unto this day;" and it may

1 The opinion of some, who extend the duration of the period of the Judges to four hundred and fifty years, is grounded on an erroneous reading and interpretation of St. Paul's words (Acts xiii. 20). See the note below on that passage.


3 It is probable (as A Lapid observes) that the term of forty years in Acts xiii. 21 is a round number comprising the rule of Samuel as Judge as well as of Saul as King; cp. Biscoe on the Acts, ii. 613. From 2 Sam. ii. 8, 10 it appears that Ishbosheth, Saul's son—probably his youngest son—was about forty years old when his father died, and Saul was a young man when first inaugurated by Samuel (1 Sam ix. 2).

4 Cp. Carpzov, Introd. in V. T. p. 188.

5 See Keil, p. 217, and his Einleitung in d. A. T. p. 159, who rightly affirms that from the invasion of Chushan-rishathaim (iii. 8) to the time of Jair (x. 3) the history proceeds in regular chronological order. Some remarks on this subject may be seen in Mr. R. S. Poole's art. on Chronology, B. D. i. 323.

6 ch. xvi. 6; xivii. 1; xix. 1; xxi. 25.

7 ch. xiii. 1.

8 1 Sam. vii. 1—14.

9 ch. i. 21.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

hence be concluded, that the Book was written before Jerusalem was taken by David; that is, before the end of the eight years of David’s reign at Hebron.

The Talmud affirms that the Book of Judges was written by Samuel; and this seems to be probable. Perhaps an argument in favour of this opinion may be derived from the consideration that the writer of the Book of Judges must have been cognizant of the sins of Eli’s sons, and of the infirmities of their father, the Judge and High Priest of Israel; and that he must also have heard of the honour bestowed by God on Samuel, in the days of Eli, “when all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a Prophet of the Lord.” All notice of such circumstances as these happening in the time of the Judges, would hardly have been omitted by any historian, except Samuel himself.

The unity of the authorship of the Book has been disputed by some recent writers; but their arguments do not seem to be of any sufficient weight to invalidate the authority of the ancient Hebrew and Christian Churches, which have ever regarded this Book as constituting one well-compacted composition: at the same time that it may be readily allowed that whatever trustworthy documents were existing in the writer’s age—such as the record of the song of Deborah;—would be adopted and used by him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The courage, honesty, and truthfulness of the Historian are evident, from the unsparing and unflinching manner in which he exposes the defections of Israel from the Law of God, and from His worship; and displays their manifold sins in serving the gods of the heathens round about, and exhibits the miserable and ignominious consequences of their rebellion against God, in their subjugation on all sides by those enemies, whom they had conquered under Joshua, while they were obedient unto Him. The reception of such a Book as this into the Canon of Holy Scripture by the Hebrew Nation, whose ingratitude to God is described here with such clearness and fulness, is a standing evidence of its Truth and Inspiration.

The principal commentaries on this Book are, among the Ancient Christian Writers, those of Origen, Theodoret, Augustine, Procopius Gazeus, Isidorus Hispalensis, Bede; among the Rabbis, Kimchi, Aben Ezra, S. Jarchi; and among later Christian Writers, Arias Montanus, Servius, A Lapide, Bonfrereius, P. Martyr, Sebast. Schmidt; and among the most recent, Ziegler, Studer, Bertheau, and Keil.

1 2 Sam. v. 6—9. 1 Chron. xi. 4—9.
2 Bava Bathra, f. 14. This opinion is adopted by Abbarandel and most of the Rabbis.
3 And this opinion is adopted by Arias Montanus, Tostatus, Servius, Bp. Patrick, John, Paulus, Keil, and others; and so Dr. Pusey on Daniel, p. 311.
4 As is evident from his reference to the captivity of the Ark (xxviii. 30, 31; cp. ch. xiii. 1).
5 1 Sam. iii. 20.
6 Ziegler, Bertheau, Studer, De Wette, Stähelin, and others.
7 For a special examination of those arguments, the reader may refer to Hâvernick, Einleit. ii. 66; Keil, Einleit. in d. A. T. pp. 155, 156. Some of the principal objections will be considered below in the course of the notes on the book itself.
8 That the use of writing was not uncommon in that age may be inferred from the casual incident related in ch. viii. 12.
9 ch. v.
1. NOW and cp. the Sam. and Or, Probably first, him date go i. 7.


3. I. xiv. 5.

Now’] I. v. 3.

4. And he rolled the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew them in — Bezek ten thousand men. 5. And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek: and they fought against him, and they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites. 6. But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. 7. And Adoni-bezek said, Three score and ten kings, having † their thumbs and their great toes cut off, || gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath required me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

JUDGES.

Ch. 1. Now] The Hebrew ווא, connecting this book with the foregoing: cp. Josh. i. 1. The conjunctive ווא (says Keil on 1 Kings i. 1) at the beginning of a writing is a sure sign that it was connected with another: cp. Ezek., Krit. Gramm. p. 516, note 7. — after the death of Joshua] The death of Joshua is the date of degeneracy. So in spiritual respects, as long as the true Joshua lives in the soul, there is health. St. Paul says, “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. ii. 20). The true Joshua lives in the souls of His saints; but if He dies in the soul, that death is theirs; the death of their souls (Origin). — asked the Lord] In the days of Moses and Joshua, the Lord did not wait to be asked. He revealed Himself (see Josh. i. 1, and passim). The question was probably put by means of Urin and Thummim (Exod. xxviii. 30). — Who shall go up] They had all received a command to go up; see Deut. xx. 17. Cp. Josh. x. 40. 2. Judah shall go up] As the tribe on whom the Messiah's blessing had been pronounced—the tribe of CHRIST (Gen. xlix. 8–12). 3. Judah said unto Simeon his brother? “Utiue tribus ad tribunum” (Aug.). The tribe of Simeon was next to that of Judah (Josh. xix. 9). — Come up—and I likewise will go! The different characters of the two lots are expressed by these words—Come up to me in my upland mountain region; and I will go to thy lowland. Two Tribes go up together against the Canaanites. Christ sent forth His Apostles and His Disciples two and two (Mark vi. 7. Luke x. 1). The Apostles sent Peter and John together from Jerusalem to Samaria (Acts viii. 14). The Holy Ghost sent Paul and Barnabas together from Antioch, to preach to the Gentiles (Acts xiii. 1, 3, 47). All these were sent forth in pairs, to fight against the spiritual Canaanites, and to subdue the world to God. Here is a lesson for Christian Missions.

4. Canaanites and Perizzites] The two nations which comprised the whole population; the latter being more especially the inhabitants of the mountain districts (Gen. xiii. 7; xxxiv. 30). — Bezek] About seventeen miles N. of Shechem: cp. 1 Sam. xi. 8. Probably the king of Bezek had come down from the north to help the Canaanites in the south (Keil).

ADONI-BEZEK CONQUERED AND PUNISHED.

5. Adoni-bezek] Lord of bezek, or lightning; see on v. 7. 6. his thumbs and his great toes] Literally, the thumbs of his hands and his feet, that he might neither fight nor fly. Doubtless they knew what he had done to others (see v. 7), and they required him for it; and led him to confess God’s just retribution. This mode of punishment is mentioned by Ellen (Var. Hist, ii. 9), who says that the Athenians inflicted a part of it on the Aeginaeans, to disable them from fighting. Among the Romans, they who desired to escape conscriptions, thus mutilated themselves; and sometimes parents amputated the thumbs of their children—publica trunculant; whence poltron (Sueton., Aug. 2). 7. gathered their meat] or, were picking up, i.e. crumbs, εναλιγνωσε τα πτωτα της τροπης ανω: cp. Luke xvi. 21. — as I have done, so God hath required me] He acknowledges God’s justice. On this text, as a declaration of God’s righteous judgment, adjusting and adapting men’s punishments to their sins, see Joseph Mede’s excellent Sermon, Book i. Diss. xxx. Works, pp. 141—49.

The punishment of the rich man in the parable, with the comment of Abraham upon it (Luke xvi. 25), opens out to us a view of the spiritual instruction to be derived from these and other incidents in this book. They are specimens of God’s dealings with the Adoni-bezeks of this world, who abuse the power and wealth which they have received from Him, and make them instruments of heartless cruelty. The beggar, lying at the rich man’s door-gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from his table; and the Kings crowning beneath the table of Adoni-bezek; and the subsequent punishment of the rich man and of Adoni-bezek, belong to the same class of evidence of a Divine Moral Governor, and of Future retribution. The same truth is displayed to us in the treatment of Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian, to whom Gideon said, “As the Lord liveth, if ye had saved them (my brethren, the sons of my mother), I would not slay you” (viii. 19); and of Agag, king of the Amalekites, by Samuel, who said, “As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women” (1 Sam. xv. 35).
But the teaching of the Gospel, with characteristic fulness, goes further; it lifts up the veil which separates this world and the future; and shows not only the retribution of the wicked, but the reward of the righteous in the world to come. Doubtless there is also a deeper meaning here.

The Book of Judges, which relates the history of the struggles and victories of Israel after the death of Joshua, represents, as in a figure, the conflicts and conquests of the Christian Church after the departure of Christ.

Adoni-bezek is a figure of our spiritual Enemy.

He is the Lord of lightning. Satan is compared to lightning by Christ (Luke x. 18). He dazzled the Heathen World by his glory in arts and arms; and yet, like lightning, he was a destroyer. The cutting off of thumbs and great toes represents the disabling men for fight or flight. Satan did this. He maimed the powers of mankind, and he kept mankind in chains. Adoni-bezek maimed seventy kings, and kept them in vassalage. The nations of the world were then maimed by the Hebrews (see on Dent. xxxii. 5). Satan kept them in thraldom. The kings crouched beneath the feet and under the table of Adoni-bezek, and fed on the scraps and crumbs which fell from it. Such was the condition of the nations, when the Apostles—the Jews and Simeons—went forth to preach, and to fight against the spiritual Beezel of Satan. The nations lay like slaves beneath Satan's feet and under Satan's table, content, like the prodigal, to feed on husks which fell from it (Luke xv. 16). The Apostles went forth strong in the Spirit of God, given to them at Pentecost. "The Lord was with Judah" (v. 19). They conquered Satan; they disabled him who had disabled others. Christ was with them, and in them, and He bound the strong man, and spoiled his goods (Matt. xii. 29. Mark iii. 27. Cp. Rev. xx. 2, 5). When He had sent the seventy forth (the same number as Adoni-bezek's royal slaves), and they returned to Him, Christ said, foreshewing the triumphs of the Gospel, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke xii. 18). Adoni-bezek is brought as a captive to Jerusalem, and he dies there. Satan is overcome by the power of Christ in the Gospel, and is carried in triumph to the Church of God. And in the end of all things, Christ's presence will shine like the lightning (Matt. xxiv. 27; and He will destroy the enemy with the brightness of His Coming (2 Thess. ii. 8); and all kings will fall down before Him (Ps. cxli. 11); and He will put all things under His feet (1 Cor. xv. 25).

This history at the beginning of the Book of Judges is like the history of the fall of Jericho at the beginning of the Book of Joshua, a copious representation of the work of Christ by the ministry of His Church, beginning with His Ascension, and to be consummated at the end. *He went forth conquering and to conquer* (Rev. vi. 2). And as by this specimen at the beginning of this book, showing what two tribes of Israel could do by faith and obedience, against Adoni-bezek, who had subjugated and enslaved seventy kings, God showed what the twelve tribes might have done, if they had believed and obeyed Him; and that all their subsequent miseries were due to defection from God;—in like manner, also in the Christian Church, if men had followed the example of the Apostles,—the Jews and Simeons of the first ages,—and gone forth in the spirit of faith and love against the powers of Darkness, they might long since have evangelized the World. All the distresses of Christendom are ascribable to desertions of Christ, and not to any imperfection (as some have alleged) in Christianity, and not to any imperfection (as some have alleged) in Christianity.

8. *the children of Judah* [Here (v. 20) we have an account of the victories of Judah, the tribe of Christ; and the reason is added,—"The Lord was with Judah" (v. 19).]

Jerusalem] Joshua had taken and slain the king (Josh. x. 18—20; and Judah took the city; but afterwards it was re-entered by the Jehovahites, who dwelt in it with the children of Judah (Josh. xv. 63), and of Benjamin (Judg. i. 21), the city being in Benjamin (Josh. xvii. 18), or, in the border of Judah (Josh. xv. 8); and it was not till the reign of David, that Zion, its fortress, was recovered (2 Sam. v. 7).

This conquest of Jerusalem by Judah is another evidence of what conquests were gained, and might have been maintained, by God's blessing on men's faith and obedience; and the subsequent moral state of Jerusalem, inhabited by Jehovahites as well as Israelites, represents the failures in the Church of God, which are due to the sins of men. Cp. Matt. xiii. 27, 28.


[in the valley] or, low land. Heb. shephelah; see Josh. xv. 33.

10. *the children of Judah* [This history of the exploits of Caleb and Othniel, of the tribe of Judah, seems to be introduced here by way of recapitulation from the Book of Joshua (xv. 13—19).] Grotius. Cp. ii. 6—10.

11. *the children of the Kenite* [See Num. x. 29. It appears that this was the promise of Moses, Jehovah's son-in-law, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good:" see also the promise there (v. 92). And this union of the Kenites with Judah was a fulfillment of that promise of Moses. In like manner, the Proselytes and Gentiles were united with the Apostles of the seed of Abraham, in doing God's work, and overthrowing His enemies, and extending His Church: see below, Introductory to the Acts of the Apostles, p. 9.

12. *the city of palm trees*] Jericho (Deut. xxxiv. 3). Out of Jericho (a type of the city of this world), having been bequeathed by Joshua, some went forth to fight for Israel. So in the history of Christendom, God has made earthly powers to forward the progress of the Gospel. Cp. Rev. xii. 16, "The earth helped the Woman," the Church.

17. *And Judah went with Simon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah.* 18. Also Judah took *Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof.* 19. *And the Lord was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.* 20. *And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said: and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak.* 21. *And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.*

22. *And the house of Joseph, they also went up against Beth-el: and the Lord was with them.* 23. *And the house of Joseph sent to desire Beth-el.* (Now the name of the city before was Luz.) 24. *And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and we will shew thee mercy.* 25. *And when he shewed them the entrance into the city, they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but they let go the man and all his family.* 26. *And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which is the name thereof unto this day.*

17. Zephath [now Sephata, south of Elusa: see Josh. xii. 14. — was called Hormah] destruction: and thus the vow of Israel was fulfilled: see Num. xxi. 2. 18. Judah took Gaza] This victory of Judah alone over the chief cities of Philistia, while the other tribes were subdued, was not without a reason. The influence of the Philistines was due to the sins of Israel, forsaking God. 19. So, in the first ages of the Church, God subdued countries to the Gospel, preached by a single Evangelist, or an Apostle (e.g. by a Philip or a Peter sent from Jerusalem, and passing through the region: see Acts vii. 26; ix. 32—42, but now, by reason of men's sins, they have been almost lost to Christianity. These remarkable victories in the Sept. here (Judah did not inherit Gaza) is probably due to the fact that these cities were afterwards repossessed by the Canaanites: see xiv. 19; xvi. 1. 1 Sam. v. 10. 20. And the Lord was with Judah] The Targum of Jonathan has here "the Word of the Lord," and so in v. 22. "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," was Christ's promise to His disciples (Matt. xxviii. 20); and when the Christian Judahs and Josephs went forth to fight against Sin and Satan, and preached everywhere, the Lord worked with them, "and confirmed the word with signs following" (Mark xvi. 20). 21. — he drave out — could not drive out] The word here used in both clauses is from the same root, yarash, primarily to seize (cp. kaph, kaphe, khes, Gen. xxi. 50). The word is adopted from the Pentateuch (as Hagg. observes, ii. 30), and the Greek phrase, xardxioi eiqou (possession of the Gentiles, the occupation of their land), is thence derived (Acts vii. 45). 22. the house of Joseph] Ephraim is here placed before Manasseh (see v. 27), according to Jacob's prophecy (Gen. xlviii. 20). — Beth-el] now Bethlia. It was on the borders of Ephraim and Benjamin (Josh. xvi. 2; xviii. 13), and they naturally desired to occupy some city, associated with the history of their forefather Jacob; and "the Lord," who had then appeared to Jacob, and had promised the land to his seed, "was with them" in their expedition (see Gen. xxviii. 11—22; xxxv. 6—15).

The Man of Bethel.

24—26. And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city — unto this day! What is the meaning of this incident? It may at first sight seem to be trivial; but nothing in Scripture is so. The Ephraimites make offers of mercy to this man of Bethel, if he would help them in their enterprise, and enable them to win Bethel; the place where Jacob had seen the holy angels, and where he had built an altar, and where God had talked with him, and had promised to give him the land (Gen. xxxv. 10—19), which Jacob had consecrated by changing its name from Luz to Bethel — the house of God. The man of Bethel complied with the desire of the Ephraimites, who, with his help, took the city, and destroyed the Canaanite inhabitants of it, but spared the man and his family, doing more for him than they had promised to do. Here then was a happy opportunity for the man of Bethel; he might have dwelt with the men of Joseph at Bethel, and have become a worshipper of the true God, and have thus become a citizen for ever of the heavenly Bethel, the house of God, which will stand for ever. But he lost his opportunity; he went away to the land of the Hittites, a land of idolaters, and there he built a city, and called it Luz, the same name as Bethel formerly had in its heathen state. He might have become an inhabitant of Bethel with the people of God; but he leaves Bethel, and he is the founder of another heathen Luz of his own.

The man of Bethel, therefore, is presented to us in this Scripture as a specimen of that class of persons, who help the Church of God in her work from motives of fear, or of mortality benefit, and not from love of God; and who, when they have opportunities of spiritual benefit, slight those opportunities, and even shun the light and go away from Bethel, the house of God, as it were, unto some far-off land of the Hittites, and build there a heathen Luz of their own.

There are four classes of persons, whose various conduct towards the Church of God, and to the Gospel preached by her, is represented by four cases in the Books of Joshua and Judges; namely —
JUDGES. 27—33. and ascendance of Canaanites.

Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.

Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries.

Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achizib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob: But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out. But he dwelt among the Canaanites, the

(1) There is this case of the man of Bethel. (2) There is the case of the Levites, in v. 16, who helped Judah after their victories in Canaan, and are received into fellowship with them. (3) There is the case of the Gibonites, who came to Joshua from motives of fear, and were admitted to dwell with Israel, as herders of wood and waters of water. (See Prelim. Note to Josh. ix.)

(4) There is the case of Rahab. She stands out in beautiful contrast to the man of Bethel. He helped the spies of Joseph, and was spared, with his household, but did not choose to live in their Bethel. But Rahab received the spies of Joshua, even before she had gained a single victory, and she professed her faith in their God; and she was spared, and her house hold, and became a mother in Israel, an ancestress of Christ (See Josh. vi. 25).

Rahab represents the faithful Church, and every faithful soul in it. The man of Bethel represents those who have the truth presented to them, and favour it, to a certain degree, from reasons of personal advantage or political expediency, but are not lovers of Christianity for its own sake, but build up a Luz of their own.

Such, in the New Testament, was Herod, who adorned the Temple from love of popularity, but was a slyer flatterer of Rome, and murdered the Innocents. Such was Felix, who dealt kindly with St. Paul for love of money, and knew the Gospel, but shunned it, for he loved darkness rather than light. Such, in some respects, was Herod Agrippa II., who confessed St. Paul’s innocence, and was converse with the Apostles and the Prophets, but had not courage to profess his faith in Him of whom the Law and the Prophets spake (see on Acts xxvi. 28).

Such was his friend, the historian Josephus, who had some knowledge of the Gospel, but dared not embrace it. Such was Demas, who loved this present world, and in the hour of St. Paul’s persecution went off to Thessalonica (2 Tim. iv. 10). Such are the Machiavellis of modern times, who help the Church of God from more earthly motives, but have no real love for it, and in their hearts dwell far from it.

All these have opportunities afforded them of living in the house of God here, and hereafter. But they care not for the citizenship of the Bethel on earth, and will not dwell in the everlasting Bethel that is above. They prefer a Luz of their own, in the land of the Hittites. The site of that Luz is unknown, and their end is darkness and shame. But blessed are they who dwell in the true Bethel; they will have visions of angelic love, as Jacob had, and be with them for ever hereafter.

Neither did Manasseh. Notwithstanding the success with which God blessed the arms of Judah (vv. 3—20), and Joseph (vv. 22—26), i.e. Ephraim; other tribes failed of their duty, and did not drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in the land allotted to them.

These verses are applicable to the lukewarmness and failure of particular Churches in the work of evangelization.

On the site of Beth-shean and other towns in v. 27, see Josh. xi. 11.

The Canaanites would dwell] The Canaanites made an overture to dwell: the Hebrew word is goel, the hipkit of goel, to begin, to desire (see Gen. 326). Observe the progress of degeneracy in the Hebrew Church of God. The Canaanites at first make friendly overtures, they even consent to pay tribute for a time (v. 28); but eventually, as this Book shows, they domineer over, ensnare, and oppress the Church of God. But there is mercy even there, for God wills the stones to cry, and drive them out (see Josh. x. 28).

Be that as it may, the Church is here warned, and the same word is used with respect to the Canaanites, to drive them out the Canaanites, to drive them out. The Canaanites dwell within the borders of the Church, and God commands the Church to drive them out. This is the Church’s part, and the Church’s duty. It is the Church’s part to preserve the Church’s purity, and the Church’s duty to drive out those who would defile it. But the Church is commanded to do this, and to do it with strength, determinedly, and not to be overruled, as the Canaanites were, nor to be imposed upon.

Israel’s degeneracy.

28. when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute.] They used the strength, which (see Josh. vii.), enriching themselves, and not in obeying Him. On the instruction thence to be derived for Christian States and Churches, see above on Josh. xvii. 13.

29. the Canaanites that dwell] This expression, to dwell among, signifies a friendly cohabitation; see 2 Kings iv. 13, "I dwell among mine own people."

The Canaanites dwelt side by side with Israel, as neighbours and friends—a new stage of national degeneracy, preparing the way for further decline (v. 32).

—Gezer—See Josh. xvi. 10.


31. Accho—a harbour on the north of Carmel; called 'Aqiq by Joseph, Antit. ix. 14, 2, and Diod. Sic. xix. 38; and afterwards called Ptolemais, i. Mace. v. 15—22. Acts xxi. 7, where we read of the visit paid to it by St. Paul, in his way from Tyre to Caesarea; celebrated as St. John’s of Acre in the history of the Crusaders, by whom it was surrendered to the Sultan of Egypt, A.D. 1291; now containing a mixed population of Moslems, Druses, and Christians, amounting in all to about 5000 souls (Ramner, Robinson, Ritter, and Thomson).

—Zidon—Now Sidon: see Josh. xi. 8.

32. the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites] A further degeneracy. Here, it is said, that the Canaanites were allowed to dwell among the Israelites (vv. 27—30); but now the Israelites go and dwell among the Canaanites. The words of the origin are very expressive—Asher dwelt in the midst, as it were, in the heart of Canaan. Asher was incorporated in Canaan.

Such also was the gradual decay of the primitive zeal and piety in the Church. The Christians of the first age fought against the spirit of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and brought it into subjection to themselves. The first decline was that of permitting that spirit to steal into the Church and to dwell there. The next degeneracy in the Church was that of going forth and taking to itself the spirit of worldly ambition and carnal indulgence, and of doing those works of the Evil One, which are the fruits of that spirit, and the keeping its court in the world, and the other works of the devil in the heart of Canaan.

33. Beth-shemesh—The house of the sun (see Josh. xix. 38). Here is a still further decline. Israelites dwell quietly with the Canaanites in Beth-shemesh, a city of idolatry. Joshua by his prayers had arrested the light of the Sun, till he had conquered the Canaanite who opposed him; but these Israelites dwell with idolaters in the city where the Sun was worshipped in the place of God. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness and the Light of the World; but some Christian Churches have tolerated the Sun from Him, and dwell along with them—Beth-shemesh of their own, where they have fellowship with idols.

—he dwelt among the Canaanites] Literally, he dwelt in the midst of Canaan. Naphtali was incorporated with Canaan: see v. 38.
inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became tributaries unto them. And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley: But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries. And the coast of the Amorites was from the going up to Akkrabbim, from the rock, and upward.

II. And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I have seen all that Israel do in the wilderness: behold, they sin against the Lord, in that they make the golden calf, and they worship and serve it. And the Lord said unto Aaron, What dost thou here? And he said, My people have sinned. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. And the Lord said unto Aaron, Take one of the princes of Israel, and say unto him, Remove from me the congregation of Israel from before me. And they shall be gathered unto thee, and you shall come up into Mount Sinai. And Aaron told the other princes of Israel, and they brought every man his servant unto the mountain of the Lord. And two tribes, Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, being strong armed, being able to fight with the Amorites, came up with him unto the battle. And they said unto him, Because the Lord said, Go to the people of Amorites, and devour them, we will come with thee: for we will do the work of the Lord with thee. And Joshua said unto the two princes, Be strong and of good courage: be not afraid, neither be ye discouraged from serving the Lord: for the Lord will be with you, as he was with Moses.

34. the Amorites forced the children of Dan] Literally, the Amorites pressed, from lacka, to squeeze, to affright (Gen. 317). Hosea 12, 1 speaks of the Israelites who had not to drive out the Amorites; and, if they had been faithful and obedient to God, might have conquered them, as Joshua had done (Josh. x. 12), and as God had promised that they should be enabled to do (Josh. iii. 10)—are now driven out by them. What is the moral of this? If the Church does not drive out her spiritual Amorites—Unbelief, Ungodliness, Herestry, Idolatry—her spiritual Amorites will be abaser and infest her, and they will at length drive her out of her inheritance.

36. the scene of Joshua's great victory over them: here was a signal mark of Israel's faithfulness and fall. The mount here mentioned is called Heres, the Sun. Was it sacred to the sun in the worship of Canaan? Cp. Keil, p. 186, who supposes it to be the same place as Ir-shemesh, the city of the Sea (see Josh. xv. 10). This would be a further aggravation of Israel's shame, that the Amorites should dwell in the Mount of the Sun in Aijalon, where Joshua had stayed the light of the Sun and the Moon until he had routed the Amorites, his enemies (Josh. xiii. 13).

When the Church of God declines from her first faith and love, even the battle-fields of her noblest victories will become the witnesses of her defeat and ignominy. The City of Rome, where Peter and Paul shed their blood for Christ, and where (perhaps it was the purest flower for the Church in the west) the first basin (alsab) seen, and now soes, the triumphs of error in doctrine, and of superstition and idolatry in worship.

—(Schaalbin] Josh. xix. 42.

36. from the going up to Akkrabbim] Literally, from the ascent of Scorpion, at the southern end of the Dead Sea: see Num. xxxvi. 4. Josh. xv. 2, 3.

—(from the rock] Probably Petra in Wady Musa, s.e. of the Akkrabbim; see 2 Kings xiv. 7. Isa. xvi. 1 (Baruch, Bohkim) so supposes it to be the rock in Num. xx. 8, in the wilderness, and upward or beyond.

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD.

CH. II. 1. an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim] Who was this Angel who came from Gilgal to Bochim? Probably the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. He speaks as God: I made you to go out of Egypt: I have brought you into the land which I sware unto your fathers. I said, I will never break my covenant with you. The First Person of the Blessed Trinity is never said in Scripture to be sent, but the Second Person is often represented as an angel—viz., as sent. (See above on Exod. iii. 2; and below, vi. 22.)

The Angel came from Gilgal. There "the Captain of the Lord's host" had appeared to Joshua; and He was no other than the Sun of God (see on Josh. x. 31—15, and so Calocenas, Gerhard, Pfleiger, Lightfoot, i. 45) and there was a remarkable propriety (as Theodoret observes) in the coming of the same Divine Being from Gilgal, because Gilgal was the first place in Canaan at which they halted, after the miraculous passage of the Jordan; and because at Gilgal the reproach of Egypt had been rolled away from Israel by the circumcision which God gave to his people. (See Num. x. 10.)

2. why have ye done this?] On the enormity of this sin, especially the connivance at, and patronage of, idolatry in the Church of God, see Tertullian, commenting on this passage in his Scorpice, c. 4, and applying it to the Church.

3. unto all the children of Israel] Therefore these words were scattered on a public occasion, when they were assembled, perhaps for some festival, at Shiloh (Bp. Patrick: cp. H echt, Auth. ii. 81; and below, vi. 9). The Sept. (v. 1) connects Bochim with Bethel, but its site is uncertain.

4. the Angel to bochim] Cp. Allon-bachuth, the oak of weeping (Gen. xxxv. 8).—They sacrificed there unto the Lord as they were permitted to do in any place where the Lord revealed Himself to them (cp. vi. 20, 28; xiii. 12. Num. xxiv. 25; and Keil on Deut. xii. 5). This was an intimation of God's will that His worship should eventually be diffused everywhere (see Mal. i. 11; John iv. 21; 1 Tim. ii. 5).

The Israelites called the place Bochim; they named it from their own tears. They hid the principal stress on their own feelings, and on their own outward manifestations of sorrow. But they did not speak of God's mercies: and they were not careful to bring forth fruits of repentance; they were a barren fig-tree, having only leaves. Theirs was a religion (such as is too common) of sentiment and emotions, not of faith and obedience.

How different was Joshua's view of their relation to God! The place where at God's command he had circumcised them was called by him Gilgal, because he had there rolled away the reproach under which they lay, not being God's people. But they call this place Bochim, as if their tears were a sufficient answer to the reproof of God. But they gave no other signs of amendment. Rather, they became worse and worse (see v. 11)—they served Baalim. They were content with this outward display of sorrow—a mere show of repentance, like that of Cain, or Ahab, or of the Pharisees, or of Judas (see on 2 Cor. vii. 10). How expressive therefore of national degeneracy is the phrase from Gilgal to Bochim. But Bochim by this concession without religious acts—emotions without effects—leave the heart worse than before. If God's rebukes are tried with, His grace is withdrawn. Here there is another warning to Christian Churches, and souls.
And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land. 7 And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel. 8 And When Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. 9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash. 10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers:

And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. 11 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim: 12 And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger. 13 And they forsook the Lord, served Baal and Ashtaroth. 14 And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. 15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. 17 And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; but they did not so. 18 And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it was 6—10. when Joshua] Here are other recapitulations from the Book of Joshua (Augustine), showing the connexion of this Book with that (see Josh. xxiv. 30, 31; and above, i. 10—15). There is a similar kind of interweaving of the Book of Joshua with the Book of Judges, and of the Pentateuch with both, as there is of the Books of some of the earlier Prophets with the Books of those who came after them, and of the earlier Gospels with the later, and of the earlier Epistles of the New Testament with those Epistles which were written after them. All Scripture is written on an uniform plan, and each part lends its help, and bears its witness to each; and the parts form together one harmonious whole, like stones in some beautiful building, or like links in some well-proportioned body, or like the wings and wheels of the Cherubim of Ezekiel, interwoven and inwound with each other. 8. Joshua—died] See i. 1. 9. Timnath-heres] Called Timnath-scrub in Josh. xxiv. 30; cp. xix. 60. The change of name after Joshua’s death was due, as some of the Rabbis say, to the representation of the sun (Heb. cherev: see Geen. 306) on his grave, in memory of the miracle of Gibeon (Josh. x. 12). 10. there arose another—which knew not] Another phrase adopted from the Pentateuch (Exod. i. 8).

11. Baalim] Literally, the Baalim, i. e. the different forms under which Baal was represented. They forsook the One True God, the Lord, to serve the false deities of other nations, as Baal, a lord, with various images and under different titles; such as Baal-peor, Baal-zebub, Baal-berith (see Augustine, Qu. 16; Pfeiffer’s learned note, Dublin, p. 178, and the article in Dr. Smith’s B. D. i. 145). Baal was the principal male deity of the Phoenician nations, as Ashtar was the female. The one was the sun-god, the other the moon-goddess; the one the principle of original production, the other that of reception and development (see Movers, Phénizier, p. 184). But Baal appears as a godless in the New Testament (see below on xi. 4). 12. And they forsook] Here is a refutation of the theory of those modern critics, who allege that the Book of Judges and the following Books of Holy Scripture represent a gradual development of a religious system of law and worship, and not a gradual defection from the primitive standard of both, which is seen in the Pentateuch. Cp. Hengst., Anti. ii. 120. 13. Ashtaroth] For the various forms of Ashtarte, the goddess of the Canaanitish races, see Horod., i. 105; and below, x. 6. 1 Sam. vi. 4; vii. 5; xii. 10. 1 Kings xi. 5, 33. Cp. Pfeiffer, p. 180. The word here used begins with the Hebrew ovein; in i. 7 we have Ashereth, a word beginning with the Hebrew aleph. The name of the latter is by some supposed to be derived from the asherim, or idols of wood; see Exod. xxiv. 13. Deut. vii. 5; xii. 3; xvi. 21. The Hebrew Ashtoreth is connected by some with the Persian Esther, or Greek aorhip, a star; see Gesen. 661; and above, on Gen. xiv. 5; but Movers, Phil., pp. 560—600, denies their identity; cp. below, on 1 Kings xi. 5; xiv. 22—24. 14. he sold them] They were no longer freemen, but they had made themselves captives and slaves; such was the condition to which they had degraded themselves by disobedience. God punished them by their own sins. The Hebrew manner, to sell, had been already used in this sense in Deut. xxxii. 30 (Gesen. 475). 15. judges] Heb. shephatelion, from shaphat, to judge, literally to set the standards (Gesen. 844); hence the name “sofetes,” by which the chief magistrates of Carthage were called (Lev. xxvii. 37; xxx. 7). The name judge, as used in this Book, and in other parts of Scripture, is much more comprehensive in its sense, than the Greek aorhip, aorh, and signifies to rule, to govern (Gesen. 814). “Ye shall sit on twelve thrones,” says our Lord to His Apostles, “judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. xvi. 28), i.e. ruling them. — delivered them] Literally, saved them; = sauvo autós.
repented the Lord because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. 19 And it came to pass, "when the judge was dead, that they returned, and ||corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; † they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.
20 fAnd the anger of the Lord was not against Israel; and he said, Because fver. 14, that this people hath e transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice; 21 halso I will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died:
22 I That through them I may i prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did known, or not. 23 Therefore the Lord ||left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

III. 1 Now these are *the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them.

(Sept.) The word in the original is from the same root, γασθον, to set free, to save (Gen. 2:17), as Joshua or Jesus. The Judges are called in the original, σωτεριους, σωτηρἐς, by Sept. in i.ii. 9; 15: and so the Septuagint prepared the way for the recognition of the true character of the judges, as figures of the Great Liberator and Saviour of all men—Jesus Christ; cp. Eph. iv. 14.

22. That through them I may prove Israel! God in His mercy overrules evil for good. He commanded the Israelites to root out the Canaanites. Israel disobeyed the command; and God’s next purpose was, that good may be derived by Israel from them; that the faith, patience, and steadfastness of Israel may be tried and exercised by them, and so may receive a reward.

So it is in the field of the Church. God sowed good seed in the field; but men slept, and the enemy came and sowed tares, and the tares are allowed to remain for the trial of the wheat, even to the Day of Harvest: see Matt. xiii. 24—30.

The Canaanites of Unbelief, Heresy, and Schism try the faith and love of the Church: see I Cor. xi. 19. Those who are weak, worldly-minded, self-confident, fill thereby: but to those who love the Truth, and seek patiently and humbly for it, the assaults of the Enemy are overruled for good, and serve for the clearer elucidation, and stronger confirmation, of the Faith, and of the Lord’s ways to Israel. So Mon. i. 9. Augustine & St. Ambrose de Incarn. i. 6; St. Augustine de Vera Religione, c. 10, whose words may be transcribed here:—

Ecclesia Catholica utitur omnibus eruditiis ad prophetas suos, et ad eorum correctionem cum eivisignabulam adnuum, ut Deus, qui est Deus, in operationibus suae; Heretices, ad probationem doctrinae suae; Schismatis, ad documentum stabilitatis sua; Judaeis, ad comparationem palæitritudinis suae. Exclusi ab Ecclesia aut penitendo redactum, aut in nequitiam defunctum, ad admonitionem nostrae diligenter; aut schismam ad eacorrectionem nostre patientiae; aut harensem aliquam gignunt ad examinem sake occupionem nostrae intelligentes.

... Utinam ergo etiam heretici, non eorum apologetibus errores, sed ut catholico disciplina ad normam eorum insidias accurates, vigiliantiores, eavos ab hominibus, etiamus eos ad aliquem non reasonatum esse."

So St. Augustine, in his Letter to his friend Rufinus, in Ps. 51, "Et hereticis aseertat Ecclesiae; et ex his qui malum sentiant, probati sunt qui bona sentiant," and in Ps. lxvii. C. Hooker, v. 46, 6: and below, on ii. 21.

Neither delivered them into the hand of Joshua? They were not to be driven out at once, for the reason assigned in Deut. vii. 22. So our Blessed Lord left much to be done by His Apostles after His Ascension. He would not achieve all the victory Himself. He would not deprive them, and His Church, after them, of the glory to be gained from the contest and the conquest. Indeed He promised, that they who believed in Him, would be enabled by Him to do greater works than He Himself had done on earth, because He would send them the Holy Spirit, after He had gone to the Father. See below, on John xiv. 12. Acts ii. 41; iv. 4; v. 15; xix. 12.

Preliminary Note to Chap. III.

With this chapter begins the history of the Judges, properly so called.

That history may perhaps at first sight appear to be liable to several objections. Some of the details, as, for instance, in the present chapter, may seem to be trivial, insignificant, perhaps even offensive; and some of the actions of some of the Judges may appear to be liable to exception on the score of morality.

Occasion will be given for the examination of such allegations in detail in the following notes.

(2) Therefore the seeming triviality and insignificance of these details, which may be slighted and disparaged by some readers of God’s Word, should rather lead us to consider, whether there is not in these some instruction for us, which does not lie on the surface, but beneath it; and whether it is not for our own duty diligently to examine what that spiritual instruction is.

Here is our moral probation. They who are disposed to carp and cavil at God’s Word, may be tempted to censura and condemn the actions of those Judges who are here presented to us. But let every reverent reader of Holy Scripture keep in mind, that these men were raised up by God in times of great national distress and spiritual degeneracy, and were enriched by Him with extraordinary measures of His Spirit, and even called Sauls and Kings in His holy Word, and received a special commission from Him Who is the Giver of all Law, and the Arbiter of Life and Death, and Who is the only Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy (James iv. 12); and Who enabled them with superhuman might, and enabled them to achieve with marvellous success those prodigious works which by supernatural inspiration He prompted them to undertake. Therefore the reverent reader of Holy Scripture will not be disposed to contravene the sentence pronounced by the Ancient Hebrew Church, speaking by the mouth of the wise son of Sirach, “Concerning the Judges, every one by name, whose heart went not a whoing nor departed from the Lord, let their memory be blessed.”

But there is something more than this in this history. S. Jerome says, speaking of this Book (Epist. ad Paulinum, Ep. 50), “Quot principes populi, tot figura sunt.” He asserts that all the Judges have a typical character.

The canaanites of Israel (as another Father, Origens, observes, in his Homilies on this Book) are typical of our spiritual enemies, and of those sins, against which the Apostles and Saints of God in the Church have been raised up to fight, and which they have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to overcome for the deliverance of God’s people.

1) In this view of this Book the acts of the Judges acquire a new interest and importance.

They are acts of God Himself, working by human instru-
even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; 2 Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof; 3 Namely, 4 five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath. 4 c And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

5 And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites: 5 And 6 they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. 7 f And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, 7 and served Baalim and 6 the groves. 8 Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of 6 Chushan-rishathaim king of 6 Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years.

9 And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord 3 raised up a 4 deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even 6 Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. 10 And the Spirit of the Lord came upon...
upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and the Lord delivered Chushan-rishathaim king of *Mesopotamia* into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushan-rishathaim. **11** And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

**12** And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord: and the Lord strengthened *Eglon* the king of Moab, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord.

And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and *Amalek*, and went and smote Israel, and possessed **r** ch. 5. **11**

Of him it may be said in an eminent degree, as it is of Othniel, "The Spirit of the Lord was upon him." That Spirit made him a new man. Othniel stands first among the Judges. Peter holds the first place in all the lists of the Apostles (Matt. x. 2, Mark iii. 16. Luke vi. 14. Acts i. 13). Othniel was of the tribe of Judah; Peter was specially the Apostle of the Jews (Gal ii. 7). Othniel was married, so was St. Peter; and if we may believe the ancient history of his wife's courage, she was a worthy swittype of a daughter of Caleb (see *Enseb. H. E. iii. 30, and below on 1 Pet. iii. 6), and that she was endowed with the upper storey of the Divine grace. Othniel prevailed over Chushan-rishathaim, who name betokens a double form of evil. It is remarkable, that St. Peter was the first of the Apostles who prevailed over the stubbornness of the Jews, and over the wisdom and strength of the Gentile world. He and the kingdom of the world (the new world, by which he opened the kingdom of heaven to the Jews at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, and to Cornelius the Centurion, the first-fruits of the Gentiles, at Caesarea (see Acts ii. 14. 38; x. 34. 48; xv. 7). The victory of Othniel was gained over a king of *Mesopotamia*, or Babylon. The first converts of St. Peter mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles came from Babylon (see on Acts ii. 9). His first Epistle is dated from Babylon (see on 1 Pet. v. 19); and if we may take *Babylonia* in a spiritual sense as the Babylon of the new world, as a Literal sense as the Babylon of the Western Babylon—Rome, when he received the crown of a glorious martyrion there (see below, the *Introduction* to his Epistles, p. 69).

It is therefore submitted to the learned reader's consideration whether the work wrought by Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Church of God by the instrumentality of St. Peter, the first Apostle, may not have been foreshadowed by the work which God wrought by the agency of Othniel, the first Judge?--*The land had rest forty years.* The same period of the wandering in the wilderness, a term occurring elsewhere in this Book (see v. 31; viii. 28). The Rest after Balaam's rule was twice forty (v. 30). On the meaning of this term as a term of trial, calamity, in some crises, either for good or evil, see below, on Acts, p. 29.

Observe the superabundance of Divine love. Israel had been oppressed by Chushan-rishathaim during eight years for many sins, and now they have peace during forty years for one act of faith and repentance (*Origenes*).

On the Chronology of the Book of Judges, see the *Introduction*, p. 83.

**12. evil** Literally, the evil (see v. 7).

*Eglon*, the king of Moab, was not strong by his own strength, but by Israel's sin. Our sins strengthen our spiritual enemies against us. When we do evil in the sight of the Lord, we lose Satan against ourselves with our own hands (*Origenes*, Hom. 3: see below, on *Rev. xx. 10*).

Balak, king of Moab, had not been able to hurt Israel when they feared God; and they were blessed by Balaam, who had been hired to curse them; but when they fell from God to idolatry and fornication, they were punished by God (Num. xxv. 1); but they now despised that warning, and were given into the hands of Moab, and its king.

The name *Eglon* (who was probably so called from his fatness, v. 17) signifies a large bull-calf. *Simonia*. Cp. *Genen*, p. 605, who renders it *vulcrum*, from *eaph*, a calf or bullock.

The moral and spiritual significance of the word is suggested by such scriptural expressions as "Joshuah waxed fat and kicked" (Deut. xxxii. 15); "fat bulls of Bashan close me in" (Ps. xxii. 15). Cp. *Ezk. xxiv. 18, and Amos iv. 1, "Hear this word, ye kings of Bashan, Cp. below on v. 29.

*possessed the city of palm trees* Established himself in Jericho, which God had overthrown when it was encompassed by Israel with faith (Josh. vi. 20). What we have gained by faith, we lose by unbelieving.
The Lord raises up Ehud

JUDGES III. 14—23.

to deliver Israel.

14. **eighteen years**] A longer term of suffering than before (see v. 8). Repetition of sin brings aggravation of punishment.

15. **a deliverer**] a saviour (see v. 9).

— **Ehud**] a name which signifies union (Gesen. 16).

— **Gera**] a name elsewhere occurring in connexion with the tribe of Benjamin (cp. 2 Sam. xvi. 5; xix. 16). In 1 Chron. viii. 3, a son of Bela, the son of Benjamin, has this name.


The Sept. and Vulg. have son of Jethri; but the former is the right rendering (see Genesis, 128. 351).

— **a man [left-handed]** Literally, shut of his right hand (see Genesis, p. 35; Khet, p. 222). Cp. below, xx. 10. 1 Chron. xii. 2; and so Syriac, Arabic, Targ. Josephus (Antt. v. 4. 2) says that Ehud used his left hand better than his right. The Sept. and Vulg. render it, "who used his left hand as well as his right," ambidexter, but more correctly (incorrectly, and better), ambidextrous (see p. 21).

Who would not have thought both hands too little for Ehud's work? or if either might have been spared, how much rather the left hand? But it is the ordinary wont of the Almighty to use the unlikeliest means ( Cp. Hail).

— **a present**] So duxes were they at the time.

16. **a dagger which had two edges**] Literally, a sword with two months. Hence Sept. has ὑπεράνως ὄρμον, the words which the Apostle applies to the Word of God (Heb. iv. 12); and a two-edged sword is represented in the Apocalypse as going forth from the mouth of Christ (Rev. i. 16; ii. 12).

— **a cubit**] Properly, a staff, or rod, for measuring: see Genesis. 174.

— **upon his right thigh**] contrary to the usual practice of warriors, who wear the sword on the left side; he being left-handed, wore his sword on the right side: see v. 21.

17. **far**] Heb. bari (whence perhaps Gr. dupn), from bara, to bring forth, produce (Cp. Baph, Syriac, Lat. verna (Genesis 139. 141)). Probably his name, Eglon, was derived from this circumstance (v. 12). Particular emphasis seems to be laid on his fitness (cp. v. 22); as also on that of the Moabites generally (v. 29), doubtful for some good spiritual reason. Cp. on v. 15, and below, on v. 29.

19. **he himself turned again**] After leaving the king's presence with his companions, he turned again in order to enter the palace alone.

— **from the quarries**] or, rather, from the graven images. So Sept., Vulg., and Targ. here, and v. 26. The Hebrew word is pesilim, used in that sense Deut. vii. 25; xii. 3. 2 Kings xvii. 41. Ps. xcvii. 7, and in numerous other places, from passal, to carve (Gesen. 633, 624).

We hear in the Acts of the Apostles, that St. Paul's spirit was stirred within him at Athens, when he saw that city, so richly endowed by God with manifold intellectual riches, wholly given to idolatry (Acts xvii. 16). Probably Ehud's heart was stirred within him, and the spirit came upon him when he saw graven images even at Gilgal. Idols of Gilgal! the place where Israel had first encamped after the miraculous passage of Jordan, and where Joshua had relied away from Israel the reproach of Egypt; and where the Captain of the Lord's host had appeared to Joshua, and from which Joshua had gone forth to encompass the walls of Jericho, that very city where Ehud himself was now ruled over Israel—! that city whence Joshua had gone forth to war against the kings of Canaan, and to which he had returned after the victory (Josh. iv. 19; v. 9. 13—15; vi. 1—27; x. 8. 43).

Ehud might well be moved with holy indignation at Gilgal. He was then like a Judas Maccabaeus, beholding the abominations of desolation—an idolatrous altar—set up in the temple of Jehovah. He thence went forth to victory. The arms of Satan, the author of idolatry, recoil against himself by kindling the zeal of the saints. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isa. lix. 19).

— **a secret errand**] Literally, a word hidden.

20. **sitting in a summer parlour**] In an upper room for refreshment, or cooling himself. Cp. Amos iii. 15; and Shake's Travels, p. 214.

— **I have a message from God unto thee**] Literally, word of God is to me for thee.

21, 22. And Ehud put forth his left hand . . . . so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly] The sword remained in the body.

Some have raised objections to this act of Ehud, as considerable on moral grounds: and they have described him as a "crafty Israelite," taking an unfair advantage over an unwieldy corpulent Moabite; others have apologized for it, on the plea that it is not to be measured by what they call the standard of our "enlightened modern civilization" compared with what they term the "barbarous temper of those times."

But surely these are low and unworthy notions.

The following remarks from two of our best divines may find place here:—

"Of those worthies whom God at several times endowed with herculean spirits, to attempt some special work for the delivery of His Church, the Scriptures use to speak in words and phrases much like this. It is often said in the Book of Judges (Judg. iii. 9. 15; i. 16. 18) that they rose up such, and such to judge Israel, and that Deborah and Jair (Judg. v. 7, and x. 1. 3, &c.) and others rose up to defend Israel: that is, the Spirit of God came upon them, as it is said of Othniel, and by a secret but powerful instinct put them upon those brave and noble attempts they undertook and effected for the good of His Church (Judg. iii. 10). Raised by the impulse of that powerful Spirit which admitting no slow debates, Phinehas stood up, and, feeling himself called to flow..."
Eglon and the Moabites

JUDGES III. 24—29.

are slain.

Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.

24 When he was gone out, his servants came; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour were locked, they said, Surely he will covereth his feet in his summer chamber. 25 And they tarried till they were ashamed: and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour; therefore they took a key, and opened them: and, behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth.

26 And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath. 27 And it came to pass, when he was come, that he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them. 28 And he said unto them, Follow after me: for the Lord hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hands. And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over.

29 And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all lusty, and all men of 

deliberate, but to act, without casting of scruples, or forecasting of danger, or expecting commissi from men when he had his warrant sealed within, he taketh his weapon, despacheth his errand, and leaveth the event to the providence of God. Let he who cannot be able to demonstrate Phinehas' spirit, presume to imitate his facts. Those opera liberi Spiritus, as divines call them, as they proceeded from an extraordinary Spirit, so they were done for special purposes, and the power seems to have been immediately given them, or by those worthies that did them, for ordinary or general examples. The error is dangerous, from the privileged example of some few exempted ones to take liberty to transgress the common rules of life and of laws. It is most true indeed the Spirit of God is a free Spirit, and not tied to strictness of rule, nor limited by any bounds of laws. But yet that free Spirit hath restricted thee to a regular course of life and bounded thee with laws, which, if thou shalt transgress, no pretension of the Spirit can either excuse thee from sin or exempt thee from punishment. It is not now, every way, as it was before the coming of Christ and the sealing up of the Scripture canon; God having now settled a perpetual form of government in His Church, and given us a perfect and constant rule whereby to walk, even His Holy Word. And we are not therefore now vainly to expect or boastingly to pretend a private spirit to lead us against, or beyond, or but beside the common rule: nay, we are commanded to try all pretensions of private spirits by that common rule, AD LIGEM ET AD TESTAMEN-

TUM, to the Law and to the Testimony (Isa. viii. 20). At this test examine and try the spirits whether they are of God (1 John iv. 1) or no. If any thing within us, without us, exalt itself against the obedience of this rule, it is no sweet impulse of the Holy Spirit of God, but a strong delusion of the lying spirit of Satan. Bp. Sanderson, Works, p. 323, on the Act of Phinehas (Ps. cxi. 30).

Dr. Waterland thus speaks:—

The objector is pleased to say, "How many precedents besides that of Ehad did the Papish Priests plead from the Old Testament for the assassination of the two Henries of France?" But how is Scripture at all to blame for men's perverting it to an use (as they may any thing) through their own depravity? The Papish assassins wanted the very principal thing which Ehad had, namely, a divine commission. The text expressly says, The Lord raised up Ehad (Judg. iii. 15): and it is well known that all the deliverances which the Jews had under their Judges were directed and conducted by the immediate hand of God, according as the people by their repentance became fit to receive them. But did the Lord raise up the Papish assassins; or was there any special direction sent from them to slay them? A divine warrant in such a case, is a clear foundation to go upon, and that Ehad had; but is it, therefore, any precedent for others to act upon who have no divine warrant at all, but quite the contrary? What is Reason and Understanding given for, but to distinguish upon cases and circumstances? If the objector is afraid of men's making an ill use of pretended precedents (which are no precedents), let him advise his readers to be honest, and to reason fairly and justly, without bias or corrupt affection. That is the true course to be taken in such cases: not to plead for throwing Scripture aside (which is wrong judging and false reasoning), but to interpret it with care and conscience, and then all will be right (Dr. Waterland, Scr. Vindicated, vi. 128). To which may be added Bp. Hall's sentence, "Though Eglon were an usurper, yet had Ehad been a traitor ü God had not sent him." 22. and the dirt came out] So Vulg., Targ. The Syriac and Arabic have, and he (i.e. Ehad) went out quickly: and the Syriac seems to favour the same meaning.

The Hebrew substantive in this passage (persedonal) is not found elsewhere; the rendering in our margin is adopted by Gesen. 693, and Keil; but that in the text seems preferable. "Vulnus seled leta circit, ut eum aliquid teneret oespite et puragaret." Cp. below, on v. 29.


25. a key] Literally, the key.

26. passed beyond the quarries] or, rather, he passed by the idles at Gilgal (see on v. 19): there he displayed the triumph which had been wrought by his means over the false gods of Moab, and for the glory of the Lord, who had appeared to Joshua there. Did he return that way in order to throw down those idols in his zeal for God, according to God's command (Exod. xxxiv. 13. Deut. vii. 5)? — unto Seirath] Why did he go thither? Was this place so called from the idolatrous worship practised there? See on Lev. xix. 7. 2 Chron. xi. 15. Gesen. 792. Did he pass to Seirath in order to destroy the images there, as he had probably done at Gilgal?

27. blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim] where he would remember the noble deeds of Joshua (Josh. xxiv. 30), as well as at Gilgal, and receive fresh courage from the remembrance.

28. took the fords of Jordan] occupied the fords mentioned in Josh. v. 7; so that the Moabites might not escape across the river into their own land.

29. all lusty] Literally, every one that was fat (see Gesen. 835). Every one that was fat and strong of the Moabites, in Jericho and those parts, they destroyed.

On the Acts of Ehad.

The question now arises, whether this record of Ehad's actions is only a true history of certain facts, or whether it has not also a spiritual character, and if so, what does it signify? It is said by an ancient Father of the Church, that the king of Moab represents those who lead voluptuous and dissolute lives, and place their chief happiness in pleasure. The king of our Moab—the god of this world—is to be destroyed by the Word of the Gospel, which is likened in Scripture to a sword; the sword of the Spirit is to be used against him: "ipsa prophetici sermo in ventre eorum atque in multis precordi ambulatrix idola; his disputationibus conditator." Let this sword mortify and kill all evil affections of corrupt doctrine and carnal wisdom which exalts itself against the spiritual knowledge of Christ. Let every spiritual Judge in Christ's Church fight with the Word of God, and he will become an Ehad in Israel (Origens, Hom. 4).
judges 31. 30, 31. iv. 1—3. jabin king of hazor.

valour; and there escaped not a man. \(^30\) so mOab was subdued that day under the hand of israel. and the land had rest fourscore years.

\(^{31}\) and after him was sha'går the son of anath, which slew of the philistines six hundred men \(^e\) with an ox-goad: \(^f\) and he also delivered \(^e\) israel.

iv. \(^1\) and \(^e\) the children of israel again did evil in the sight of the lord; when euhad was dead. \(^2\) and the lord \(^e\) sold them into the hand of jabin king of canaan, that reigned in \(^e\) hazor; the captain of whose host was \(^e\) sisera, which dwelt in \(^e\) harosheth of the gentiles.

\(^3\) and the children of israel cried unto god.
Deborah, the prophetess and judge

IV. 4–11.

foretells Sisera’s death by a woman.

Deborah’s very name signifies her being a joint sign of Israel. She was the last of the Judges of Israel, lasting from the days of Barak to the days of Jephthah. She was a daughter of Hamutal, and her husband, Jahaziel, was a man of noble birth. Deborah was a woman of great wisdom and courage, and she is held in high esteem by the people of Israel. She is remembered for her part in the victory over Sisera, the captain of Jabin’s host, which was accomplished by the valor of Barak and the heroism of his army. Deborah’s prophecy to Barak was a foretelling of the victory over Sisera, and it was fulfilled in due time. Deborah is described as a woman of great beauty, of noble character, and of strong courage. She was a true friend of Israel, and she is remembered as a woman of great faith and courage. Deborah is held in high esteem by the people of Israel, and she is remembered as a great prophetess and judge of Israel.
law of Moses, had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, *which is by Kadesh.*

12 And they showed that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to mount Tabor. 13 And Sisera *gathered together all his chariots, even nine hundred chariots of iron,* and all the people that were with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles unto the river of Kishon.

14 And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: *is not the Lord gone out before thee?* So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. 15 And *the Lord discomfited Sisera,* and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword before Barak; *so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet.* 16 But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: *and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not a man left.*

17 Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: *for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.* 18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not. And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a || mantle. 19 And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty. And she opened *a bottle of milk,* and gave him drink, and covered him. 20 Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent, and it shall be, when any man doth come and enquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here? *that thou shalt say,* No. 21 Then Jael Heber's wife *took a nail of the tent,* and || took an hammer in her hand, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: *for he was fast asleep and weary.* So he died.

22 And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come and I will shew thee the man whom thou seest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail *was in his temples.*

(v. 17) *Heber, or cheber,* means fellowship, from chebar, to join (Gesen. 259). — *Zaanaim* that is, of migrations; from tsaan, to move a tent (Gesen. 714).

Perhaps it may be so called from this Kenite migration from the north of Canaan to the neighbourhood of Kadesh, on the N.W. of the waters of Merom.

15. *the Lord discomfited* with supernatural phenomena, manifestations of His power and anger, in storm and tempest of the elements, producing panic and confusion, as appears from Deborah's language (ver. 20—22); and the word here used (hamas) is employed to denote such divine interventions as in the discomfiture of the Egyptians at the Exodus (Exod. xiv. 24) and of Joshua's enemies (Josh. x. 10; cp. 2 Sam. xii. 15. Ps. xviii. 15; and see Gesen. p. 528; and Keil, p. 229). — *on his feet* not one of his 900 chariots was left at his command for his escape.

17. *the tent of Jael* It is remarkable that it is not called the tent of Heber, but of Jael. See below, the note at the end of this chapter.

The name Jael signifies an ibex, or perhaps the chamois, from ga'al, to ascend (Gesen. 260): cp. the name Tabitha or Dorcas (Acts ix. 50).

18. *mane* or coverlid.

19. *milk* Buttermilk, which, properly prepared, makes a cooling and refreshing drink: see Dr. Thomson, p. 441.


21. *a nail* the wooden pin or peg (Heb. yathed, from yadad, to fix; cp. Latin patus, papillus, from pango, ponsui) by which the tent was fastened into the ground: see Exod. xxv. 19; xxx. 18; xxxviii. 20. The tents of the Arabs are kept firm by stretching down their cords with cords, tied to wooden, hooked, and pointed pins, driven into the ground with a mallet or hammer (Shaw, p. 221). Hence Isa. xxii. 23, 25, "a nail in a sure place," and, speaking of the Church, he says, "Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes" (iv. 2): cp. Genes. 376. Dr. Thomson, Land and Book, p. 440.

— *an hammer* Heb. makkabah, from mabak, to bore, to thrust (Gen. 505. 564), whence some derive the name Macocado, a strenuous warrior, as Martel in French.

— and fastened it into the ground or, rather (as Gesen. renders it, p. 713), and it went down into the ground, as if impelled by supernatural force. The word is the same as is used in Josh. xv. 18. Judg. i. 14, where it is rendered she tighst off: see the note there.

So in 1 Sam. xvii. 49 the stone, slung by David, is said to have *swung* to the forehead of Goliath, i.e., to have been impelled into it by Divine power.

— *for he was fast asleep* or, rather, and he fell down astonished; cp. Ps. lxxvi. 6, where the same word, niredan, (the niptial of radam), is used, and which is the best exposition of the same sense,—"As thy rebuke, 0 God of Jacob, both the horse and chariot are cast into a dead sleep." By this rendering the history is seen to be in entire harmony with Deborah's fuller account of it, which describes an act of rising on Sisera's part, and then of bowing down, and then of falling prostrate, as if he was stunned and paralyzed by the exercise of supernatural force on the part of Jael: "At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead" (v. 27).

—and weary or, rather, and he fainted away: see Gesen. p. 614, who renders the verb used here, "to faint away, so that the eyes are involved in darkness." Cp. 1 Sam. xiv. 28. The Septuagint well renders the passage Rv. 6:3, 5; 8:14. The Vulgate has "soperem morti conscios defectit (he fainted) et mortuus est." The Targum has also "he was laid asleep, and fainted, and died."
So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel pressed, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

32. So God subdued by the work of Jael is represented by the Sacred Writer as the work of God; and Deborah ends her song with the prayer, “So let all Thine enemies perish, O LORD!” (v. 31.)

ON JAEI'S ACT IN DESTROYING SISERA

What is the true character of Jael’s act, described in this chapter (vv. 17–22)? That act has been censured and condemned, by some in modern times, as one of base treachery and barbarous cruelty. And no different opinion had been pronounced of it by those who knew all the circumstances of the case, especially by Deborah, it might have been reasonably regarded in that light. But Deborah, in her song, describes it and commends it. She says, “pressed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be among women in the tent” (vv. 24–27).

The question therefore arises—is Deborah’s judgment of the act of Jael to be accepted as a right judgment? Is it authorized? It would seem very likely, that a woman, a gentle woman, should have been raised up by God to execute His judgment on Sisera; for Sisera was not only the captain of Jabin’s host, a heathen enemy of God’s people, and the instrument of Jabin’s power, mightily oppressing God’s people during twenty years, but also a traitor and traitor’s son, who, in order to lead the virgins of Israel into captivity, for the gratification of their own licentious passions. There is something very expressive in Deborah’s commemoration of the words of Sisera’s mother, addressed to her son, when she heard of his return from battle, and exulting in anticipation of triumph over the future humiliation of the virgins of Israel, — “Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey; to every man his heritage, to every one his spoil?” (v. 30). To every man a damsel, or two! Such, in the fond dream of this ruthless matron of Canaan, was to be the fate of the maidens of Israel. But the God of Israel rescued them. He raised up Jael,—a gentle woman, and a wife,—to avert this shame and misery from the virgins of His people.

Yet further. — The act of Jael had been foreseen and foretold by Deborah the prophetess, and was ascribed by her to the LORD. Deborah said to Barak, “The journey shall not be to thine honour” (but to the honour of some one else). “The LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman” (v. 9). The battle of that day is called by her the LORD’s battle. “Is not the LORD gone out before thee?” (v. 10.) It was the Lord (we read) who discomfited Sisera (v. 15). Meroz is declared by the angel to be cursed, “because they came not to the help of the LORD” (v. 23); and if Meroz was cursed by the angel for not helping, then Sisera’s sin may not Jael be rightly blessed by Deborah for her zeal in his cause? And the Sacred Historian says, “So God subdued in that day Jabin the king of Canaan” (v. 23), and Deborah concludes her divine song of victory with these emphatic words, “So let all Thine enemies perish, O LORD!” (v. 31.)

Again, let us consider this. If Jael had not been actuated by some sudden impulse from God, she would not have risked a struggle with this strong captain, Sisera, but would have gained her own end, and that without any other peril. She would have remained in her tent till Barak came up, and she would have delivered him into Barak’s hands. But Almighty God in His just judgment had foreseen, and foretold by Deborah, that Sisera should not perish by the strength of a Barak, or of any of his warriors, but by the hand of a woman, and that Sisera would not only be discomfited and made to fall, but would in his very death be made to be a blessing to the children of Israel, because he was, as His prophet had declared He would be, a curse to the children of Israel. And the Sacred Historian says, “So God subdued in that day Jabin the king of Canaan.”

But, as was before observed, this rendering appears to be inaccurate, and ought to be corrected. It is not certain that Sisera fell asleep (see the note on the passage). The right translation of the words appears to be this: “The nail went down into the ground; for he sank down, and fainted, and died.”

The Book of Judges is a record of sudden outbursts and supernatural gushings-forth of God’s Holy Spirit in times of great peril and need. God had been actuated towards Sisera, and when God interfered by extraordinary manifestations of His power for the deliverance of His people Israel. It is a Book of spiritual storms. In reading it, we see numerous examples of such supernatural interventions vouchsafed to men and to Israelites, such as Gideon, Ehud, Shallum, Ibzan, Gideon, and Samson. In the narrative now before us we may not recognize an extension of God’s supernatural power, for the like purpose, to a woman, a gentle woman,—Jael!

The Lord discomfited the army of Sisera. Did not the Lord also destroy Sisera himself? Yet further; it is stated in the history, that there was peace between Sisera’s master and Jael’s husband. Why is this mentioned? Is not this notice inserted for the same reason as the prophecy, that Sisera would be sold by the Lord into the hand of a woman? That is, in order to justify Jael; to suggest to the reader, that when Jael received Sisera, she did it in perfect good faith, but that after she had lain down, he who had been upon her, as He did on Ehud at Gilgal after he had given to Eglon a present (see above, iii. 15). And as the Spirit sent Ehud back to Eglon’s palace to destroy the enemy of God and His people, so he incites Jael to act in a similar manner, in order to achieve, the deliverance of His people by the destruction of their enemy, and to bring back His people to Himself and to the Truth.

And (says the Apostle) is only the lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy (James iv. 12). He is the Arbiter of life and death. He who gives life, may take it away when and how
Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying,

He pledged. He did not choose Barak with his ten thousand men, but he chose a weak woman to execute His righteous purposes in destroying this strong captain of Jabin, who relied on his nine hundred chariots of iron, and mightily oppressed God's people Israel; and who at this very time was proudly hoping to seal the victory to Israel's captor, God tested magnetizes His power; He made His name more glorious by the fecundity of the instrument which He used for the accomplishment of His will.

"It can scarcely be doubted," (says a learned English Divine, the author of "Scripture Vindicated," Dr. Waterland, p. 131), "that Jael had some divine direction or impulse to stir her up to do what she did. The enterprise was exceedingly bold and hazardous; and, one might think, that had she been left to her own counsel, she might have thought of an easier, a more sudden impulse, which she obeyed." Cp. Burgon on Inspiration, pp. 225—226.

But further still; "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. iii. 16).

Is there not a profound spiritual meaning in the Scripture before us?

We have seen reason to believe that the acts of the Judges of Israel, such as Othniel, Ehud, Shammgar, Gideon, and Samson, are not merely historical facts, but prophetically foreshadow works done by the Holy-Spirit, acting by the instrumentality of men, especially such men as the holy Apostles, in the true Israel of God, the Christian Church. "Intelligens hic omnia sacra mensa esse" (says Origen). The acts of the Judges are not only historical events in the literal Israel, but symbolic foreshadowings of future transactions in the Christian Church.

The enemies of the literal Israel are types of the enemies of the Christian Church.

The Canaanitish king, whose captain Sisera was, Jabin, king of Hazor, dwelling in Harosheth of the Gentiles, has been regarded as that human type, that the wisdom and power of the Heathen World as opposed to Christ: see above on Josh. xi. 1—13. The name Jabin (as is well known) speaks of wisdom, as the name Hazor does of power. And we have seen that an Ancient Father of the Church, "Jael, a foreigner to Israel, seems to typify the Church gathered together from the heathen" (Origen, Hom. 5). Her victory is a figure of the victory of the Gentile Church of Christ, who observe that Deborah the prophetess, dwelling in the south of Canaan, being inspired by God, gave the first impulse to the movement against Jabin and Sisera. So the Hebrew Church, speaking by Prophecy in the Old Testament, led the way to the victory of the Gentile Church of Christ. Deborah foretold Jael's triumph, as Isaiah and Jeremiah—pre-announced the triumphs of the Gentile Church.

Deborah stirred up Barak; so Hebrew Prophecy raised up the heroes of Israel. But the heroes of Israel did not overcome Heathenism in the post-apostolic age. This was done by the Gentile Church. It was not done by Jews, but by Greek and Gentile philosophers; it was done by such men as Aristides, Theophilus, Justin, Irenaeus, Clement, Origen, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine, who were raised up from the ranks of Heathenism to contend for the Christian faith against the wise and powerful Jabinus, who reigned in the Haroshech of the Gentiles.

Then the Gentile Jael completed the work which the Hebrew Deborah had begun, and which the Hebrew Barak had carried on, at the instigation of the Hebrew Deborah; and the voice of Deborah, the Hebrew Melissa or Bee, in her sweet songs of prophecy, praises the Gentile Jael for her faith, and courage, and says, "Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent."

Consider also this: what was the instrument by which Jael destroyed Sisera? It is called in our Version a nail of the tent (v. 21), but that word does not give altogether a clear idea. It was the broader instrument. Then why should the left hand of her tent be fastened into the ground; a custom to which the prophet Isaiah refers when he addresses the Gentile Church, and says, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; pull them not down; enlarge thy stake" (Isa. lvi. 2). The Hebrew word there rendered stake is the same as the word rendered nail in the tent; and the hammer in Jael's hand was the hammer of the tent by which those pegs or stakes were driven into the ground.

What was Jael to the Church, through which the Christian Jael, the Gentile Church, fixes her tent into the earth? What is it by which that tent, when extended, is firmly fastened to the ground? It is the Cross of Christ. What was the weapon with which the Christian Jael, the Gentile Church, achieved her victories, and destroyed, and still destroys, the heathen Siseras of this world? The Cross of Christ. This is no novel interpretation of the passage before us. It is the exposition given by those ancient writers of the Apostles of Christ. The primitive Fathers of the Christian Church, in commenting on this Scripture, observe that the Church of Christ fixes her Tent by means of the doctrine of the Cross. It was that doctrine, driven in by the hammer of Faith, by which it is that we are fastened into the ground of Heathenism. "Palo illum interfect, id est, ligni Crucis acuminis," says Origen, who was born in the second century (Hom. 5); and another ancient Christian Father, S. Augustine, says: "What is it that woman did in the plain of Zarethan? ... Sisera, the ancient enemies of Israel, were as the temples of Sisera the enemy, with wood? What is she but the faith of the Church destroying the kingdom of Satan by the Cross?" (S. Augustin. c. Faust. manich. xii. 93.) And another S. Ambrose says, "There was a judgement, teaching us themselves. "Deborah," he says, "foretold the issue of the conflict; but Jael achieved the victory. A woman prophesied; and in that victory we may see a figure of our own conquests over our own spiritual enemies, by faith and prayer, which are the arms of the Church." (S. Ambrose de Virgin. c. 8); and Origen again says, "Let us be like Jael, strong in faith, and crucify our own lusts, and thus destroy the Siseras within us; then we may do the work of her who is the figure of the Christian Church gathered from the Gentiles, and we may go and sit down with Deborah under her palm-tree, the tree of victory, and sing a song of victory with her for evermore." See also S. Prosper Aquitan. de Promiss. lii. 17, who gives a similar exposition: "Non foro Sisera, sed feminam virum confici, ut palo aspiciat, sunt signa fidelium Christianorum, que Ecclesiam simililitudinem gerens voce resonaret 'hi in curruin, hi in equis,' &c. (Ps. xx. 7, 8, 9). Hace et alia cantat sancta Ecclesia exspectans idola, et vicinos hostes suos hereticos; quia Dominus vestris vos salvabit, Deus vestrum et Domine vestrum, et it is well said by our own venerable Bede (Qu. c. 2), "The victory was not gained by God's ancient people—prefigured by Barak—but by Jael, the stronger, the type of the Church; who destroys the spiritual Sisera with the wood of the Cross, that is, in faith in Christ crucified." But let us inquire, Was there not also a higher typical meaning in the act of Jael? The Siseras, and Herods, and Thamnols of old, the enemies of God and of His people Israel, are representatives and types of our spiritual enemies, the Devil. The victories gained over them are figures of the victory gained by the power of Christ over the Evil One. The act of Jael, or rather the act of God Himself, working by her hands and destroying the enemy—that act which was foretold by the prophecy of Deborah, may be compared to that Great Act—the greatest Act ever done in this world—the Act foretold in the first prophecy of Scripture (Gen. iii. 15), by which our ghostly enemy was destroyed, and the whole habitation of Heaven and which the Church of God has ever gained, or ever will gain, in this world. Jael pierced Sisera's head with the wooden nail, and destroyed him, and delivered Israel; and it was by means of the Cross that the Seed of the Woman bruised the Serpent's head and redeemed the world.

The instrument of destruction, and the means by which destruction was wrought, are described with special emphasis by Deborah the prophetess (vs. 29, 37).

Surely there is a spiritual meaning in this. God wrought deliverance for the ancient Hebrew Church by Jael, who drove
JUDGES V. 2. and Barak.

Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel; and when the people willingly offered themselves.

2 The song of Deborah, Judges V. 1. Theen song Deborah and Barak We hear of no song of praise for victory in the Book of Judges before this time, when Jael has destroyed the enemy of God. Why is this? May it not be because (as the Ancient Fathers observed, see theforegoing note) the people are not represented in the same way as in the New Testament, and Deborah and Barak represent the Prophecies and Saints of the Older Dispensation, who will praise God for the victory of the Christian Church, by which the Jew and Gentile will be joined together in one, as Is. 2. 2 of Balaam says, referring to the Oth Testament, "For this cause will I confess to These among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy name." And again he saith, "Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people;" and again, "Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and laud Him, all ye people." (Rom. x. 9—11.)

Deborah, the figure of Hebrew prophecy, and Barak, the representative of the saints of the Old Testament, were redeemed from bondage by Jael's victory, and rejoiced in it. So, as St. Paul saith (Rom. vii. 4), "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, that He might destroy Satan through the woman." (Gal. iv. 4.)

Therefore there may well be a parallel between Jael and the Virgin Mary. Deborah sings the Magnificat of Jael; "Blessed are women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent;" and "Blessed art thou among women," said Gabriel to Mary, and the Holy Spirit by the mouth of Isaiah (Luke i. 35); and she herself saith, "All generations shall call me blessed." (Luke i. 48.) Jael and Mary are blessed, not for what they wrought themselves, but for what God wrought by their means.

And it is irreverent to remark, that Jael is called the wife of Heber, and Deborah the wife of Leciel, as taking any part in the work; and the tent is called "the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite." (Jael, iv. 17)? Is this altogether without a mystery? The tent in which the Lord of Heber, father of Heber, lived (Gen. xii. 14), was the Blessed Virgin; and she was the wife of Joseph. "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife" (said God by the angel), Matt. i. 20. Yet Joseph had no part in the work by which the world was saved, and our enemy was destroyed.

How is it possible to explain the doctrine of Christ's humanity and of His Cross, that the Church of God is able to destroy the spiritual Sisera. And not only is the Christian Church a Jael, and overcomes the enemy by the Spirit of God, but Heber the Kenite, who was the type of the Church, and whose name is given to Sisera within us, Sisera, dwelling in the tents of our own hearts; and of them the Apostle saith, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts" (Gal. v. 24); and "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal. ii. 20). And of the world is enrapured to me, and unto the world. (Gal. vi. 14.) Let us be Jael to ourselves. Let us pray for the outpourings of God's Spirit upon us; the spirit of love to God, remembering the words of Christ, "If any one come to Me, and my mother, and his mother, (that is, his spiritual above, and the world, and the flesh, and the devil, and continue His faithful soldiers and servants unto our lives' end. Then however weak we may be in ourselves, yet we shall be more than conquerors (Rom. viii. 37), through the power of Him that loved us, and died for us; our names may be among those of noble army of martyrs, who overcome the enemy by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. (Rev. xii. 11), and Jael's blessing may be ours, not pronounced by a prophetess on earth, but by the Lord of all the prophets, at the Great Day.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH.

Ch. V. 1. Then song Deborah and Barak We have a song of praise for victory in Exodus; we have a song of victory in Numbers; we have a song of victory in Deuteronomy; we have this song of victory in Judges; we have a song of victory in the first book; we have a song of victory in the second of Samuel; we have the song of Zacharias, and the Magnificat, or Song of the Blessed Virgin, and the song of Simeon, in the Gospel; and all these songs are preludes to the new song, the song of Moses and of the Lamb, which the Saints of the Church glorified, from all nations, will sing, at the crystal sea, with the harps of God, when all the enemies of Christ and His Church will have been subdued, and their victory will be commemorated for ever (Rev. xiv. 1—3; xv. 2—4).

The song of Deborah is appropriately apprised to be read in the synagogues, together with Exodus xiii. 17 to xvii. 16, containing the history of the Exodus and the passage of the Red Sea; and of the victory, gained by the arms of Joshua—Sword and Prayer—the prayers of Moses, supported by Aaron and Hur,—figuring the work of Christ as Intercessor,—over the arms of Amaleck, the enemy of Israel.

The structure and language of the song of Deborah, the reader may see Bp. Lowth's Proleg. xviii.; Bp. Horley's, Bibl. Crit. ii. 424—427; and the treatises of Rosenmüller, Holmian, Herder, Boettler, and others: see Winer, R. W. B. i. 263; and Hengst., Anth. ii. 110—119.

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Recapitulation of the history

JUDGES V. 3—9. from the Exodus of Israel.

3d Hear, O ye kings, Give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will sing unto the Lord; I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel.

e Deut. 32, 1, 2.
Ps. 2, 10.

4 Lord, * when thou wentest out of Seir, When thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, * The earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, The clouds also melted water; * The mountains melted from before the Lord, * The inhabitants of the villages ceased, They ceased in Israel, Until that I Deborah arose, That I arose a mother in Israel.

5 They * chose new gods; Then was war in the gates: * Was there a shield or spear seen Among forty thousand in Israel? * My heart is toward the governors of Israel, That they offered themselves willingly among the people; Bless ye the Lord.

6 In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, * the highways were unoccupied, And the * travellers walked through * byways;

7 * Was there a shield or spear seen Among forty thousand in Israel? * My heart is toward the governors of Israel, That they offered themselves willingly among the people; Bless ye the Lord.

hearts of the leaders of Israel, especially Barak, to begin, or go before (the Hebrew verb is para : see Gesen. 630), i.e., to set the example of faith and courage, and because He moved the people to follow it; see the Sept. here, Cod. Alex., and Theodot.; and Bp. Andrewes' Sermon, v. 220, "Hallelujah for the Princes; Hallelujah for the People; blessed be God for both."

3. * Hear, O ye kings! Do not think that I am flattering men, even the highest one: no; I am praising God for the graces given to them by Him; He is the author of all: courage to Him be all the praise! * when thou wentest] at Thy Exodus from Seir—Edom; when Thou camest as a conqueror out of the land of Canaan, to enemies to visit and comfort Thy people gathered at Sinai.

— The earth trembled] Cp. Ps. lxxviii. 7, 8, "The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel."

5. * The mountains melted] flowed like waves: see Gesen. 541.; and for the history see Exod. xix. 18. The propriety of this reference, noble and beautiful in itself, to the awful phenomena at Sinai, is made more evident by the supernatural manifestations on the battle-field, where Joshua's host was discomfited and Sirion fell: see v. 20, 21.

— that Sinai! Literally, this Sinai; τόσσο χιλια (Sept.). Sinai is present to the poetic eye of Deborah.

6. In the days of Shamgar—in the days of Jael] So great was the degradation of Israel, on account of their sins, that even in the days when a man like Shamgar (iii. 31) was still living, they had no security from their enemies. It is probable that Jael here is the name of some Judge of Israel, whose acts were well known to Deborah, but have not been recorded in any extant document. Compare the name of another Judge whose acts are unknown to us (Bedaan, in 1 Sam. xii. 11). The Jael here mentioned was hardly by the wife of Heber the Kenite. She was raised up by God for a particular purpose, and Deborah could hardly speak of her days as marking a period in the series of Hebrew Judges: cp. above, Intro. p. 75. * highways were unoccupied! Literally, highways ceased; ceased to be ways: ceased to be passable, on account of the enemies who infested them.

As the Prophet says, "The highways lie waste, the way-faring man ceaseth" (Isa. xxxii. 8: cp. Zech. vii. 14).
10 || Speak, Ye that ride on white asses, 
* Ye that sit in judgment, 
And walk by the way; 
They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, 
There shall they rehearse the † righteous acts of the Lord, 
Even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: 
Then shall the people of the Lord go down to the gates.

12 Awake, awake, Deborah, 
Awake, awake, utter a song: 
Arise, Barak, 
And lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam. 
Then he made him that remaineth * have dominion over the nobles 
among the people: 
The Lord made me have dominion over the mighty. 

14 Out of Ephraim was there a root of them * against Amalek; 
After thee, Benjamin, among thy people; 
Out of Machir came down governors, 
And out of Zebulun they that † handle the pen of the writer; 
Even Issachar, and also * Barak: 

return to the gates, from which they had before been forced to fly, for fear of the enemy (see v. 8). 
12 lead thy captivity captive: or, lead captive thy captivity —thy prisoners (see Rev. xii. 10) lead them in triumph as thy captives and spoils, the fruit of thy victory. 
13 Then he made him that remained — people rather than a remnant came down to the nobles of the peoples; as the Sept., Cod. Vat., renders it, ὁ τῶν πατέρων κατάλειμμα. Deborah describes the coming down of the faithful and valiant remnant of the people to the Lord's battle. They who remained over and above from the national apostasy, they came down (the Heb. garad, to descend; Gen. 864) from the hills to the plains of Edremon, and to the brook Kishon, and flocked to the standard of Barak, and followed him to the victory. See also Targum Jon., Syriac, and Arabic, which confirm the rendering came down.

In a spiritual sense, this remnant of faithful and valiant Israelites typifies the true remnant, of which St. Paul speaks (Rom. ix. 27), and the Apostle's adoption of the word κατάλειμμα, used here by the Sept., helps us to recognize the analogy. 

The Lord made me have dominion over the mighty: 
Rather, the Lord came down to me among the mighty. 
Not only the remnant came down to help Barak and me; but the Lord Himself came down with them.

14. Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against Amalek: out of Ephraim came forth to the battle, not the whole tribe, but a root of them in Amalek; that is, a genuine remnant and stock of those who distinguished themselves in the matter of Amalek; i. e. upon Amalek, or against Amalek. On this use of the preposition, see Genes. 98. St. Paul, imitating the language of the prophets (Isa. xi. 1. 10), uses the word ἔθνος, root, also in this sense (Rom. xv. 12), to signify something that is left in the ground; and though it may be hidden and appear dead, is ready to spring up again. 
Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim; and he had been the first to lead the Lord's people against Amalek, and to gain a victory over them (Exod. xvii. 13, 14); and the men of Ephraim had dispossession the Amalekites in Canaan (xii. 15); and though in the times of national apostasy this root of Ephraim, planted upon Amalek, and supplanting it, was hidden, yet it sprouted up vigorously again at the call of Deborah and of Barak.

— Out of Machir the only son of Manasseh (see Num. xxvi. 29; and xxvii. 1); the name is used here for the tribe. 
— they that handle the pen of the writer: Literally, they who draw with the rod of the writer: that is, they who draw...
He was sent on foot into the valley.

For the divisions of Reuben

There were great thoughts of heart;

Why abodest thou among the sheepefolds,
To hear the bleatings of the flocks?

For the divisions of Reuben

There were great searchings of heart.

g Gilead abode beyond Jordan:

And why did Dan remain in ships?

Asher continued on the sea shore,
And abode in his breaches.

And the kings came and fought,
Then fought the kings of Canaan.

troops together (see iv. 6) with the rod or staff of the musereth.

"Qui exercitum ducent ad bellandum" (Valpy.) Cp. 2 Kings xxv. 19. 2 Chron. xxvi. 11. Genes. 594 and 801, who interprets the Hebrew word to mean "the battlements;" which was in the hand of the musereth, who made the conspiration, or levy—the general of the forces.

13. He was sent on foot into the valley [or, he was sent into the plain from the Mount Tabor, and from the river Jordan,] by God, leading by the hand; [but the horses and chariots, as Sisera came to meet us, but on his feet, with no cavalry; and yet God gave us the victory; and Sisera, who had come against us with his 900 chariots of iron, fled before us on his feet. See ch. iv. 15, where the Hebrew word is the same as here.

15. For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart! It is doubtful whether the word rendered divisions (pelaqoth), from palpaj, to divide, is not rather to be rendered streams, as in Josh. xx. 17, the only other place of the Bible where the word is rendered. The latter reading is preferred by Gesenius, 675, and Keil, 210. On the other hand, the rendering divisions, not however in the sense of distractions (as understood by many divines, as Bp. Andrewes, i. 661; v. 209, 210), but of portions, is favoured by ancient versions, as Sept., Vulg., Syriac, Arabic, Targ. Don.

The word rendered thoughts, is translated decrees, in our version of Isa. x. 1, the only other place of the Bible where it is found. It is derived from chakerah, to come to agree, to decree, and the parallel word to it in the next clause, rendered searchings, is from the cognate root chahakar, to dig, to explore (see Gesen. 301).

Probably the word pelaqoth, though describing a natural object, is used with some allusion to its moral significance also, divisions. And the sense seems to be, in the watercourses of Reuben there were great decrees of heart; at the water-courses of Reuben there were great searchings of hearts; that is, they were deliberated a great deal, but did not act. His conduct was like that of his own streams and brooks, ent into many devious channels, winding and flowing, but not steady, firm, and united. Cp. Gen. xlix. 4, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excell." The same sense is confirmed by the question, Why abodest thou among the sheepefolds?

—sheepefolds] See Gen. xlix. 14, where the same word, also in the dual number, is used.

the bleatings] rather, the pipinga, i.e. of the pastoral flute; the shofar is connected with the Gr. and Latin syrinx (Gesen. 850). Why didst thou prefer the pastoral music of the flute among thy flocks, to the martial sound of the trumpet, when the Lord called thee to the battle?

The herds and flocks of Reuben, in which he rejoiced, and on account of which he asked Moses to give him the well-watered land on the east of Jordan (see Num. xxxii. 1—5), proved a snare to them. Moses gave them the land of Gilead on the condition that they should help their brethren to subdue Canaan; they had done so, and had been blessed by Joshua for their co-operation (Josh. xxxii. 6). But now they decline to fight the Lord's battles, together with their brethren, and forfeit the blessing of the Lord.

Those Reubenites of Gilead (v. 17), who "abode beyond Jordan," instead of helping their brethren at the call of Deborah, and who had no part in the victory achieved by the act of Jael, the type of the Gentile Church, may be compared to those Jews who stand aloof from the Gospel of Christ, and will not hearken to God's voice, and will not join with their believing brethren, and with the faithful Gentiles, in the Church of Christ.

17. Gilead] (and the eastern portion of Manassæ; the western joined Barak (see e. 14).—why did Dan remain in ships? absorbed in its trade, commerce, and fishing.

Here, in Dan and Asher, is the second hindrance to zeal for God's cause; the other was that, in the case of Reuben—comparative distance from the scene of danger and rural occupation (see e. 15, 16).

They who live in commercial and maritime Cities, engaged in worldly business, are tempted to prefer their own worldly interest to the cause of God and His Church. They who thus act, imitate Dan, and forfeit the blessing of Deborah. They also who live in country Villages, removed from the din of controversy, and engaged in farming and other rural occupations, have strong temptations to live merely to themselves, and to stand aloof from their brethren, and not to listen to Deborah's voice, and not to flock to Barak's standard, and fight God's battle together with them against the Heresy and Infidelity which assail His Church.

The Clergy of country Parishes may perhaps think that the unbelief and false doctrines which are now menacing the Faith in large Towns, will not penetrate into their quiet hamlets; that they are at a distance from the scene of battle, and they may suppose themselves to be safe, and that they need not take part in the conflict. But all true Israelis have a common cause, and have common enemies; and will unite in one body against them, and so will receive the blessing of Deborah.


—breaches] creeks: properly breaks in the shore; from Heb. porrets: cp. Gr. pyrgouises, from phourg (Gen. 691).

18. Zebulun and Naphtali! A noble contrast to the foregoing; Zebulun and Naphtali, in "Galilee of the Gentiles," sent forth champions to the Lord's battle against the enemies of the Hebrew Church; and their land was afterwards honoured as the scene of Christ's preaching (see Matt. iv. 13), and gave birth to many of the Apostles, the first champions of the Christian Church against the spiritual Sisera of this world.

the high places] the Merouns: see Josh. xi. 5; 7; and Genes. 508.

19. The kings came] rather, kings came: kings of Canaan fought. Here it appears that, as in the days of Joshua, Jabin, king of Canaan, mustered a league of confederate kings against Israel and the God of Israel (see Josh. xi. 1—12), and that they were defeated, as in the conflict with Joshua. Jabin signifies wise, and hazor means fortress: see above the notes on the account of the contest with Joshua; and here, as there, is a foreshadowing of the great future inscription of Antichristian Powers against the Church of God, and their final discomfiture, which is revealed in the Apocalypse (Rev. xvi. 14—16; xix. 11—21).
The stars fought against Sisera.

**JUDGES V. 20—26.** Meroz is cursed; Jael, blessed.

In Taanach by the waters of Megiddo;

They took no gain of money;  
They fought from heaven;  
The stars in their courses fought against Sisera;  
The river of Kishon swept them away,

That ancient river, the river Kishon.

O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.

Then were the horsehoofs broken

By the means of the pranings, the pranings of their mighty ones.

Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord,

Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof;

Because they came not to the help of the Lord,

To the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Blessed above women

Shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be;

Blessed shall she be above women in the tent;

He asked water, and she gave him milk;

She brought forth butter in a lordly dish;

She put her hand to the nail,

Kishon, which swept away the enemy in its eddies (v. 21).  
"The four rivulets of Megiddo were swollen into powerful streams, the torrent of the Kishon rose into a flood, the plain became a morass" (Stanley, op. Josephus, v. 5, 4).

21. That ancient river: that river of ancient days, celebrated from antiquity (Gesen. 722).

— thou hast trodden down strength This seems the right rendering. Strong men were trodden down, like ripe grapes in the winepress (see Luke 20:19).

It seems that the routed forces of Sisera fled in confusion toward Endor, between Tabor and Little Hermon, and perished there: see the description in Ps. lxxxix. 12.

22. Then were the horsehoofs broken. The word rendered, were broken, is halamos, from halam, to strike (used in ch. 26; she smote Sisera); and is sometimes used intransitively, or passively, as our translators render it here: see 1 Sam. xiv. 16. Gesen. 226, who however renders it here in the active sense, they stumped the ground; and so Kiri.

— By the means of the pranings or, by the rapid drivings: see Geno. 190. The noun is from dahar, to press on swiftly (Nahum iil. 2).

their mighty ones] their riders, or drivers.

23. *Curse ye Meroz* Meroz, perhaps now Kefr Mo'ar, s. of Tabor (Wilson, Vandewelde). Dr. Thomson (p. 274) supposes it to have been at Meron or Maros, between Kadesh, Naphtali, and Tabor.

— said the angel of the Lord The angel of the Lord said "Curse ye Meroz," because they did not take the Lord's side against Sisera; and it may be reasonably inferred, from this and other evidences, that Jael may have gathered from this angelic declaration, or from some other divine communication, that it was God's will that she should do what she did, and so obtain a blessing, which is pronounced upon her here by Deborah: see above, iv. 22, 23.

The Lord Himself here, as Judge, by the voice of His angel and His prophetess Deborah, distributes cursings and blessings, and places Meroz on the left hand, and Jael on the right hand; and who will venture to gainsay this Divine verdict? — against the mighty? Rather, among the mighty.

24. Blessed above women] Deborah sings a Magnificat for Jael, who is placed in Scripture side by side with the Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom Gabriel said, "Blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1. 28); and who praised God for His mercy to her, saying, "All generations shall call me blessed" (Luke 1. 48).

On this subject—the act of Jael destroying Sisera—see the note above, at the end of chap. iv.

—the Kenite] not an Israelite.

—in the tent] The great captain of Jabin's army fell not by the hands of a woman in the field, but of a woman in the tent.

25. butter] or, rather, buttermilk.


26. sail] the wooden pin of the tent: see on iv. 21.
And her right hand to the workmen's hammer;
And with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head,
When she had pierced and stricken through his temples:

At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down;
At her feet he bowed, he fell;
Where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

The mother of Sisera looked out at a window,
And cried through the lattice,
Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

Her wise ladies answered her,
Yea, she returned answer to herself,

‡ So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord:
But let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.
And the land had rested forty years.

VI. 1. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord: and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years.
2. And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel: and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds.
3. And so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them;
4. And they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass.
5. For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they

— the smote off. [The Hebrew word machak, destroy, is found only here (Gesen. 460). It does not appear that she smote off his head.

When she had pierced and bruised. The Hebrew word is machak, to agitate, to shake. [Gesen. 465].

27. At her feel as a captive or suppliant. Cpt. the act of Haman before Esther (Esther vii. 8).

He bowed, he fell, he lay down. At the first stroke he rose, but being stunned and paralyzed by supernatural power (see above, iv. 21, and note end of chap. iv.), he bowed down as a suppliant (see 2 Kings i. 13), humbled and prostrate, like the kings beneath the feet of Joshua's captains, and as all kings will one day bow down and fall beneath the feet of Christ: see Ps. lxxii. 9, 11, They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow down before Him; His enemies shall lick the dust; all kings shall fall down before Him.

30. Have they not sped? Literally, have they not found the spoil?

A damsel. Heb. rochem, showing for what lustful purposes these maidens of Israel were designed to be captured captive.

31. thine enemies. Not ours only, O Lord, but Thine.

Perish. David adopts Deborah's words (Ps. lxxxi. 9). Do unto them as unto Sisera and unto Jabin at the brook of Kishon.

Let them that love Him. Deborah ends with blessing them who love God. Love of God is her moving principle. Does Jael need any other justification than that she is blessed by Deborah, or rather by the Holy Ghost, who inspired her?

— the land had rest. After the stirring emotions of the tempest of the elements, and the rush of the combatants, and the din of arms, and shock of battle, described with wonderful energy in this divine poem, the land had rest; a beautiful contrast, and an emblem of the peaceful calm which will prevail when the storms of this world will be lulled in the Sabbath of Eternity.

Forty years. See iii. 11.

2. made them the dens made use of the fissures formed by torrents flowing through them: see Gesen., p. 657, for this use of the verb asak, to make, and p. 486, for the meaning of winework, gullies of water: cp. Keil, p. 248.

3. that the Midianites came up from the s.e. across the Jordan; as Bedouins do in the same region at the present day for a similar purpose, as described by an eye-witness, Dr. Thomson, p. 448.

The Amalekites descendants of Esau (Gen. xxxvi. 12), and the ancient enemies of Israel (Exod. xxvii. 8).

4. till thou come unto Gaza from n. to s.w.

5. with their cattle and their tents their cattle eating up all before them, as their tents moved from place to place, like locusts; not grasshoppers, as in Auth. Vers.: cp. Joel ii. 2—11.
and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it. 6 And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.

7 And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord because of the Midianites, 8 That the Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage; 9 And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and I brake them out from before you, and gave you their land; 10 And I said unto you, I am the Lord your God; 11 fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.

11 And there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abi-ezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, 12 and the "angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. 13 And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and 14 where be all his miracles, which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. 15 And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: 16 have not I sent thee? 17 And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house. 18 And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. 19 And he said
unto him, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. 18 *Deport not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

19 And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. 20 And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. 21 Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight.

22 And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face.

23 And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.

24 Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah-shalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites. 23 And it came to pass that the Lord said to him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it:

17. that thou] The Lord, not a man.

On the use of the Hebrew šah here for asher, see v. 7; viii. 28.

18. my present] on which thou majest work the sign (v. 17).

There is no evidence that Gideon designed to offer a sacrifice; but the Lord desired him to accept his gift, and to convert it into a sacrifice: cp. Kël, p. 251, and see below, xiii. 19.

19. a kid] As Abraham did a calf (Gen. xviii. 5-8).

— unleavened] As most readily prepared.

20. of God] The name Elôhim (God) is interchanged with that of Jôveh (the Lord) in this history, where miracles are recorded as wrought in the world of nature; in order to declare that Jôveh, the covenanting God of Israel, and not the God of Canaan, is the Elohim, the Creator and Lord of the natural world (see vv. 20. 36. 39. 45; viii. 3; cp. on Exod. vi. 3).


21. the staff] εὐπρεπὸς. The original word is from šaûn, to lean, and is used as a badge of a ruler; Num. xxi. 18; cp. Is. ii. 1, from Judah, the stay and the staff (Genes. 519. 812).

— fire out of the rock] The fire was produced out of the rock, which had been pointed out by this Divine Person (“this rock,” v. 20); it came forth out of the rock when the rock was touched by the end of the staff on which He had leaned, and which He held in His hand; and it consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes, although they had been moistened (it seems) by the broth poured over them (v. 20).

This consumption by fire was a mark of acceptance of sacrifice (1 Kings xvii. 38. 2 Chron. vii. 1).

Thus this Divine Being complied with Gideon’s prayer for a sign (v. 17).

What did this sign mean?

(1) It was an answer to Gideon’s complaint, that the Lord, who had delivered his forefathers, had forgotten and forsaken them. It showed, that if they would turn to Him with humility and faith, as Gideon had done, and if they would obey Him, He would be with them, and accept them and their sacrifices.

(2) It showed, that God, who had brought water out of the hard rock in the wilderness, could also bring fire; and that if they turned to Him, and offered to Him the sacrifice of themselves, He could hold their hearts in His hand; He could kindle the heart of all hearts, with the fire of His Spirit, and inflame them with holy zeal, and enable them to consume their enemies. He effected this for Gideon himself, as the subsequent history of Gideon’s acts shows.

(3) But is there not something more than this here, which is profitable for the Church in every age? This question will be considered further in the note at the end of this chapter.


23. the Lord said] The same Divine Being, no longer visible, continues to talk to him; showing that visibility was no necessary condition of His being, of His sight, or of His utterance; that He is the Invisible, All-seeing One; and yet He is called an Angel, i.e., one sent, which is a special characteristic of the Second Person of the Trinity, but is not applicable to the First (see above, on ii. 1). Here thou was a mysterious vision of the Son of God Himself, before His Incarnation.

24. an altar] Not for sacrifice, but as a record of the Divine appearance, and of that offering which had been changed into a sacrifice. Cp. Hag. ii. 43.

— Jehovah-shalom] Jehovah peace. So called from the Lord’s words to him (v. 23), “Peace unto thee; fear not, thou shalt not die.” Here was a practical proof and profession of Gideon’s faith in the Lord, who had spoken to him, and here also was a protest against looking to Baal for peace. Moses had called his altar at Horeb Jehovah-nissi, “The Lord is my banner.” (Exod. xvii. 15); Gideon calls his altar Jehovah-shalom: “The Lord is peace.” These are preparations for Him who is Jehovah-tsidkenu, “The Lord our Righteousness.” See Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxlii. 16. 1 Cor. i. 30; and cp. Bp. Pearson on the Creed, Art. ii., p. 159, and p. 148; note, and see below, the note at the end of the chapter.

25. the second bullock of seven years old] Here is the third mode of revelation in this history, a message by night.

— young bullock] bullock of an ox. The two Hebrew words here used are par (בּוּנַס), and shar (שָׁר), Genes. 587. 512, which supposes that the “young bullock” is the same animal as that which is described as of “seven years old,” and that only one bullock is here intended: and so Keil. But the original text seems clearly to speak of two bullocks, and the ancient versions appear to distinguish them (see Sept., Vulg., Syrisc, Arabic). Two bullocks were to be taken; one for life, the other for death. On the probable meaning of this, compare on Levit. xvi. prelim. note.

— the second bullock of seven years old] The same number of years as Midian had oppressed Israel. This bullock began to live when Israel began, as it were, to die; but its death was a sign and pledge of Israel’s resurrection from death. Seven is also the sacred number which brings to rest: see below on Rev. xi. 15, p. 220.

— throw down the altar of Baal] The Lord will not be worshipped with Baal (see on Josh. xxiv. 14. 15). Baal’s altar must be overthrown, before God’s altar is built.
And build an altar unto the Lord thy God upon the top of this rock, || in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down. 27 Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the Lord had said unto him: and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night.

And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built. 29 And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing. 30 Then the men of the city said unto Josiah, Bring out thy son, that he may die: because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it. 31 And Josiah said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar. 32 Therefore on that day he called him || Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

33 Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel.

But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abi-ezer was gathered after him. 35 And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; who also was gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.
The fleece wet, the floor dry. JUDGES VI. 36—40. The floor wet, the fleece dry.

36 And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, 37 Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be upon the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. 38 And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and winged the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water. 39 And Gideon said unto God, 40 Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. 40 And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew upon all the ground.

(c. 18): and afterwards produced the greatest champions of the spiritual Israel—the Apostles of Christ.

Isaachar is not mentioned; they dwelt in the plain of Jezreel or Edreton, which was in the hands of the enemy.

36—40. And Gideon said unto God! Here was the fourth mode of revelation by a double sign, which Gideon had himself specified and prescribed; as St. Thomas did (John xx. 24). In both cases God descended to comply with the desires expressed, as the event showed, they proceeded from a sincere intention to receive the evidence given, and to act upon it.

THE SIGNS OF THE FLEECE AND THE FLOOR.

What was the meaning of these two signs?

The nation of Israel was typified by that Fleece. Gideon first desired that it might have upon it the dew,—the sign of God's favour (see Gen. xxvii. 28, 29. Deut. xxviii. 13. 28. 2 Sam. i. 21. Ps. cxxxiii. 3. Prov. xix. 12. Isa. xxvi. 19), while the earth around it was dry.

He wrung the dew out of the fleece, and desired afterwards that the dew which had fallen on the fleece might be diffused to all the ground about it while the fleece was dry. Such an extension would be the signal that the whole land of Israel would recover God's favour, and be bedewed with the showers of God's Grace.

But there was a deeper meaning here.

The ancient Christian Church recognized here a type and prophecy of things which concern the whole world. The following are the remarks of Christian Fathers on this history:—

Gideon, the Israelite by whom God chose to save His people from the dominion of their foreign enemies, changed his request, and desired afterwards that the dew should fall upon the fleece, on which alone the dew had fallen at first, and which was the type of Israel; thus intimating that the people would afterwards not have the Holy Spirit from God; as Isaiah says, "I will command the clouds for them, and the dew shall be upon them" (Isa. vi. 6), and that the dew would fall on all the earth around it; which came to pass when God sent the Comforter from heaven on all nations" (S. Trennian adv. Haer. iii. 19).

At first, the dew of God's Spirit in His Holy Word fell on the fleece of the Hebrew People, and all nations around it were dry; but now all nations have the heavenly dew of the Spirit shed upon them, and the fleece of the Hebrew People is parched and dry. When I was expounding the seventy-first Psalm (says Origen), it struck me, that the Holy Psalmist, describing Christ's Advent, foretold this result,—"He shall come down like rain into a fleece of wool." (Heb. v. 10; where gizzah, ev. 37. 39. 49). Cp. Deut. xviii. 4. Job xxxi. 30 (Gesen. 65). (Others render it "mown grass.") This was the first effusion of God's favour on the Jews; but then it is added, "As the drops that water the earth;" here is the extension of His grace to the Gentiles (Ps. lxxii. 6).

As Gideon successively took together, and drew the dew out of its own bowl, which was thus filled with water so as almost to reach the Old Testament, that Word of God, by which the dew of His Spirit fell upon His people, I press those spiritual dew out of the Hebrew fleece; I press the spiritual dew out of the Book of Judges, and out of the Books of the Prophets and the Hymns of the Psalms, and out of the Psalms of the Prophets; and I fill therewith a basin of water, that therewith I may do as Jesus did, and wash the feet of others according to the precept of Him who said, "As I have washed your feet, ye ought to wash another man's feet; an example that ye should do as I have done to you." (John xiii. 13—15). And as the dew which fell once on the fleece, afterwards fell on the floor, so the dew of the Holy Ghost, which formerly fell on the fleece of the Hebrew Nation, now fell on the whole world, which we know to be the thirsting-floor of Christ, concerning whom the Baptist says, "His fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. iii. 12: Origen, Hom. 8; imitated by S. Ambrose, de Spir. Sancto in Prolog.). -When the whole world was parched and dried up, then the fleece of the Hebrew Nation was refreshed with dew; but now that Faith has been dried up in the hearts of the Jews, God's grace has been poured out upon the Gentile world, and the whole Earth is bedewed with spiritual dew (S. Ambrose de Spir. Sancto in Proleg., lib. i.; and cp. S. Jerome in Adiab.).

"Quid vultus computit, areà siccà, et postea compluit area siccò vellere, volunt, nisi primò una gens Hebrorum habens occultò in sanctis mysteriià Dei, quod est Christiani; qua mystericò totus hic vacuos erat, num autem in manifestatione totus orbis id habet, illa vacuata est." S. Augustinæ c. Faust. xii. 32: see also Id. in Ps. lix. 6; and in Ps. xxxvii., where he says, "The doctrine of Christ is the sweetness of the dew. He is in the fleece of the Hebrew Scriptures. Will you not recognize Him in those Scriptures, for whose sake those Scriptures were written?" See also Id. Serm. 131. Theodoret, Qu. 15. Formerly, when the Church was dry, the Synagogue was bedewed with divine oracles and sacred mysteries; but afterwards the dews passed from them, and Christ has given the grace of the New Testament to the thirsty-floor of the Gentile World, and the fleece of the synagogue is dry (Proper Arum). Isid. Bods. Qu. 4).

Two other Thirsting-flours in Holy Scripture—that of Beaz (Ruth iii. 14—19), and that of Araumah—were also remarkable types of the Church of Christ Universal (see below, on 2 Sam. xxiv. 24); and John the Baptist, in the Gospel, calls the Universal Church of Christ "fleece." The Old Testament is then dry, the Synagogue was bedewed with divine oracles and sacred mysteries; but afterwards the dews passed from them, and Christ has given the grace of the New Testament to the thirsty-floor of the Gentile World, and the fleece of the synagogue is dry (Proper Arum).

The above-cited remarks of ancient Expositors lead to further inquiries concerning the spiritual significance of the acts of Gideon.

The Book of Judges, as we have seen, is not only a true history, but it has moral and doctrinal lessons for the Christian Church, and presents foreshadowings of her history even to the end.

In the foregoing chapters we saw a representation of the work of Hebrew prophecy in Deborah foretelling the future triumph of Jael, the figure of the Gentile Church, and exciting the Baraks, or Saints of old, to prepare the way for that triumph, and rejecting it when achieved; and we saw a figure of the means by which that triumph over the Jabin's and Sisera's of this world is to be consummated—namely, the preaching of the doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ, the Seed of the woman, and of the Cross of Christ by whose Death and Passion the serpent's head is bruised.

After a revival of this final glorious consumption, which is ever in preparation, from the beginning of the Bible to the end thereof, we stand in the Act of Gideon and the same history presented to us in minute detail, and with some fresh warnings and encouragements. Gideon stood almost alone in evil days. His father's house and his father's city had lapsed into idolatry. The Midianites ravaged the land of Israel, and Jethro, the priest of Midian, came to the Lord, who sent him a prophet who rebukes them for their sins. But he does more for Gideon. The "Angel of the Lord," the Son of God Himself, came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah, and revealed Himself as the Angel of the Lord, who said, "I am with thee, thou mighty man of valour." He looked upon Gideon, and filled him with supernatural might, and gave him a commission to save Israel from the Midianites. Gideon, who felt that he had received supernatural strength from the Angel of the Lord, asked for a sign that He who had appeared to him.
JUDGES VII. 1—4. "The people are too many!"

The Lord sends Gideon.

VII. 1 Then "Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of Moreh, in the valley. 2 And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel 

The prophet declares that Midian will be subdued in a spiritual conquest by the Israel of God. The dramatizations and canons of Midian and Ephraim, the invaders who once ravaged the land (see v. 5), will bring tribute and worshippers to the Church of Christ ( Isa. liv. 6). For confirmation of this interpretation, see above, note on vv. 36—40.

Let not therefore the Church of God be surprised by what it has now seen, the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews as a Nation; and Gideon will be the type of the Apostles who converted the Gentiles; but the time is coming, when, as the previous history of Deborah and Jael shows, "the fulness of the Gentiles will come in, and all Israel will be saved." 3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, "Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand. 4 And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many;
bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. And the number of them that lappeth, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink. And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites unto thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place. So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand. But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host: And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shalt thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host. And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude. And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

4. the water] of the well Harod, near which they were encamped.
5. lappeth] out of his hand, with his tongue, and does not stoop down on his knees to drink. They did this, showed that they were in earnest, and eager for the battle, and would not lose a moment in indulging themselves; but were zealous for the Lord and for Israel.
This is the interpretation given by Origen, S. Gregory Mag., R. Levi, Piscator, Bucer, Montanus, Kilii, and others.
As to the spiritual sense of this and of what follows, see the note at the end of this chapter.
7. the three hundred] not one of whom perished in the battle against 135,000: see vii. 4.
8. the people] The three hundred are called "the People" here, and vii. 5. They who fought the battle were "the People" of God: they were His Church, the true Israel; the others who left Gideon's standard, though far more numerous, were not worthy of the name. They were not "the People"—δ λαὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ. They were cyphers.
—victuals—a nd their trumpets] Both of these were significant: see the note at the end of the chapter.
How could they have so many as three hundred trumpets? Probably some of the trumpets were supplied from those who left the army.
9. get thee down] with the three hundred.
10. if thou fear to go down] with the 300 to fight, then go down with Phurah (whose name signifies a branch: Gen. 68:9) to hear.
—thy servant] young man, ναυπάγος (Sept.): "nurse" (Vulg.).
12. grasshoppers] locusts (vi. 5).
—as the sand] So the enemies of Joshua are described
And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do like: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.

So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.

And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled. And the three hundred 

And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manassch, and pursued after the Midianites. And Gideon sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and took the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan. And they took two

[whom Jehovah gave], an Israelite. The words are oracular and prophetic. The barley cake is like a sword which will destroy Midian.

—hath God delivered? The Midianite says that Elohim (God) hath delivered Midian into the hand of Gideon; but Gideon the Israelite says the work is Jehovah’s (the Lord), and says to Israel, “The Lord hath delivered unto your hand.” Observe his faith and humility.

three companies] Literally, three hands.

the same word used; Lat. caduceus as is rendered pitcher in the history of Rebekah at the well (Gen. xxiv. 14, 15, 43), and barbel (barrel of meal) in 1 Kings xvii. 12, and barbel (barrel of water) 1 Kings xviii. 33, and pitcher in Eccles. xii. 6, where it seems to be an emblem of the human frame. The Sept. renders it by ὁ ἄριστος, the same word as is used by St. John, iv. 28. They were fragile earthen vessels, as may be inferred from v. 19.

lamp] torah; see Gen. xv. 17. Exod. xx. 18, where it is rendered lightnings. Judg. xv. 4. Is. lxii. 1, where it is used to describe “salvation”; and Dan. x. 5, where it describes the eyes of Christ.

The sword] This swordword represents the co-operation of human will and work with divine Grace. This union of the “Sword of the Lord and of Gideon” (v. 20) is necessary for victory of the Church.

This was to be their watchword.

the hundred men] Gideon was at the head of one company; the other two companies had also their leaders; and he gave the word of command to all.

—in the beginning] at the head; that is, when the first watch was being relieved by the middle watch, which took place so that both watches were awake. The night was divided into three watches (cp. Exod. xiv. 24. 1 Sam. xi. 11); afterwards into four (Matt. xiv. 25. Mark vi. 48).

they had not newly set the watch] Literally, when they were awakening the watch, which was appointed to relieve the first watch.

and brake the pitchers] So that in the dark night, all the torches that had been hidden within the pitchers flashed forth suddenly upon the host of Midian.

they stood every man in his place] The three companies stood round the host on different sides. They did not attack the Midianites, but stood still around the camp of the enemy, who probably believed that there were more Israelites in the rear of the three hundred. God destroyed the Midianites by their own hands.

the Lord set every man's sword] Compare the similar confusion and slaughter in 1 Sam. xiv. 20. Isa. xix. 2. Zech. xiv. 13: and see the note at the end of this chapter.

Beth-shittah] house of acacia. Probably in the valley of the Jordan. Zerarchah may be the same as Zaretan, mentioned in the history of the crossing of the Jordan (Josh. ii. 10). The Midianites were flying in a S.E. direction, toward their own land.

Abel-meholah] meadow of the dance. In or near the Jordan valley, ten miles S. of Scythopolis (Jerome), near Wady Maleh.

Tappath] south of Abel-meholah. Here Elisha was found at his plough by Elijah (1 Kings xix. 16—19).

out of Naphtali—Asher—Manasseh] The battle was on the borders of Manasseh; and a swift runner could reach the frontier of Naphtali and Asher in an hour (Thomson, p. 450). The Midianites in their security brought their families with them, and their flight would be encumbered thereby.

the waters] The passages of the Jordan, that they may not escape into their own country. Compare the similar act of Israel, under Ehud, against the Moabites (iii. 27, 28).

unto Beth-barah and Jordan] Take the waters as far as Beth-barah, and take Jordan. Pre-occupy first a special part (to which the Midianites will first direct their course), and then extend yourselves to the whole, so that none may escape.

and take Beth-barah] Perhaps the same as Bethabara (in some MSS. of John i. 23), which means the house of passage.
princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the winepress of Zeeb, and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side Jordan.

The ancient Fathers observed that there was something significant in this number, three hundred. They formed one body, and then were divided into three equal parts or heads, as they are called; and what is very wonderful, not one of them fell in the engagement with the 185,000 Midianites (chap. vi. 12). There seems to be something divine in these numbers. Some of the Ancient Fathers supposed that the 300 (which are represented by the Greek letter Σ) symbolized the Cross of Christ (S. Ambrose de Abraham. i. 3; and de Fide i. 18. S. Aug. Qu. 37). It would be presumptuous to dogmatize on such a matter as this. But it may be submitted for the learned reader's consideration whether these three hundred, who came from the water of Harod, by which they were separated from the sons of Jair, and were three equal parts, may not rather foreshadow the preaching of that doctrine which the Apostles and their successors have been commissioned to proclaim to all the world (see Matt. xxviii. 19), and by which they overcome all the enemies of the Church of Rome, appealing to the multitude of her numbers as an evidence of her truth. Of Gideon's 32,000 there remained only 300 who lapped, and God said that He would save Israel by them; and they were the Church of God.

We have this treasure in earthen vessels, says the great Apostle of the Gentiles (2 Cor. iv. 7). These pitchers are our bodies of clay,—"corpora nostra figurata de limo" (S. Ambrose de Sal. Sermo 82). Scripture blesses forth most gloriously when the earthen vessel is broken. At the death of the Saints, especially at the deaths of Christian Martyrs, the earthen vessel is broken, but then the Light of Christian Faith, and Hope, and Charity, and the Spirit fills the breach, then the Spiritual Lamp blazes forth. Who (asks S. Augustin. Qu. 49) could have directed Gideon to adopt such a significant type as this, but God Himself,—"qui praefiguravit..."
Gideon is envied by Ephraim;  JUDGES VIII. 1-8. is taunted by Succoth and Peniel.

VIII.  1 And *the men of Ephraim said unto him,* †Why hast thou served us thus, that thou callest us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites?  And they did chide with him ‡ sharply. And he said unto them, *What have I done now in comparison of you?*  † Is not the gleaming of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?  3 God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their ‡ anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.

4 And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing them. 5 And he said unto the men of Succoth,  4 *Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me;*  for they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian. 6 And the princes of Succoth said,  4 *Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand,* that we should give bread unto thine army? 7 And Gideon said, Therefore when the Looph hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand,  4 then will I tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briars. 8 And he went up thence  5 to Peniel, and spake unto them likewise: and the men of Peniel answered him as the men of Succoth.

sanctos suos thessanurum Evangelici luminis inバス futilibus habituros, sicut Apostolus dict (2 Cor. iv. 7); quibus in passione Martyrum; Corinthum rescripsit Fructus major corum gloria evincuit, quae impius Evangelizationis prædicationis insipita nulli Christi claritate superavit?* And as S. Gregory says, in Job, lib. xxx. 27, *Designatur in tubis clamar prædicantium, in legibus fragilibus corporum; confrærevat legen
dae Martyræ dum solventa in passione suprema corpora hæc supplicant*  7 (cp. below, on Acts viii. 1—6). There was a loud clashing noise in the simultaneous breaking of the earthen vessels, and the torches glared forth, and both the noise and flame alarmed the enemy. In like manner, as Prosper Aquitanus observes (iv. 18),  7 *fortium corporea Martyræ illis velut hydriam dum concerptamt suo sonitu fugavero insimulacres;* and so Bede, Qu. c. 5. *As Bishop Latimer said to Bishop Ridley when going to the stake, “Be of good cheer, brother Ridley, for to-day we shall light a candle which shall never be put out in England.”*

Every man’s sword among the Midianites was set against his fellow (c. 22). So one hersesy destroys another. Nestorianism, however, is far more dangerous than Arsinæius and Euthynæus against Nestorianism. But the Church of Christ, preaching the true faith of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, remains unshaken from age to age, like the 500 men of Gideon in their conflict with 135,000. The princes of Midian represent the spiritual enemies of the Church.  1 Is it by chance that they were called Oreb the Ravens,  1 and Zeeb the Wolf? The Ravens is contrasted with the Dove in the history of the Flood (see Gen. vii. 11) as an unconscious bird (cp. Lev. xv. 15); and in the New Testament, the Wolf is the emblem of those False Teachers who tear and devour the flock of Christ (Matt. xvii. 15; x. 16. John x. 12. Acts xx. 29.

Cn. VIII. 1. The men of Ephraim. 1 Who, as connected by descent with Manasseh, the tribe of Gideon, ought to have been foremost to help him. The Ephraimites were eager for a share in the spoil, although they had not been willing to encounter the peril by which it was gained. The Ephraimites showed a like temper on another occasion, after the victory of Jephthah over the Ammonites, and then it was fatal to them (see xii. 1—6).

Here is a specimen of that spirit which is too common in Christianity. They who are lukewarm in the hour of the Church’s danger, envy her in the hour of victory. But the Christian Church, like Gideon, is gentle in her language, even to those who accuse her falsely; as Christ was (1 Pet. ii. 23). 2. What have I done? Observe Gideon’s modesty and generosity; he deplores his own acts and magnifies theirs.  3. The gleaming of the grapes. The honour and spoil which you have gained in taking the princes of Midian.

‡See ch. 12. 1 2 Sam. 19, 41;  1 Heb. What thing hast thou done unto us,  1 Heb. strongly.

Ch. 9.  1 Heb. spirit.  1 Prov. 15, 1.  2a See ch. 12. 1 2 Sam. 19, 41;  1 Heb. What thing hast thou done unto us,  1 Heb. strongly.

b b. ch. 7, 24, 25. Phil. 2, 3.  1 Heb. spirit.  e Prov. 15, 1.  2a See ch. 12. 1 2 Sam. 19, 41;  1 Heb. What thing hast thou done unto us,  1 Heb. strongly.

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Succoth, had answered him. 9 And he spake also unto the men of Peniel, saying, When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower.

10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand men, all that were left of all the hosts of the children of the east: for there fell an hundred and twenty thousand men that drew sword. 11 And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents on the east of Nobah and Jogbeah, and smote the host: for the host was secure.

12 And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them, and took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and discomfited all the host.

13 And Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle before the sun was up, and caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and enquired of him: and he described unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, even threescore and seventeen men. 15 And he came unto the men of Succoth, and said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom ye did upbraid me, saying, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thy men that are weary? 16 And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught the men of Succoth. 17 And he beat down the tower of Peniel, and slew the men of the city.

18 Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men were they whom ye slew at Tabor? And they answered, As thou art, so were they; each one resembled the children of a king. 19 And he said, They were my brethren, even the sons of my mother: as the Lion liveth, if ye have saved them alive, I would not slay you. 20 And he said unto Jether his firstborn, Up, and slay them. But the youth drew not his sword: for he feared, because he was yet a youth. 21 Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Rise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man is, so is his strength. And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the those that were on their camels' necks.

9. this tower] In the strength of which ye trust.

10. Karkor] level place (Gen. 14:5). The exact site, as well as of Nobah and Jogbeah (exalted), is unknown; probably they were not far from Rabbath Ammon (see Piel, p. 267; and on Num. xxxi. 31). Zebah was, as usual, from a warrior of Gideon's tribe, who took it (Num. xxxii. 42).

13. before the sun was up] or, from at the ascent of Cheres; and the Sept. and Arabic favour this version (and so Houbigant and Keil), rather than that in the text of the Authorized Translation, which is that of the Vulg. and Targ. Ion.

As to the use of cheres and cheresah for sun, see Gen. 806, which observes that it is mostly a poetical form; but see below, xiv. 18; and Jer. xix. 2. The use of the word cheresah for sun in this book (xv. 18) seems to justify our Translators in their rendering; or rather to authorize the rendering, from at the going up of the sun; and no place has been pointed out hearing the name of Ascent of Cheres.

This incident seems to be recorded to show the speediness with which the vengeance overtook the men of Succoth and Peniel, who had no fault in the cause of Gideon and in his future victory. May there not be also something typical in the incident that Gideon's victory dated, as it were, from sunrise? Such was the victory of Christ. It was a victory over the powers of darkness by the rising of the "Sun of Righteousness with healing on his wings" (Mal. iv. 2).

14. caught] he chose a young man who was not an accomplice in the sin of the rulers of Succoth.

- eued] Gideon did not execute judgment without examination. As described wrote down the names of. So Christ will judge out of "the books" (see Rev. xx. 12).

- threecore and seventeen] This number, seventy-seven, is used to express the fulness of retribution in Lamen (Gen. iv. 24), and for bringing in of full forgiveness in Christ (see Luke iii. 23).

- he taught] made them to know, by severe means, what they ought to have known before by other means. They who now despise the mercy of Christ as the Lamb, will hereafter feel the wrath of Christ as the Lion (Rev. v. 5).

18. Tabor] To the s.w. of the Sea of Galilee; celebrated in the history of Barak and Sisera, and on the n. of the camp of Midian, described above, viii. 1. See on iv. 8.

- each one resembled each as the form of sons of a king. Sept. ed. Add. et Compl. Sp. Pearson, Art. ii. p. 87, note. See the following note.

19. my brethren - the sons of my mother] Is there not also a warning here, pointing to Christ and to the Great Day of reckoning? At that day, The Son of Man (Matt. xvi. 31), who has taken our nature in the womb of the Virgin Mary His Mother, will say to those on the right hand, "I was as ye have done it (i.e. acts of mercy) unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me;" and He will condemn the unmerciful, as guilty of unkindness to His brethren, and, in them, to Himself (see Matt. xvi. 31-36.

This problematic reference is cited by what goes before. They whom Zebah and Zalmunna had destroyed at Tabor are described as having the form of the "sons of a king," The Christian Israelites have the form of the sons of a king, for they have been made sons of the King of Heaven by faith in Christ, and by filial adoption in Him. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in His name (John i. 12). And sins of cruelty against Christians are sins against Christ, and against God. See Acts ix. 4, "Snail, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" - if ye had saved them alive] if ye had made them to live, instead of destroying them.


- he feared] The eldest son of Gideon cannot execute vengeance on the kings of Midian. No one can execute judgment but Christ.

21. Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna The Psalmist describes Zebah and Zalmunna as having said, "Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession" (Ps. lxxiii. 12), and he represents these kings of Midian as enemies of God and His people. The destruction of Zebah and Zalmunna repro-
Gideon's ephod, a snare

JUDGES VIII. 22—28. to his house and to Israel.

22 Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. 23 And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; *the Lorp shall rule over you. 24 And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, *because they were Ishmaelites.) 25 And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey.

26 And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold; beside ornaments, and | collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks. 27 And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even * in Ophrah: and all Israel * went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.

28 Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, that so they lifted

seems the overthrow of the enemies of Christ and His Church. Perhaps the names of these kings may be prophetic. Zebah signifies sacrifice, and Zalumma, shadow restrained (Gesen.). The acts of Gideon typify the working of Christ in His Church. The overthrow of the princes and kings of Midian presages the victories of the Gospel. May it not be that the overthrow of Zebah and Zalumma represents the effect of Christianity in putting an end to sacrifice, heathen and Jewish, by the one sacrifice of Christ, and in restraining and dispersing the shadows of darkness and of death, and in summing up the shadowy outlines of the Law in the glorious Light of the Gospel (see Isa. ix. 2. Luke i. 79. Col. ii. 17. Heb. viii. 5; x. 1.)

Gideon gained his victory over the kings at sunshine, and Christ is He who "has turned the shadow of death into the morning; the Lord is His name" (Amos v. 8).

— the ornaments little moons,— δύναμεν (Sept.). The original word is from the Hebrew root warkh, to be round: cp. Isa. iii. 18. Gen. 37. 7. Perhaps they were made in honour of the moon-faced Astarté, and intimated that they who bore them were placed under her protection. The taking away of these ornaments would thus be a removal of idolatrous objects; like Gideon's destruction of the pillar on the altar of Baal (vi. 25—28), and the act of David destroying the images of the Philistines (2 Sam. v. 21). Gideon took away these ornaments from their camels' necks. This act may therefore symbolize the work of the Redeemer in destroying the golden images, by which God's creatures are perverted to supersticious uses, and are made to do homage to Satan himself, who is the author of idolatry (1 Cor. x. 20), and in restoring God's creatures to Him.

On the ornaments worn by the camels of Midian and Arabia, a practice still continued, see Wellsted, Arabia, i. 208.

23. I will not rule over you,—the Lorp shall rule over you. A protest against any human lordship over God's Church. The kings of the Gentiles (said Christ to His Apostles) exercise dominion over them; but ye shall not be so; one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren (Matt. xx. 25, 26; xxvii. 8. Luke xxi. 25).

Gideon's example was not followed by Ahabiahmehel, the son of his concubine, who made himself a king at Shimron (ix. 6. 16). So the precept which Christ left to His Apostles, and which His Apostle St. Peter has reinforced, forbidding the assumption of lordship over God's heritage (1 Pet. v. 3), has been transgressed by some in the Church, and by no more than by those who call themselves successors of St. Peter.

24. the earrings the rings worn either in the ear or nose (Gen. xxv. 15). Gideon asked for freewill-offerings in order to make his ephod, as God by Moses had asked for freewill-offerings to make the ephod and other ornaments of the tabernacle. Gideon imitated a good act, but for a bad end. Cp. Hengst., Art. 28.


25. a garment A large cloak.

26. a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold About seventy pounds in weight.
up their heads no more. 4 And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon. 5 And Jerubaal the son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house. 6 And Gideon had three score and ten sons of his body begotten: for he had many wives. 7 And his concubine that was in Shechem, she also bare him a son, whose name he called Abimelech. 8 And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites. 9 And it came to pass, 1 as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and 2 went a whoring after Baalim, 3 and made Baal-berith their god. 10 And the children of Israel 4 remembered not the Lord their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side: 

Neither showed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely, Gideon, according to the all goodness which he had shewed unto Israel.

IX. 1 And Abimelech the son of Jerubaal went to Shechem unto a his mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying, 2 Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, 3 Whether is better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubaal, which are b three score and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over

in evil days, that men should not suffer themselves to be exasperated by the defects of God's Ministers to resort to irregular means for the attainment of good ends. By such practices as these the Jerubbaals of God's Church become Jerubbesheths (2 Sam. xi. 21). Cp. Lightfoot, i. 49.

Gideon is numbered among the Saints of God in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 32), but the Saints of God were men, and no man is free from some blemish of human infirmity. And the sins of the Saints are recorded in Holy Scripture to show that we have in Scripture a true and immaculate record of their lives; and to remind us that, though in many things the Saints are types and figures of Christ, yet in one respect they are not like the Divine Antitype, Who alone is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners (Heb. vii. 20), and Who, by His perfect holiness, corrects all the aberrations of the types (see above, Introduction, p. 2).

Even the blemishes of the human types are suggestive of contrary perfections in the Divine Antitype. "We do not say, that their sins are not sins, although God used them as sinners for a foreshadowing of His own will" (Augustine, Qu. 49).

Gideon erred in making this ephod. Christ also has made an ephod, and has placed it in His own Ophrah. He has constituted Himself our Priest by His Incarnation; and He has been anointed by the Holy Ghost to be our Priest; and He wears the Priestly Ephod on His own Divine Person in heaven (see Rev. i. 13). And having received gifts for men (Ps. lxxiii. 18. Cp. Eph. iv. 8), and being enriched with the offerings from all lands, as the Prophet Isaiah describes, even from Midian and Ephah (Isa. ix. 6), He has placed an Ephod in His earthly Ophrah, the Church, by sending forth His Apostles and their successors to minister His Word and Sacraments.

It may perhaps be unworthy of remark, that the word ophrah signifies a fason, and that the masculine form opher is a word used in the Song of Solomon to describe the beauty and love of Christ and His Church: see Cant. ii. 9, 17; iv. 5; vii. 3; viii. 14. 28. forty years] See v. 31.

30. Gideon had three score and ten sons—for he had many wives] Spiritual and carnal harlotry are generally joined together. Gideon gave occasion to spiritual harlotry by his ephod, and to carnal harlotry by his concubine in Ophrah.

Here is another instance of what has been already observed (v. 27). The saints of God are not represented in Scripture as free from human infirmity. Polygamy (as Christ has taught us) is contrary to God's will, as declared at the Creation (Matt. xix. 4); and it appeared first in Lamech, in the race of Cain (Gen. iv. 19). But even the infirmities of the saints are spiritually transfigured in Christ. He is described in Scripture as combining in Himself all relations, even the tenderest, to each individual soul. "Whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. xii. 50); and in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism the soul is exposed to Christ (2 Cor. vi. 12). In a mystical sense, the Lord speaks of His relation to both the Churches of Israel and Judah under the figure of marriage (Jer. iii. 6—11); and Christ has many spiritual children in all Churches throughout the world. The number of Gideon's sons (seventy) corresponds to that of the disciples sent forth by Christ (Luke x. 1. 17. Cp. below, on 2 Sam. iii. 2—5; v. 13).

31. his concubine that was in Shechem] not in Ophrah (v. 27), but in Shechem, or Sichem; so celebrated in sacred history: see above, on Gen. xii. 6. Josephus says that her name was Drumah (Antt. v. 7. 1).

— Abimelech which signifies father king (Gen. 6).

32. Baal-berith] Baal-covenant. This worship of Baal, which seems to have taken root at Shechem (iv. 27), where Joshua had made a covenant (berith) between Israel and Jehovah (see Josh. xxiv. 25), seems to denote an attempt, in the first place, to combine, by a sort of compromise, the worship of Baal with that of Jehovah, and to secure by an equivocal syncretism, the favour and protection of both (cp. Hengst., Anti. ii. 99). The Sept. and Vulg. render the words thus: "They made a covenant for themselves with Baal, so that he might be their god," and so Arabic.

This is the first phase of religious degeneracy. Idolatry steals into the Church in the mask of true religion. Aaron made the golden calf at Horeb, but at the same time he invited the people to celebrate a feast to the Lord (Exod. xxx. 5). Jeroboam followed his example, and set up his calves to Jehovah. The name of Baal is here eugenized on the berith with Jehovah at Shechem, so in later days Israel tried to make a match between Jehovah and Malcham, for which they are condemned by the prophet (Zeph. i. 5).

CH. IX. 1. Abimelech the son of Jerubaal went to Shechem

The son of Gideon (who derived his name, Jerushhalai, from overthrowing the altar of Baal, vi. 32) went and joined himself to those who had set up the worship of Baal (v. 4) at Shechem, the place where God had first appeared in Canaan to Abraham, and where Jacob had built his altar El Elhorei Jehovah, and where the tabernacle of the Lord was, and where Joshua had proclaimed the blessings and the cursings of the Law of Moses, and where he made a covenant between the twelve tribes and Jehovah.

Here then was a crisis of religious apostasy. 2. that all the sons of Jerushhalai—reign over you] Abimelech does not call him Gideon, but by a title which would exasperate Baal's votaries at Shechem; and he insinuates that Gideon's sons were desirous to do what he was ambitious of doing himself alone.
Abimelech made King there.

JUDGES IX. 3—9.

Jotham's Parable of the trees

you? remember also that I am your bone and your flesh. 3 And his mother's brethren spake of him in the ears of all the men of Shechem all these words:

and their hearts inclined t to follow Abimelech; for they said, He is our brother. 4 And they gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-berith, wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light persons, which followed him. 5 And he went unto his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren the sons of Jerubaal, being threescore and ten persons, upon one stone: notwithstanding yet Jotham the youngest son of Jerubaal was left; for he hid himself.

And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went, and made Abimelech king, || by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem. 7 And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.

k The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. 9 But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith I feed you God and man, and

4. the house of Baal-berith The temple of Baal was also the treasury as the temple of Jerusalem afterwards was (1 Kings xv. 18), and as the Parchemon was at Athens, and the temple of Jupiter Olympius at Rome. The treasury of Baal was made by the Shechemites to contribute towards the execution of the ambitious and cruel policy of Abimelech, who lent himself to the maintenance of the idolatry, which his father Gaal had destroyed. The temple idolatry gathered was fifty spent upon treason; one devil is ready to help another in mischief. There never was any man that worshipped only one idol. The money of Baal is a fit hire for murderers (Bp. Holman). Abimelech came to the kingdom by the devil's patent, and is his officer; so we see daily in our days, he bestows offices, and presents to benefices in Churches (Bp. Andrews, p. 532).

— light persons Heb. pochosin, from pachoz, to boil over, to be dissolute (Gen. 672). Compare above on Gen. xlix. 4, the sin of Reuben as described by Jacob.

5. Ophrah] See viii. 27.

— threescore and ten persons] See viii. 30. He desired to kill all; but one, Jotham, escaped (v. 5).

— upon one stone] Perhaps the stone mentioned in the description of the appearance of the angel to Gideon (v. 20, 26), and in the history of the overthrow of Baal's altar by him. The men of Shechem were accessories to this act of Abimelech (v. 39), and perhaps they may perhaps have joined, as an act of religious zeal for Baal their god.

On this act see further, the note at the end of this chapter.

— Jotham Jehovah is upright, or perfect (Gen. 344). However sin may prevail for a time, yet in the end it will be published by the righteous Judge whose way is perfect (Gen. 365).

6. all the men of Shechem] Lit. all the chief men of Shechem.

— house of Millo] The inhabitants of the millo, or fortress; probably the lower described in x. 40—49. The word millo signifies a rampart, filled in with stones and earth (from mla, to fill), hence a citadel; and a part of the citadel of Jerusalem was thence called Millo (2 Sam. v. 9). See Gen. 476. Keil, 27.

— went, and made Abimelech king] Abimelech was the first who assumed the name of king in Israel; and this was an act of disobedience to his father, and of rebellion against God (viii. 29).—In the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem] Such was Abimelech's audacity and theirs; this act was done near the teraheth of the pillar at Shechem I even in the place where Joshua had made a covenant with Israel, as subjects of Jehovah, their king, and where the people had said, "The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey" (see the history in Josh. xxiv. 1. 21—26). This act therefore was tantamount to setting up Abimelech in the place of Jehovah, and to the doing of this in the national sanctuary of Jehovah Himself. The coronation of Abimelech was like the detraction of Jehovah in His own house.

Here then was something like a dark foreshadowing of that future revelation in the Church of God, which St. Paul describes in his prophecy concerning the Lawless One, the man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God. See below on 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, and the note at the end of this chapter.

Note the word rendered pillar is matsabah, and may well have this sense; it is from the word matsabah, to set up (Genes. 560). It is rendered mount in Isa. xxxix. 3, and there seems to mean a fortress or garrison; the cognate words matsabah and matsboleth often occur in the sense of a pillar or monument: see Gen. xxviii. 18; xxx; xxxi. 13; 45; xxxiv. 14, 20; 2 Sam. xviii. 18.

7. he went and stood] Perhaps on some public festival (Josephus).—the top of mount Gerizim] Perhaps the conspicuous cliff which rises precipitously above the site of ancient Shechem, where he would have been inaccessible, but audible from below (Stasley, Hist. 350).

The ancient city of Shechem (says Dr. Thoson), I suppose, stood where Nahboe does now, and it is easy to comprehend how Jotham could stand above it and deliver his allegory in the hearing of the people, and then run away before they could take him (Judg. ix. 7—21). Several lofty precipices of Cordilliterally overhang the city, any one of which might perhaps have joined, as an act of religious zeal for Baal their god.

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The Bramble made King.


Hob, go up and dwell other
trees.

1. If the trees, said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. 11 But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? 12 Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. 13 And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, "which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? 14 Then said all the trees unto the point, Come thou, and reign over us. 15 And the brahmal said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the brahmal, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

16. Now therefore, if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hands; 17 (For my father fought for you, and 1adventured his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian: 18 And ye are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threecore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maid servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother;) 19 If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let also rejoice in you: 20 But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.

21 And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

22. When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel, 23 Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech: 24 That the cruelty done to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them; and upon the men of Shechem, which added him in the killing of his brethren. 25 And the men of Shechem set liers in wait for him in the top of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them: and it was told Abimelech. 26 And Gaal the

anointing of the vessels, &c., of His sanctuary; and man is honoured therein the union of kings, priests, and prophet:
— To be promoted] Rather, to move to and fro; moveah. Shall I go and wander up and down among the trees, guiding to and fro, instead of remaining rooted in my native soil, where God's hand has planted me, and where alone I can grow and bring forth fruit? The Hebrew verb here used (awo) is connected with ruwah, into (Gen. 5:4), and is rendered to be moved in Isa. xix. 1, and suger in Isa. xxix. 9, and wander. Lam. iv. 14. Amos iv. 8; viii. 12.
11. forsmale] be promoted leave, and wander about. The Fig-tree uses the same words as the Olive (v. 9); and as does the Vine (v. 13).
13. which cheereth God] which maketh God to rejoice. God is said to rejoice in His own works (Ps. civ. 21), and God is said to be rejoiced with the sweet odour of the acceptable sacrifices of holy men (see on Gen. vii. 21), and wine was principally used in the drink-offerings of the sanctuary: see Exod. xix. 40. Lev. xxii. 13. Num. xv. 7, 10; xxvii. 14.
We have no reason therefore to be more surprised at this description of the fruit of the vine than at the words applied to the olive, as "honouring God," in v. 9. In a prophetic sense also how true is it, especially as applied to the "fruit of the vine" which the faithful drink, "now in the kingdom of God," in the Holy Eucharist! See Matt. xxvi. 29. Mark xiv. 25. Luke xxii. 18.
For another refutation of the objections raised by some to these words, the reader may see Dr. Waterland, Ser. Vind. p. 152.

14. all the trees] none were willing to be kings. Men may learn wisdom from trees, shrubs, and flowers. Matt. vii. 23. Mark xiii. 28. Luke xvi. 27, xxi. 20. John xv. 1, 8. 15. the brahmal] or Thorn. Heb. athad: see Gen. i. 10. Ps. viii. 9, where it is rendered Thorn. It does not mean the Brier or Bramble, but the Rhamnus, or Buckthorn (Gen. 35. Houghton, B. D. iii. 1481).— my shadow, as if any shelter should be expected there!— let fire come out of the brahmal] which is easily set in a blaze (Exod. xxii. 6. Ps. viii. 9).— cedars of Lebanon] emblems of nobles and princes (Isa. i. 19; xxvii. 24. Ezek. xxv. 9).— fought for you] Literally, fought over you, when ye lay prostrate on the ground: cp. below, on Jase 3. — adventured his life far] Literally, flung it away to a distance for your sake. Compare St. Paul's metaphor in Phil. ii. 26.
18. one stone] See v. 5.
20. and devour the men of Shechem] as it did literall (v. 15).
21. Beer] a well, now probably El Birekh: about eight miles s. of Scythopolis (Oxonum), and therefore not far from the well of Harold (v. 11), and near the scene of his father's victory over Midian.
26. Gaal] a name derived from Gaal, to cast away, to loathe (Gen. 176). He was probably one of the old Canaanite race which had formerly occupied Shechem: see v. 28.
son of Ebed came with his brethren, and went over to Shechem: and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him. 27 And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode the grapes, and made merry, and went into the house of their god, and did eat and drink, and cursed Abimelech.

28 And Gaal the son of Ebed said, "Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? is not he the son of Jerubbaal? and Zebul his officer? serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem: for why should we serve him?" 29 And "would to God this people were under my hand! then would I remove Abimelech. And he said to Abimelech, Increase thine army, and come out.

30 And when Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was kindled. 31 And he sent messengers unto Abimelech thus privily, saying, Behold, Gaal the son of Ebed and his brethren be come to Shechem; and, behold, they fortify the city against thee. 32 Now therefore up by night, thou and the people that is with thee, and lie in wait in the field: and it shall be, that in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise early, and set upon the city: and, behold, when he and the people that is with him come out against thee, then mayest thou do to them as thou shalt find occasion.

33 And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that were with him, by night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four companies. 34 And Gaal the son of Ebed went out, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and Abimelech rose up, and the people that were with him, from lying in wait. 35 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, there come people down from the top of the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou seest the shadow of the mountains as if they were men. 36 And Gaal spake again and said, See there come people down by the middle of the land, and another company come along by the plain of Ijon. 37 Then said Zebul unto him, Where is now thy mouth, wherewith thou saidst, Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him? is not this the people that thou hast despised? go out, I pray now, and fight with them. 38 And Gaal went out before the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech. 39 And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him, and many were overthrown and wounded, even unto the entering of the gate. 40 And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah: and Zebul thrust out Gaal, and his brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem. 41 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people went out into the field; and they told Abimelech.

42 And he took the people, and divided them into three companies, and laid wait

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27. and made merry] made public thanksgivings (Levit. xix. 24): hillulion, from the piel form of halal, to resound (Gen. 24. 22; 25).
28. Who] Who is Abimelech, the son of the king, and who is Shechem, the chief of the city? Abimelech is the son of a rebellious man, but Shechem is of a noble origin. Is not Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal, who overthrew the altar of our god Baal, in whose temple are we? Is not Zebul his officer? Has not Abimelech set up his own vassal over you? Ought Shechem to serve Abimelech? No: if you must have a king, have one of your own illustrious ancestors: serve the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem, the original Canaanite race: see Gen. xxiv. 2. Josh. xxvii. 32.
29. [Abimelech] i.e. of Abimelech—reference to—note that Abimelech was present, though in his vain-glorious revelry
30. Or, songs: Gen. 25. 26. 1 Sam. 15. 10: 1 Kings 12. 16.
31. privily] Heb. craftily, or, to Tornak,
32. Heb. as thine hand shall find.
34. Heb. novel.
35. Heb, as thine hand shall find.
Abimelech overcomes the Shechemites; Judges ix. 44—57. is killed by a Woman.

in the field, and looked, and, behold, the people were come forth out of the city; and he rose up against them, and smote them. 44 And Abimelech, and the company that was with him, rushed forward, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and the two other companies ran upon all the people that were in the fields, and slew them. 45 And Abimelech fought against the city all that day; and he took the city, and slew the people that was therein, and beat down the city, and sowed it with salt.

46 And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard that, they entered into an hold of the house of the god Berith. 47 And it was told Abimelech, that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together. 48 And Abimelech got him up to mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid it on his shoulder, and said unto the people that were with him, What ye have seen, me do, make haste, and do as I have done. 49 And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them; so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women.

50 Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it. 51 But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut it to them, and gat them up to the top of the tower. 52 And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire. 53 And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull. 54 Then he called hastily unto the young man his armourbearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men may not of me. A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died. 55 And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place.

56 Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren: 57 And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads: and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

Abimelech had shain his brethren on "one stone" (v. 5), and a stone is the cause of his death.

— all to brake his skull i.e., wholly fractured his skull. Jael draw the nail of the tent into the head of Sisera; the woman of Thebez fractured the skull of Abimelech, the Seed of the woman has bruised the Serpent's head.

54. that men say not of me] Literally, to me; see v. 29.

But, after all, they did say that a woman slew him, and it became a proverb in Israel, "Who smote Abimelech, the son of Jerub-Besheth? Did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez?" (2 Sam. xi. 21.) He did not escape this ignominy by an indirect suicide; he feared a vain reproach from men, but had no awe for the judgment of God; he was a coward with regard to men and to time, and fecklessly with respect to God and Eternity; such is the strange blindness and mysterious infatuation of sin. Compare the case of Saul (1 Sam. xxxi. 4), and of Ahithophel (2 Sam. xvii. 23).

56. Thus God rendered] God made Abimelech an instrument for punishing the wickedness of the men of Shechem, and he punished Abimelech, in the hour of victory, for his sin against his father and brethren, and against the Lord.

57. the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal] which was more powerful than Abimelech and Shechem. The name Jotham, significant of Jehovah's righteousness (v. 5), and the name Jerubbaal recording the overthrow of Baal, are equivalent.
Abimelech's history.

JUDGES X. 1, 2. Tola, Jair, and other Judges.

X. 1. And after Abimelech there arose to defend Israel Tola, the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in mount Ephraim. 2 And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

On the History of Abimelech.

The history of Abimelech is a true history, to be interpreted literally, and is full of practical instruction, especially to Rulers and States.

But he has also a prophetic character.

The Book of Judges is reckoned by the Jews among the "Former Prophets," and all the ancient Expositors who have commented on this Book recognize in it typical foreshadowings of events in the Church of the first, and of the following portions of the Book we have seen reason to acknowledge the correctness and importance of this view: see above, Introduction, pp. 76—78.

The Acts of Gideon, as the Ancient Interpreters agree, represent the Work of Christ in the Visible Church not altogether exempt from blunders, but yet contending against Idolatry, Unbelief, and Sin, and maintaining the True Faith.

But under Abimelech the aspect of things is changed.

Gideon had refused the crown when offered to him. "I will not rule over you," he said, "neither shall my son rule over you; the LorD shall rule over you" (vii. 23).

Yet Abimelech, the son of Gideon by his concubine, in defiance of this declaration, usurped the kingdom. He set him up King, at Shechem, in the sanctuary of Jehovah (see on v. 6). He was crowned instead of Jehovah; Jehovah was dethroned that Abimelech might be king.

Abimelech may be regarded as a type and a precursor of Antichrist: see Prosper Aquitanus, i. 19; and Bede, Qu. c. 6, who, "In the person of Abimelech," says, "Antichrist signification.

Abimelech slew his seventy brethren that he might have no rivals; and it is twice noted that he did this "upon one stone" (v. 18).

We may not perhaps venture to say that he prefigured a special degenerate form of Christianity. This might be too bold an assertion. At the same time we find that ancient Interpreters have taken that view of his history.

But we need not hesitate to say that a form of corrupt religion has arisen which bears a striking resemblance to the character of Abimelech.

Abimelech, by his Hebrew name, signifies Father King. Legitimate monarchy itself is a good thing; but that monarchy which God forbade, and which set itself up in the place of God, and against God, was an impious thing.

And Christ has forbidden the assumption of supremacy over His Church. He is her Supreme Head, and all His Apostles are brethren: see above, v. 23, and note on Matt. xvi. 18.

But, notwithstanding this, there has arisen one Person in the Church who usurps lordship over his brethren. There is one Person in His Church who claims such a supremacy. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave. He will not allow any bishop to be a bishop except by his leave.

What is this, but to make himself another Abimelech? Some might even feel disposed to see a resemblance in the very name Abimelech. Father King. Papal-B. see vili. 31; ix. 6. Has he not destroyed his brother bishops by his claim to be the Rock of the Church? Has he not, as it were, "slain his brethren," as Abimelech did, "on one stone" (see v. 5)? Has he not also claimed and allowed a form of exercise even episcopal functions without his permission, and without suing humbly for the pallium from him. All bishops of Christ's Church are to be bishops only "by grace of the apostle see,"—as he calls the see of Rome. Thus he claims power not only to give, but to revoke, all apostolic authority throughout the world. In a word, he has destroyed, as far as in him lies, the life and independence of all episcopal and sacerdotal authority; and he has done this, and still does it, on the plea that he himself is the Rock—the foundation-stone of the Church: see Matt. xvi. 18.

What is this, but to make himself another Abimelech? Some might even feel disposed to see a resemblance in the very name Abimelech. Father King. Papal-B.

When he is inaugurated as Supreme Pontiff, is he not endued on the very Altar of God? Does he not there sit in the temple of God? And are not his feet, which trample on God's altar, kissed by cardinals kneeling before him? (See below, on 2 Thess. ii. 2—9, pp. 30—32.) This was not done by bishops of Rome in primitive times. No; but in lapse of ages the faithful city became an harlot (Isa. i. 21); and as the literal Israel became the children of the Bondwoman by the promise (Gal. iv. 30), and as God did not hesitate to describe His own people Israel, and as they had fallen away from the pure faith, as "sons of the sorceress and the seed of the adulteress" (Isa. lvii. 3), so likewise Abimelech's Church. Its head is of the origin, her Pope, has become Abimelech, by defection from God.

We need not trace the parallel further, which is submitted to the consideration of the candid and learned reader. But is there not heard, ever and anon, the warning voice of a Jotham speaking from the heights of a spiritual Gizaith, and prophesying to the Papal Abimelech, that the means which he uses for his own aggrandizement, will one day prove his destruction?

CH. X. 1. And after Abimelech] Observe the contrast. The two next Judges who defied Israel, Tola and Jair, are said to have "died, and also to have been buried" (ver. 2. 5). It is also recorded of each of the five next Judges, Jephthah, (xii. 7), Jethro, (xii. 10), Elon, (xii. 12), Abdon, (xii. 15), Samson, (xvi. 31), that they were buried. But the Abimelech, the profligate, the fraticide and usurper, They had hope in their death, and were buried in peace, and in the faith of a blessed resurrection; as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph were. Not so Abimelech.

To defend Israel] Literally, to save Israel (see ii. 18).

On the Acts of Tola, Jair, and other Judges.

No act is recorded as done by Tola; and yet he judged Israel for so long a period as twenty-three years, and a similar remark may be applied to his successor, Jair.

How is this to be explained?

Tola may have been some donor—that those Judges did nothing (Keil). But this is impossible. Israel was beset by enemies on all sides, ready to spring upon them. Others may say that the Sacred Writer knew nothing about them. But it is probable that he should have known and reported so many minute particulars concerning the later Judges, were he inclined to find something at all of what was done by later ones, in forty-five years.

Rather may we not reverently believe that there is a design here? that there is inspiration even in his silence?

There seems to be an analogy between the Judges who succeeded Joshua, and the Apostles who followed Christ.

In the "Acts of the Apostles" we have a mention of the names of all the Apostles (p. 13), but have only a record of the acts of two or three of them, especially St. Peter and St. Paul. The Holy Spirit has evidently spared the Writer of the present Book, could certainly have enabled him to give an account of all. But He did not think fit to do so. Why? Because the acts of those two or three Apostles are to be taken as specimens of what God did by means of the rest; and because He would teach us not to dwell too much on earthly renown, but to seek that true glory which comes from God only, and to labour and to pray that our names may be written in heaven. (Acts xiii. 20), and not recorded as found in the Book of Life (Phil. iv. 3. Rev. xiii. 8; xvii. 8). See below, Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles, p. 6.

This also appears to be the design of the Holy Spirit in the "Book of Judges." He recounts the heroic acts of some of them, as specimens of what God was pleased to work by them, and as intimations also of what He wrought by the rest whose acts are not recorded, and whose names only are mentioned by him, such as Tola and Jair, and Ibzan, and Elon, and Abdon (xiii. 8—15). The latter of these is the same Abdon as Abimelech, who lived from seventy to eighty years, but He does not record a single act done by any one of them; and thus He leads us to look forward and upward to another life, and to that heavenly chronicle which is written by infinite characters in the memory of God Himself, and is ever open to His Direct access. (Coll. Comm. p. 514. 515.)

—Dodo] rendered uncle by Sept., Vulg.: and also as an appellative in other ancient Versions: it signifies beloved: it is a proper name in 1 Chron. xi. 12 and here.

Jair’s thirty sons

JUDGES X. 3—12. on thirty ass colts.

3 And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years. 4 And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havoth-jair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead. 5 And Jair died, and was buried in Canaan.

6 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord, and served not him. 7 And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon. 8 And that year they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel: eighteen years, all the children of Israel that were on the other side Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. 9 Moreover the children of Ammon passed over Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed.

10 And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Balim. 11 And the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? 12 o The Zidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of the hand of them that oppressed you.

3

Jair’s Thirty Sons on Thirty Ass Colts.

4. thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities] There is a verbal similarity of sound in the original. Their father’s name is Jair, the word for colts is agarioth, and also for cities is agarioth. On the last word see Ezek. xlix. 2. There is a similar alliteration here in the Sept. between idia (colts), idiais (cities).

The riding on the ass ass was a sign of honour (see v. 10). Perhaps they rode thereon to assist their father in his government, especially in his circuits to administer justice. It would seem that the meaning of this record is, that Jair’s government was a peaceable one, and that (as Josephus intimates) he was able to place his sons in positions of dignity and trust, and that each had rule over a city assigned to them.

In the long period of forty years—for such was the duration of the rule of Tola and Jair—this is the only special incident which the Holy Spirit has chosen for commemoration; viz., that Jair had thirty sons, who rode on thirty ass colts, and had thirty cities. A like incident is recorded below in xii. 12, concerning the sons and sons’ sons of another judge of Israel—Abdon.

Why was this incident—seemingly so trivial,—recorded in Holy Scripture? Is it not reasonable to inquire—Has not this incident a spiritual meaning? The "colt of an ass," the emblem of peace, is contrasted with the war-horse, the emblem of battle, and has been emblazoned by the act of Christ, the true Saviour, Judge, and King, and yet lowly and meek, “riding on an ass, even on a colt, the foal of an ass” (see Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xx. 5. John xii. 14) at that very same season, as future Judge of Israel, delivering a parable in which He revealed Himself as setting His faithful children, one over ten cities, and another over five cities (Luke x. 17. 19). At that time He was riding into His own city Jerusalem, the city of peace, the type of heaven itself (see Rev. xx. 2. 10). And herefore, when He comes in glory, He will appear as a mighty Champion, riding on the white horse, and they also will follow Him out of the heavenly City, riding on white horses (Rev. xxi. 11. 14).

What therefore is the moral?

May we not say, that the children of the True Judge of Israel, that is, the children of Jesus Christ (the true Jair, whose name is derived from light), must follow Him in His meekness, if they would enter into His glory; that they must ride after Him now on the foal of the ass, each in their own anointed city upon earth; that is, they must do their own appointed duty, with meekness and gentleness in their own calling, if they would hereafter follow Him in glory, riding on white horses in the heavenly city (Rev. xxi. 11, 14)? See further below, on xii. 14.

— called Havoth-jair] This seems to have been an act of recovery and re-imposition of names—a thing not uncommon in Sacred History: see on Gen. xxvi. 33.

It is not said that any of these cities received this name for the first time now; some of them were so called from another Jair in the days of Moses (see Num. xxxiii. 30—41. Dent. iii. 14, 15). As Isaac re-opened the wells made by his father, and called them by the same names, so probably this Jair recovered the cities of the former Jair, and restored their ancient name.

May there not be here some allusion to the true character of religious Reformation in God’s Church? Genuine Reformations are not innovations, but restorations. How many Havoth-jairs might now be restored in France, Italy, England, and in all Christendom! How much work is to be done in raising up “the foundations of past generations,” and building up again the Havoth-jairs of primitive doctrine and discipline!

Observe also that the work of this second Jair was not only one of revival, but of extension. Under the first Jair, the Havoth-jair were twenty-three cities (1 Chron. ii. 22). Now they are thirty. Is there not also a spiritual lesson here, that true religious Reformation is not only restoration, but enlargement?

All the thirty cities of the thirty sons are called from the name of their father Jair, Havoth-jair. So the cities which the children of the Divine Judge occupy here, are not to be called by their own names, they are cities of Christ. Christian Churches are not cities of man, but of God.

5. Canaan in Gilead (Josephus).


— gods of Syria] which Jacob had ordered his servants to put away, and which he had buried at Shechem (Gen. xxx. 2—4).

— gods of Zidon] The Phoenician Baal and Asarté (1 Kings xi. 5).

— gods of Moab] Chemosh (xi. 24. 1 Kings xi. 33).

— of Ammon] Moleon, or Molech (1 Kings xi. 35. Lev xviii. 21).

— gods of the Philistines] Dagon (xvi. 23).

The mention of the two last, the gods of Ammon and the Philistines, prepares the way for the history of Jephthah warring against the former, and of Samson fighting against the latter.

11. Did not I deliver you—from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? by whom ye are now oppressed.

12. and the Maonites] Perhaps the Meunians on Mount Seir.
Jephthah the Gileadite

JUDGES X. 13—18. XI. 1—11. recalled by his people.

13 Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more. 14 Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation. 15 And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. 16 And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.

17 Then the children of Ammon were gathered together, and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpeh. 18 And the people and princes of Gilead said one to another, What man is he that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? he shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

XI. 1 Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour, and he was the son of a harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah. 2 And Gilead's wife bare him sons; and his wife's sons grew up; and they thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for thou art the son of a strange woman. 3 Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered together vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him. 4 And it came to pass in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel. 5 And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob: 6 And they said unto Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon. 7 And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress? 8 And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we turn again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead. 9 And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver before me, shall I be your head? 10 And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The Lord be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words. 11 Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpeh.

Observe, however, that he is not mentioned as belonging to any tribe of Israel. His acts are those of one who does mighty deeds in an irregular manner, at a time when those persons, who are placed in authority by God, and who ought to employ God's appointed means in a regular way, are faithless to their trust, and neglect their duty to God and His Church. His work may be compared to that which has been done by the Wesleys and Whitfieldes in the Christian Church, at a time when Bishops and Clergy were deficient in zeal and faithfulness, in the execution of their trust: see below, on xii. 4.

— he was the son of an harlot] and therefore excluded from the congregation of the Lord, even as an Ammonite or a Moabite (Deut. xxiii. 2, 3).

— Gilead] the name of Jephthah's father here; not, as is supposed by some (as Berkeley), the name for the country, used in a mythical sense, as a person.

— toward Syria] Cp. 2 Sam. x. 6, 8. 1 Macc. v. 13, 2 Macc. XI. 17. 4 Graell, B. D. ii. 1522.

— vain men] such as had been gathered together by Abimelech (ix. 4).

— went out with him] like the Bedouins of the present day, with their national chief, on their marauding expeditions.

11. before the Lord in Mizpeh] with a solemn protestation in that place, the witness of the covenant of Jacob with Laban (see x. 17). Cp. Hengstl, Anth. ii. 48, who observes that the words do not imply that the Ark was at Mizpeh.

The Sept. has Midian, and Ewald inclines to this reading (Gen. i. 229); but it is hardly probable that so common a word as Midian would have been exchanged by copyists for so rare a one as Masos, which is found in all the Hebrew MSS.

14. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen] I chose you, but ye have forsaken Me, and have chosen other gods. A bitter irony, as if you could choose a god! Go and cry to them. "Where are thy gods that thou hast made thee (asks God by the Prophet Jeremiah ii. 23) ? let them arise, if they can save thee."
12 And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land? 13 And the king of the children of Ammon answered unto the messengers of Jephthah, "Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto Mabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore restore those lands again peaceably.

14 And Jephthah sent messengers again unto the king of the children of Ammon: 15 And said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah, "Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon: 16 But when Israel came up from Egypt, and *walked through the wilderness unto the Red sea, and *came to Kadesh; 17 Then *Israel sent messengers unto the king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land: 18 but the king of Edom would not hearken thereto. And in like manner they sent unto the king of Moab: but he would not *consent: and Israel *abode in Kadesh. 18 Then they went along through the wilderness, and *compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and *came by the east side of the land of Moab, *and pitched on the other side of Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab: for Arnon was the border of Moab. 19 And *Israel sent messengers unto Sihon the king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon; and Israel said unto him, *Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land into my place. 20 *But Sihon trusted not Israel to pass through his coast: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and pitched in Jahaz, and fought against Israel. 21 And the Lord God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they *smote them: so Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that country. 22 And they possessed *all the coasts of the Amorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and from the wilderness even unto Jordan. 23 So now the Lord God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldest thou possess it? 24 Wilt not thou possess that which *Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the Lord our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess. 25 And now art thou any thing better than *Balak the son of Zipper, king of Moab? did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever fight against them, 26 While Israel dwelt in *Heshbon and her towns, and in *Aroer and her people of Chemosh," who could not deliver thee from the Amorites (ep. below, 1 Kings xi. 7). — *giveeth thee or, *shall give thee: whatever Chemosh thy god will enable thee to possess, that thou wilt possess; so what the Lord our God has given us to possess—now for 300 years (v. 20)—that we will possess.

It does not seem that Jephthah is here using the language of insult to the Amorites, but is giving them a courteous reply. He appears to recognize Chemosh as a local deity; and he speaks of the Lord as the God of Israel (v. 23) and as our God; and calls Israel "His people" (v. 23). He regards Him as a national deity, but does not claim universal dominion for him. He does not proclaim Him as the Lord of all nations, and as the sole arbiter of their destinies and disposer of their dominions.

It seems that Jephthah regards the gods of the several nations as asserting and proving their relative strength by the victories which they enable their votaries to achieve (see further below, the note at the end of the chapter).
towns, and in all the cities that be along by the coasts of Arnon, three hundred years? why therefore did ye not recover them within that time? 27 Wherefore have I not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me: the Lord the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.

38 Howbeit the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah which he sent him. 29 Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon. 30 And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, 31 Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, so shall surely the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

32 So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the Lord delivered them into his hands. 33 And he smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, even twenty cities, and unto the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

34 And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; 35 and it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back. 36 And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, x do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon. 37 And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows. 38 And he said, Go.

26. three hundred years] a round number: see above, the Introduction to this Book, p. 83.
29. the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah] It is not said that the Spirit clothed him with Himself, as in vi. 34: see note there.
31. whatsoever cometh forth] Literally, the comer forth, who shall come forth from the doors of my house to meet me; and so Sept. has the masculine gender, δ ενεχώρησεν αυτός κατά Καιλ, and Trg., "Quiamque primus fuerit ingressus de foribus domus meae;" and so Syriac and Arabic.
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34. four miles] from Heshbon (Onomast., probably on the north side of the Dead Sea) to Rabbath-ammon (Euseb.).
35. Minnith] probably seven miles to the east of Rabbath-ammon (Euseb.).
36. Jephthah came to Mizpeh] which was to the N.W. of Rabbath-ammon: cp. above, v. 11.
And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. 39 And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who *did* with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel, 40 That the daughters of Israel went † yearly || to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

round it (see Sept. here); and at the end of the two months I will return to thee, and thou shalt do with me according to thy vow. Then her father's two sons, and their companions, appeared in her majesty's regalia; and her subsequent return showed the deliberate willingness of her self-sacrifice. She desired that it might be known, even for her father's sake, that she was not Forc'd to die, but that she was a willing sacrifice. If she had not been a voluntary victim, she might easily have escaped, when left alone to roam at liberty on the mountains. Her return to Mizpeh at the appointed time was her own free act; and it rescued her father from the charge of having offered her against her will. She offered herself to him, and by him to God.

— and bewail my virginity! Lament my virgin estate, that I am never to be a mother in Israel. The sacrifice on her part was a very great one, a sacrifice that cost her many tears and many tears of heart. The time, two months, proved this. Besides, it is added, "she knew no man" (v. 39), she offered herself to a virgin to. 38. with her companions) who were witnesses of the grief in order to give herself as a sacrifice. 39. she returned] Showing that she offered herself freely, of her own accord.

— did with her according to his vow? See v. 31. 40. went I Literally, will go; probably to Mizpeh (v. 34). 41. to lament] Tan, gonal, which is rendered regretted in r. 11, and this is probably the meaning here, to celebrate, to praise (Gesen., Keil).

four days in a year! A salutary custom; in order that the daughters of Jephthah's daughter might not be forgotten, and that posterity might be warned against the sin of making rash vows, and of tempting God (S. Chrys., Hom. xiv. ad Pop. Antioc.).

**On Jephthah's Vow.**

Did Jephthah offer his daughter a burnt sacrifice, according to his vow? (1) That he did offer her, seems to be asserted in the Text. He vowed to the Lord that if he conquered the Ammonites, then "whoever first came forth from the doors of his house to meet him, should be offered for a burnt-offering to the Lord." (v. 31). His daughter was the first to meet him: he said, "All my daughters thou hast brought me very low; I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back;" and when she had returned to him after the two months' reprieve, "he did with her according to his vow." (v. 39). We find that the earliest writers, Jewish and Christian, agree in this interpretation. Josephus, who considers Jephthah, says, that he allowed her a reprieve of two months, and then offered her as a burnt sacrifice (Ant. v. 7, 10).

The Targum of Jonathan has inserted a clause in its paraphrase here, after v. 30, to the effect that no one should offer her child as a burnt-offering, as Jephthah the Gileadite did, without consulting Phinehas the Priest; and that if he had consulted Phinehas, he would have redeemed her with money.

All the Jewish writers for a thousand years after Christ concurred in the opinion that he did offer his daughter.

Among Christian writers we may specify the following:—

The Evil Spirit tempted Jephthah to make a rash vow, and God did not interfere to prevent its execution; not that God can take pleasure in human sacrifices, but that men may learn by this example not to vow rashly. Quest. et Resp. ad Orth. apud Justin. M., Qu. 99. See also Origen in Jud. tom. i. p. 457; in Joann. tom. vi. § 96; Anetur Carmimn c. Mar- cion. ap. Tertullian. lib. iii. p. 584; S. Ambrose de Officis Minister. ill. 12, who says, "Miserabilis necessitas, qua solvitur paricidio;" and in his treatise de Virgin. c. 20, S. Ambrose says, "Hoc prohibamus? minime gentium. Sol lamen eti paricidio? quod totum humano genere est;" and he adds, that Jephthah might have learnt from Abraham's case, "that God is not pleased with human sacrifices; and that God showed, once for all, to Abraham, that obedience to God is to be preferred by persons to the life of their children; and that children ought to be offered to them by God, but not to be immolated." And in his Exhortat. Virginit. c. 8, he says, "that Jephthah's daughter showed how great power God has to save through his merciful Интернет, offering herself to death, lest her father's vow should be broken." See also Theodoret (Qu. in Jud. 20), who, after censuring Jephthah for his rash vow, and contrasting Abraham's case with Jephthah's, praises the magnanimity of his daughter, who offered herself. S. Jerome says (in Joennan. lib. i. c. 19), that God did not interfere to prevent the execution of the vow, in order that the evil consequences of rash vows might be more deeply felt. And in his commentary on Jeremiah viii., and on Micah vi., he asserts that Jephthah's daughter was offered by her father. S. Augustine expresses the same opinion in Jud. (Qu. 49), where he also contrasts Abraham's case with that of Jephthah's; and de Civ. Di. i. 21. The same judgment is pronounced by S. Greg. Nazianz., Orat. xxiii.; S. Chrysostom, Hom. xiv. ad Pop. Antioc.; Epistulnibus, i. p. 1055. See also Prosper Aquitan. ii. 20; Isidore, Hispal. c. vii.; and Thomas Aquinas in iv. Dist. 38, Qu. 1; and Secunda Sententia, Qu. 88.

Among later writers the same opinion has been maintained by Tertull., Securitas, Bonifacius, Manesio, Luther, F. Martyl, Pfeiffer, Dubia Vex. loc. x., p. 184; Lighthouse, Sermon, Works ii. 1115—1222. Natalis Alexander, Hist. Eccl. tom. iii. dis. xix.; Wsner, Difficultations in Jud. c. xii.; Wsner, R. B. ii. 541; Stanley, Hist. 599; Bulllet, B. D. i. 963.

(2) This opinion has been disputed by some. The first among the Jews who adopted a different view were, Justinian, M., and Tertullian. In the following ages their time it has been asserted by some Christian Expositors, that Jephthah did not sacrifice his daughter, but devoted her to religious seclusion and to perpetual continency.

Such an opinion has been defended by Lyra, Estius, Flutus, Muenster, Drusius, Glossario, Le Clerc, Lud. de Dieu; and seems to be approved by Waterland, Scr. Vind. p. 134; Dr. Hales, Amil, ii. 298; and by Hengstenberg, Antiub. ii. 127—158; O. v. Gerlacht, Aulberin, Keil, and others.

A few modern scholars, who did not offer his daughter as a burnt-offering, but sacrificed her as a cheraen, or a thing devoted as an anathema to God, has had few followers; it is maintained by Hilleurwick, Einleit. in d. A. T. i. 502.

On the whole, the preponderance of argument and authority seems strongly in favour of the first-quoted opinion, that Jephthah did actually offer his daughter, not against her will, but with her consent, a burnt-offering to the Lord.

It is the common opinion that Jephthah did not offer his own daughter by the Levitical law (Lev. xvii. 21; xx. 5—5. Deut. xii. 31; xviii. 10). But Jephthah lived at a time of great religious degeneracy. The Priesthood had lost its influence over the people (see on viii. 27). The children of Israel had fallen into idolatry; they served Baalim and Ashhtoreth, and also the gods of Ammon and Moab (x. 9), who were worshiped with human sacrifices.

Besides, Jephthah dwelt on the east side of Jordan, far from the Tabernacle, and from the city of Israel. He lived in a heathen home, and was associated with "vain persons," and as their captain, lived a marauding life. In his reply to the Ammonites he seems to recognize their god Chemosh as a co-ordinate power with himself; and this may show a reason for his offer.

Much charitable allowance ought to be made for a wild and hardy warrior, moving amid scenes of rapine and bloodshed, separated by the misfortune of his birth from the congregation of the Lord (e. i), and living in a corrupt age, tainted by the contagious influences of national degeneracy and priestly demoralization.

That his character was greatly impaired by such associations is evident, from that savage act of civil bloodshed to which he consented in his rage. This act of murder was not sanctioned by the Jordan, whom the Ephraimites, who could not form their lips to say Shibboleth, were murdered (vii. 6).

His example shows clearly that men, who have some noble elements of heroism, and even of tender affection (cf. e. v. 35), may be domesticated and brutalized, if they are subject
Jephthah's vow.

JUDGES XII. 1. 

Enoe of the Ephraimites.

XII. 1 And the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto Jephthah, Wherefore passest thou over to fight to the influences of a roving life, unless they are controlled by the checks of religion, and are humanized and hallowed by its ordinances.

Yet further—before the days of Jephthah—Gideon, one of the greatest heroes of Israel, had set an example of ἡθος-θροφία, or will-worship, by making an ephod, for the honour, as he thought, of Jehovah, but against His commands (see viii. 27).

There is but a short step from one kind of will-worship to another.

Jephthah may have thought (as Dr. Lightfoot suggests, p. 1217), that he would do honour to Jehovah by vying with the Ammonites in religious zeal; he would not be outdone by them; he would not make a less sacrifice for his own God than they did for theirs. Their God (he knew) was served by them with human sacrifices, and they who offered those sacrifices had triumphed over the people of Israel. Could then, such sacrifices be altogether evil? If so, how were the conquests of Ammon to be accounted for? Might not those sacrifices have been pleasing to the god of Ammon? And might not the god of Ammon have been induced by those sacrifices to give the victory to those who offered them?

In the heat of his eager desire for victory and for glory, and for the delusion of his people from the yoke of their enemies, he uttered a vow, which if it did not imply an actual intention to offer a human sacrifice, certainly included it. A vow to God is a solemn thing, more solemn than a promise; the very people under him, he deemed themselves bound to keep their promise to the Gileadites, although the matter of that promise was repugnant to God's express command (Josh. ix. 14—26). Jephthah may have thought himself to be under no less strong obligation to keep his promise to the Gileadites than he was to keep the promise made by his predecessors to the elders of Israel to men. The Law of God says, "If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word, he shall do according unto it." (c. ix. 27, 28.)

To this Law Jephthah seems to refer, and his daughter refers to it also. "I have opened my mouth to the Lord, and I cannot go back" (v. 28). "Then hath opened thy mouth, and I will not go back" (v. 29). Jephthah, she replies, "do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth;" and under these circumstances, she even considers her life due to the Lord; "forasmuch as (or, after that) the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon." (v. 30.)

It must be remembered that, in the two months which followed the utterance of these words, the priests would have interfered to prevent the execution of the vow; and that Jephthah, not being a priest, could not have offered a sacrifice with his own hands, and therefore could not have sacrificed his daughter.

But all such allegations are of little weight, against the clear words of the Sacred Text, and against the unanimous interpretation of it by the most ancient Expositors, Hebrew and Chaldee.

It has been asserted by some Jewish authorities, that the Priesthood, which we find in the history of Eli (1 Sam. i. 9; ii. 35. 1 Kings ii. 27) had been transferred from the line of Elizaphan to the line of Hushan, was translated for this reason—viz., because the Priests did not interfere to prevent the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter: see Selden de Success. ad Pontif. cap. 2, p. 117; Lightfoot, p. 1218.

It is by no means certain, that the Priesthood, if able, would have prevented the execution of the vow. Jephthah's daughter herself desired its execution. And it was one of the characteristics of those times of religious confusion which are described in the Book of Judges, that the Priesthood had sunk into a position of no spiritual influence; a position more to incite to licentiousness than to restrain it. Jephthah sacrificed his daughter; and the Priests held their peace.

Jephthah was guilty of uttering a rash vow, and of tempting God to raise another Jephthah to execute the evil effects of his rashness; but God let him feel all the bitter fruits of that sinful recklessness, and has made him a perpetual warning to the world. From the mention of his name in Heb. xii. 32, there is good reason to think that his case is pointed out as a warning to all preachers, who, by word or example, have matured men into earnest repentance; and who are profited by the example. We hear no more of any such vows after this sacrifice. What God had commanded in Isaac's case, for the trial of Abraham's faith, God interfered to forbid. He did not interfere in Jephthah's case, but punished him by the loss of his daughter; and by both these examples He showed that He condemns such sacrifices. Cp. S. Chrys., Hom. xiv. ad Pop. Antioch.

This history is fraught with warning to all. It displays the evils into which Churches and States fall when the Sacred Ministry of God's Sanctuary is denormalized; and when the regular ordinances of religion are either, through the national conscience. When the Clergy of a nation lose their moral influence, then the Divine Law is obscured, and human passions usurp its place. No ignorance is so hateful as that which they use so heinous and profligate as are then committed with impunity.

While therefore Christian Churches condemn Jephthah, let them look to themselves. While they censure this rough, rude soldier, an outcast from house and home, living in a corrupt age, and familiar from his youth with scenes of bloodshed and rapine, and not enjoying the spiritual privileges, or restrained by the moral control, of the regular ordinances of religion, let them look to themselves, dwelling in the sunshine of the Gospel.

Is there not an immanence of children, worse than Jephthah's sacrifice of his daughter? She was a conscious and willing victim, offering herself to be sacrificed for the performance of her father's vow, because he had compassed the enemies of Israel. Her body was sacred, but her spirit was unsanctified, and she was celebrated after her death by the maidens of Israel.

But there are moral immanations of children by their parents; immanations of their immortal souls to Mammon, to sensual pleasures, to the world, to pride, to money-getting; "coweetowness, which is idoltry (Col. iii. 5); there are moral immanations of children, as to the spirit of licence and of lust; and there are spiritual immanations of unconscious victims; immanations of young maidens in the flower of life and beauty to the solitude and seclusion of a cloister; where they are neglected with soft speeches, when they knew before Christian altars, crowned as victims, attired in pure white robes, as if they were brides of Christ.

Therefore let Christian Churches meditate on the history of Jephthah, and let them tremble and lament.

Will it not be more tolerable for Jephthah at the Day of judgment, than for those who offer such human sacrifices as these—sacrifices, it may be, not only of body, but of soul?

But we may not pause here. There is a beautiful light shed upon the gloom of this dark history, reflected from the youthful form of the maiden of Gilgal, Jephthah's daughter.

He returns a conqueror to his home; and she comes forth from his sanctuary to meet him. He removes the pins and jewels and the veil. He rends his clothes, and says, "Alas, my daughter S. thou hast brought me very low, and thou art among them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back." She does not grieve for this, this being the fulfillment of the fulfilment of his vow to the Lord. "My father, thou hast opened thy mouth to the Lord; do me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth, forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, the children of Ammon." (v. 34.)

She is not like the Iphigenia of the Greek story. She offers her own life a willing sacrifice; and in her love for her father's name, and in calm resolve that all should know that she is a willing sacrifice, and with tender and delicate consideration for her father, and in order that no one may charge him with having sacrificed her against her own free will, she craves respite and liberty for two months, that she may range freely on the mountains, apart from the world, and prepare herself for the day of suffering. And for another two months, after her release from death, she comes down from her mountain liberty at the appointed time to offer her virgin soul for the fulfilment of her father's vow. Her name was held in honour in Israel. The finances of Israel for forty years yearly to honour her—or rather to celebrate her—for four days. The tender and reverential regard which she showed for the sanctity of a vow uttered by her father, and which concerned herself, and her voluntary subjection to his order in order that his vow might not be violated, are very instructive.

Vows are made at baptism in the name of children, and the fulfilment of those vows leads to eternal life. But do not some parents make such vows to their children? Do not some parents say, "If they thus break them? How will they sacrifice their lives, that those vows may be kept, and that they themselves may live for evermore! Yet further. Is it surprising that Ancient Expositors should have seen not only an historical event, full of practical instruction, but also a spiritual meaning in the interesting
against the children of Ammon, and did not call us to go with thee? we will burn thine house upon thee with fire. 2 And Jephthah said unto them, I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands. 3 And when I saw that ye delivered me not, I put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the Lord delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me? 4 Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites, and among the Ammonites.

Jephthah's answer

1. The war of Ephraim against Jephthah

2. The result of the war

3. The peace between the tribes

4. The Taunt of Ephraim

5. The Prophetical character of Jephthah's answer

Crit. XII. 1. The war of Ephraim] who aimed at supremacy over the other Tribes, and were jealous of all other Tribes who were their rivals for the first place of honour above the rest.

—went northward] or, perhaps, to Taanach, a town in the valley of the Jordan near Succoth (Josh. xiii. 27).

—said unto Jephthah] as they had said to Gideon, after the discomfiture of the Midianites in the plain of Esdraelon (viii. 1.). Jephthah answers them mildly, as Gideon did.

—we will burn thine house] a specimen of the lawless spirit of those times (cp. xiv. 15).

2. I and my people] Literally, A man of strife was I and my people (on the one side) and the children of Ammon on the other: we were like single combatants matched the one against the other; I called upon you to help me, but ye refused to come.

—ye delivered me not] as ye might have done. He courteously acknowledges their power and courage, as Gideon had done vii. 19.

3. I put my life in my hands] in the palm of my hands. The Hebrew word is ephah, not yad (see above, vii. 6). I put my life in the palm of my hand, where it was exposed to danger, and with it I fought against the Ammonites; I put my life in the palm of my hand, like a stone in a sling: cp. i Sam. xiv. 5; xxviii. 1. Job xiii. 14.

—the Lord] It was not your work, nor mine, but the Lord's. Jephthah laments Gideon in piety as well as in mildness and modesty (see vii. 7). It would seem as if Jephthah must have had the record of Gideon's acts and speeches before him.

—into my hand] my ephah: that palm in which my life was.

The Taunt of Ephraim


The meaning of this taunt is, that ye of Gilead (that is, Jephthah and his people) are no Tribe at all, much less a leading one, as Ephraim claimed to be; but ye are only runaways from Ephraim, and yet ye dare to intrude yourselves among the noblest tribes, and to put yourselves in the place of honor among Ephraim and among Manasseh! The word rendered among is betohe, and does not signify here between, but among, as xviii. 1 cp. Gen. xxiii. 10; xlii. 5. Exod. xxiii. 45. Num. viii. 6. 14. Josh. xvii. 9.

Here we see a specimen of that evil spirit of Envy and Pride which forced the House of Israel to the Church of God. They who are in high places in the Church, like Ephraim, sometimes stand aloof in the time of danger. And when others of lower estate have stepped into the gap, and have stood in the breach, and braved the danger, and have fought the battle, and gained the victory, as Jephthah the Gileadite did (the man of Gilead, which was not a tribe of Israel), then they are angry and jealous, and insult them with proud words, and even proscribe and taunt them with being runaways and deserters, and yet daring to take their places in the Chapels of Israel. Has not this haughty and bitter language of scorn and disdain been the language of some in the greatest Western Church of Christendom against the Churches of the Reformation? Has it not sometimes been the language of some in the Church of England toward separatists from herself? (cp. xii. 1.) Schism doubtless is a sin; but it is sometimes caused by the enforcement of antiscientific terms of communion, as it is by the Church of Rome; and the sin of the schism is here. It is often occasioned (though often not so) by spiritual luaguer and lethargy in the Church of God.
Manassites. 5 And the Gileadites took the "passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; 6 Then said they unto him, Say now ||Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.

7 And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

8 And after him ||Ibzan of Beth-lehem judged Israel. 9 And he had thirty sons, and thirty daughters, whom he sent abroad, and took in thirty daughters from abroad for his sons. And he judged Israel seven years. 10 Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Beth-lehem.

11 And after him ||Elon, a Zebulonite, judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years. 12 And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon in the country of Zebulun.

Zeal for God and for the truth is good wherever it be found. Let the Churches of Christ stand forth in the hour of danger and fight boldly the good fight against the Ammonites of Error and Falsehood. Then the irregular warfare of separatist Jephthah and their Gileadites will be unnecessary, and they will fight side by side under the banner of Ephraim.

5. took the passages of Jordan] another imitation of Gideon: see vii. 24. 

6. Shibboleth] stream; Ps. lxxi. 3. 6. Is. xxvii. 12—a word suggested by the river where they were. 

The Hebrew word means "ear of corn" (Gen. xii. 5), and is so rendered here by Sept. and Vulg.; the root shaabal means to grow, as well as to flow (Genas. 801). Thence the double meaning.

ON SHIBBOLETH.

— Shibboleth— with samech, instead of shin.

The Gileadites, it seems, had the right pronunciation of the word, and the Ephraimites had the wrong one. But the Gileadites did not use the Ephraimites because they did not agree with them in pronunciation, but because they were Ephraimites, which was discovered by their different pronunciation.

The strife in the Church of God lies deeper than differences of expression in ritual observances, or formularies of faith. They lie in the heart, which is depraved by the evil passions of envy, hatred, and malice; and slight differences in externals are often the occasions for eliciting the deep-rooted prejudices of depraved will, and the malignant feelings of unsanctified hearts. Let the heart be purified by the Holy Spirit of peace, and the lips will move in harmony and love.

— the passages of Jordan] That river which in the days of Joshua had been divided by God’s power and mercy, in order that all the Tribes might pass over together into Canaan, the type of heaven, is now made the scene of carnage between Gilead and Ephraim. In the Church of God the scenes of God’s dearest love have often been made the scenes of men’s bitterest hate. The Waters of Baptism, the living Waters of the Holy Scriptures, and of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper— these "passages of our Jordan"—the records and pledges of God’s love to the Israel of God, have been made the scenes of the bitterest controversies, and of bloodshed of brethren, by those who bear the name of Christ. The Holy Sepulchre itself has been made an Aceldama.

Because men differ as to the exact sound of shibboleth, or stream—because men cannot frame their lips to speak precisely in the same terms concerning the streams of God’s love in the Scriptures and the Sacraments, ought this to be made the occasion for the breaking forth of their evil passions? Let them earnestly endeavour "to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. iv. 3). Let them "sack cloth and canine"; let them "speak the same thing, and to be perfectly joined in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. i. 10); let Ephraim and Gilead be united together in fighting the Lord’s battles against Ammon. And if they walk by this rule—the rule of humility and love—God will reveal to them the truth (Phil. iii. 15, 16); and then the waters of Jordan will not be sullied with the blood of brethren, but will represent to them of God’s love to them, and of their own duty to each other.

— forty and two thousand] See the bitter fruits of intestine strife.

7. was buried in one of the cities] His memory is not honoured, as that of other Judges, by a record of the place of his burial. The record of his burial (as contrasted with the case of Abimelech, who is not said to have been buried; see x. 1), and the mention of his name in Heb. xi. 32, suggests the belief that he was (40th year of his sin) (xix. 20—29). But the omission of the place of his burial, and the position of his name in the catalogue of worthies in Heb. xi. 32, may perhaps also show that a shadow remained over his memory.

As to the phrase cities for one of the cities, cp. Gen. xiii. 12; xix. 29. Neh. iii. 8; vi. 2. Glass, Phil. Soc. i. 885. 866.

8. Ibzan] On the absence of any mention of exploits performed by Ibzan, and Elion (c. 11), and Abdon (c. 15), see note above, x. 1.

— Beth-lehem] of Judah, according to Josephus (v. 7. 13).

ACTS OF IZAN, ELON, AND ABDON.

9. thirty sons, and thirty daughters, whom he sent abroad, and took in thirty daughters] In the sacred history of these three Judges, Ibzan, Elion, and Abdon—whose rule extended over twenty-five years—very little is recorded; and we may be sure that this little was chosen for commemoration, because it had some special significance. Let us "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost" (John vi. 12).

(1) The Holy Spirit has taken care to note that each of these Judges was buried. Is this without a meaning? See on x. 1.

(2) In this record of Ibzan’s prophecy we have a specimen of fruitfulness from Bethlehem. Ibzan did not marry any of his sons or daughters to any one in his own tribe, but he sent forth his daughters from Bethlehem into other tribes, and took wives to his sons at Bethlehem; and these women were adopted into the tribe of their husbands.

From the one root of Ibzan’s house at Bethlehem went forth thirty daughters to different tribes of Israel, and thirty daughters were taken into that house for its sons. Was this a foreshadowing of the future extension and fruitfulness of the seed of David, and of the house of Bethlehem, where the Son of God was born into the world in our nature? Was it a foreshadowing of the going forth from Bethlehem of Emmanuel, God with us, the Divine Judge, Christ Jesus, who was born at Bethlehem, and who has sent, and is ever sending forth, children into all lands, and has received, and is ever receiving, daughters to himself from all regions of the world, in order that all may be united in one household in Him? For He is the source and well-spring from which all life flows, and He is the focus and centre to which all faith and love converge.

And after him Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel.

And he had forty sons and thirty valiant men, who rode on threescore and ten ass colts: and he judged Israel eight years. And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the mount of the Amalekites.

XIII. 1 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.

And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. 3 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. 4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: 5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

13. a Pirathonite] In the land of Ephraim; in the mount of the Amalekites, the worst enemies of Israel (Exod. xviii. 8. Num. xxiv. 20. Deut. xxv. 17). The Church of Christ advanced in its conquests from Bethlehem to Galilee, and from Galilee to the heathen world.

Pirathon was probably at a site now called Ferata, a village six miles W.S.W. of Shechem (Robinson).

14. forty sons and thirty nephews] nepotes, or grandsons: thus nephews is used in our Version (1 Tim. v. 4), and never occurs in any other verse in that Version.

The literal translation of the Hebrew here is sons of sons.

— on threescore and ten ass colts] The remarks already made on the case of Jair, who had thirty sons that rode on threescore and ten ass colts (x-4) may be applied here. What was said of Jair’s sons is extended in Abdon’s case.

He has forty sons; besides them, he has thirty sons’ sons, and they all ride, each on an ass’s colt. Is there not a figure here of that spirit of meekness which was seen in Christ, and which all the children of the True Judge must cherish here on earth, if they desire to ride with Him in glory hereafter in heaven? See above, on x. 4.

Cul. XIII. 1. And the children of Israel] This narration is to be connected with x. 7, where mention is made of the subjection of Israel to the Philistines.

The history of Samson’s acts in the west of Palestine against the Philistines is chronologically connected with those of Jephthah in the east of Jordan against the Ammonites: see above, Introduction, p. 83.


— forty years] In the course of which the Ark of God was taken under Eli (1 Sam. iv.). The forty years end with the victory gained over the Philistines, under Samuel, at Eben-ezer (see 1 Sam. vii. 12-15). It is probable that Samson’s acts date their beginning from a little after the death of Eli.

2.] This portion of this Book, to v. 23 inclusive, is the Hophrahah or Prophetic Parallel Proper Lesson to Num. iv. 21 to vi. 80, which describes the number of the Levites, the putting away of the unclean out of the camp, the Law of the Nazarites, and the offerings at the Dedication of the Tabernacle.

The reasons of this choice of Lessons are obvious.


— barren, and bare not] The language of the Sept. here presents many verbal parallels to the sacred record of the Gospel.

Such are ἣν ἡ στέγη καὶ ἡν ἡ ἐκκλησία ἥγγισεν Κυρίῳ—συλλήφθη—μὴ πίησεν σώμα καὶ σῶμα—συν ἐν γαστρὶ τίμησεν καὶ τίμησεν—συν ἐν ζωὴν—συν ἐν ζωήν—συν ἐν δόξῃ—συν ἐν σωμάτωι. The words will suggest to the reader their parallels in the Greek record of the births of John the Baptist and of Christ; and the adoption of these words by the Holy Spirit in the Gospels (Luke i. 7. 11. 15. 31; ii. 23), may prepare us to regard the wonderful operations of the Holy Spirit Himself in Samson, for the deliverance of Israel, as figurative of His still more glorious workings in John the Baptist and in Christ, for the salvation of all true Israelites.

3. the angel of the Lord] From xv. 18, 19, and 22, it appears that this was no other than a Divine Person, the Son of God, who had appeared to Gideon (vii. 12; see note there, and on ii. 1).

— unto the woman] This is the second instance in Scripture of an appearance of "the angel of the Lord" to a woman (cp. Gen. xvii. 7). The angel is about to reveal the future manifestation of the marvellous workings of the Holy Ghost. Was it by chance that He showed Himself first to the wife of Manoah, and that she came and told her husband? All the outpourings of the Holy Spirit come to mankind through Him who is the Seed of the woman, and through His Incarnation by the Holy Ghost.

Samos the Nazarite.

4. drink not wine nor strong drink] Lest it should be said that the wonderful acts of courage and strength of her son Samson were due to any artificial stimulant, and not to the power of the Holy Ghost, therefore not only he himself was a Nazarite (Num. vi. 2, 3), but his mother also, even before his conception, must abstain from wine and strong drink (shear, ginoso, Luke i. 16: see Num. vi. 3; and Gen. xxi. 26).

That such a precaution was not superfluous, appears from the insinuation of some at the Day of Pentecost, imputing the spiritual might of the Samsons of the Gospel to artificial stimulants—"These men are full of new wine"—which St. Peter refutes (Acts ii. 13—15). St. Paul may have been induced by similar considerations to take the vows in Acts xviii. 12; xxii. 26.

Samson, the strongest of the children of men, was born of one who was forbidden to taste strong drink, and he himself must abstain from it. The strength of man is not from any of the creatures, but from the Creator.

— eat not any unclean thing] for thy son shall be holy to the Lord.

5. no razor shall come on his head] A sign of his entire dedication to God. The reservation of his hair, the bloom of the head, the highest and noblest part of the body, was a visible consecration of his strength, beauty, and glory; a dedication of the whole man in body and soul to God. See above, notes on Num. vi. 2. 5.

— a Nazarite] a Nazir; i.e., separate from the world to God: see above on Num. vi. 2. The mention of this word (Nazarite) implies that Manoah’s wife was acquainted with the law of Moses (cp. Hengst. ii. 70), and is one of the many arguments, which abound in the Book of Judges, for the antiquity of the Pentateuch.

Samson was a Nazarite from his mother’s womb; that is, he was bound by a vow to a compliance with certain outward ceremonies of the Levitical law. And yet he was richly endowed with supernatural gifts of the Spirit. His example therefore shows, and is probably designed to teach, that a personal oblation of state, and the frequent and urgent use of the appointed means of grace, are not only quite consistent with, but are conducive to, the attainment of the highest degree of spirituality.

— he shall begin to deliver Israel] Literally, he shall begin...
The child shall be a Nazarite. JUDGES XIII. 6—19. The Angel's name is Wonderful.

6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, 'A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name: 7 But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.

8 Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born.

9 And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. 10 And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day. 11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. 12 And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. § How shall we order the child, and || how shall we do unto him? 13 And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. 14 She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe.

15 And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee. 16 And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the Lord. 17 And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour? 18 And the angel of the Lord said unto him, § Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is || secret? 19 So Manoah

made more remarkable by the peculiar form of the original words: see Hengst, Anth. ii. 36. 8. teach us what we shall do unto the child] Observe his faith, love, and humility, Is there not a resemblance here to the character of Joseph, the husband of the Blessed Virgin?

12. How shall we order the child what shall be his mishpat, Heb.; kpal, Sept., his right ordering, or treatment?

15. until we shall have made ready a kid] He offers hospitality, as if his visitant were a prophet; as Gideon had done (vi. 19), and "he entertains angels unawares" (Heb. xiii. 2), even the Lord of Angels. The feast of the hospitable is turned into a sacrifice.

16. thou must offer it] thou shalt offer it.

18. secret] wonderful. Heb. pily, ἀπουαρμ (Sept.), "mirable" (Polyh.), Isa. ix. 6, speaking of Christ, says, "His name shall be called Wonderful" (pelf). The same word is used in the original here, with merely the variation of an adjetival suffix (Gen. 674).

It is more important to observe that the word here rendered secret ought to be translated wonderful, because in v. 19 it is said, "He (the Lord) did wonderfully: " where the same word is used, and the sense is, "He whose Name is wonderful did wonderfully," according to His Name.

The angel who appeared to Zacharias in the temple volunteered the communication of his own name,—"I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God." (Luke 1. 19). He was an angel sent to reveal the coming of the Son of God; but the Son of God Himself "has a Name which no man knoweth but He Himself." (Rev. xix. 12). Christ announces the birth of those who are types of Himself; but He sent angels (especially the Angel Gabriel) to announce His own birth, and that of His immediate forerunner, John the Baptist.

to save Israel: and he shall thus be a signal type of Christ, who, though not literally a Nazarite, was spiritually a true Nazarite in the highest sense of the term, as we have already seen (cp. note above, on Num. vi. 2), being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26), and sanctified by the Holy Ghost from His Mother's womb (Luke i. 35), and Who consecrated His whole Being to God's service (John iv. 34; vi. 38), and Who began to save Israel from their spiritual enemies. The words of the Sept. are αὐτὸς ἢκέθησεν σῶης, and both these words are applied specially to Christ in the Gospel. As to γενέθη, see on Luke iii. 29, and above, on Josh. iii. 7; and to σῶης, see on Matt. i. 21, ἵνα σωήσην τὸν Λαόν αὐτῶν. Samson is a type of Christ; and in all those things where Samson falls, there Christ excels. Samson began to deliver Israel, but did not effect their deliverance (see xiii. 1; xv. 20). He declined from his good beginnings; and fell away first into sin, and then into the hands of the enemy. But Christ not only began to deliver Israel (Acts i. 1), but was able to say on the cross, "It is finished" (John xix. 30).

Samson's history is to be placed side by side with Christ's history. Both histories are to be read together. Taken together, they display the immense power of the Holy Spirit, the graciousness of God's spiritual gifts; and while the history of Samson shows how those spiritual gifts may be abused, and displays the miserable consequences of such misuse, and thus is a solemn warning; Christ's history comes in as a corrective, and shows how spiritual gifts are to be used, and the glorious results of that use; see above, Introduction, pp. 78, 79.

7. thou shalt conceive, and bear a son] Cp. the words of the Angel of the Lord to Hagar (Gen. xvii. 11) and the prophetic words concerning the Messiah (Isa. vii. 14). The coincidence is
took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord: and the angel did wonderously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. 20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. 21 But the angel of the Lord did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. 22 Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the Lord. 23 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. 24 But his wife said unto him, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these. 25 And the woman bare a son, and called him Samson: and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. 26 And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan 3 between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Samson went down to Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines. 2 And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines, whom I must have to wife. 3 His father and mother answered, Is there not enough land at home for thee to take wife? bring me not a wife of the daughter ofTimnah. 4 But the thing pleased him not at all. 5 And when his father and mother had held their peace, he told his father and mother all the work that the man did, and how he came upon the woman. 6 And it came to pass, when his father and mother had heard these things, that his father said to the woman, Though thou utterest the voice of an ass, seeing thou hast hearkened to the voice of the Lord, behold, my covenant which the Lord made with thee is done. 7 And his father went down into the vineyard to talk with the vinekeepers. 8 And Samson told his father and mother all these things: and his father brought down his son to Timnath, and presented him unto the woman. 9 And it came to pass, when he arose from lying down, that he was strong, and his strength waxed none to him. 10 And when he judged Israel in the days of Gaza, three years. 11 And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him in the camp of Gaza, and he took an ass and gave her unto his wife. 12 And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he judged Israel, and went whithersoever he went forth a savior, and the Lord was with him. 13 And he went down with her unto the woman, and he lay with her: and when he rose up, he knew not her. 14 And she said, Now it came to pass, when your maid saw your father's servant, an Hebrew, in the vineyard, and said, shall I bring forth you to him? he answered and said, Bring it. 15 And when she brought him unto him, she said, Behold thy servant, which thou didst seek: come in, because the Lord has found thee. 16 And he went in unto her, and lay with her: and she conceived, and bare a son, and called his name Manasseh; for he said, The Lord has made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.

19. with a meat offering? Literally, and the meat-offering (minachab); butar, Sept.; "aabamenam," Vulg.; see Exod. xxxix. 41; xxx. 9; xxl. 29. Lev. ii. 1. — and offered it] he was constituted a priest for that special occasion by the Divine command (see v. 10), as Gideon did (v. 26). 1 a rock] Literally, the rock; probably on the rock that was pointed out by the angel; as Gideon did (v. 20). 22. he would not have received] would not have accepted, as He has shown that He has accepted, by the ascent of the fire from the altar, and of the Angel in it. 25. 3 1 But Samuel] Heb. Shimshon. Josephus (Ant. v. 8, 4) interprets it by iaxwphn, strong; deriving it from shanewn, to overpower, lay waste (Gesen. 383). But the more probable etymology is from shenewn, the son; and it signifies, like the son (Gesen. 383). Christian writers have recognized in this name a typical pre-announcement of his Great Antitype, "the Day-spring from on high," the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. iv. 2: see S. Augustine in Ps. lxxv.; and Bede, Qu. c. 5), who says, "Samson was a figure of Christ in the announcement of his nativity by an angel; in his sanctification to God; in his name, which signifies Sun; in his mighty deeds for the delivery of Israel; and in the destruction of their enemies by his death." — the child green, and the LORD blessed him]. Compare the words of the Evangelist concerning Christ (Luke ii. 52). 23. to move] to stir vehemently; see Gen. xii. 8. Ps. lxxiv. 3. Dan. i. 1. 3 in all which places the word is rendered by trouble. Samson was moved by the Spirit of the Lord with a very great burning, as he was angered, as he was moved. This was the first sign that he had his own way, and was going to strangers. The ancient Christians found their moral declension. How different was the conduct of the Divine Antitype! When a child, He went down from Jerusalem to Nazareth, and was subject unto: Mary and Joseph (Luke ii. 51), and almost His last words on the Cross were words of tenderness to His mother (John xix. 26). 2. he came up, and told his father and his mother] Samson at first was subject to his parents; but he became tumultuous and disobedient to them. This was the first sign of his moral declension. How different was the conduct of the Divine Antitype! When a child, He went down from Jerusalem to Nazareth, and was subject unto: Mary and Joseph (Luke ii. 51), and almost His last words on the Cross were words of tenderness to His mother (John xix. 26). 2. he came up, and told his father and his mother] Samson at first was subject to his parents; but he became tumultuous and disobedient to them. This was the first sign of his moral declension. How different was the conduct of the Divine Antitype! When a child, He went down from Jerusalem to Nazareth, and was subject unto: Mary and Joseph (Luke ii. 51), and almost His last words on the Cross were words of tenderness to His mother (John xix. 26).
Philistines: now therefore ‘get her for me to wife.’ 3 Then his father and his mother said unto him, Is there now a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well. 4 But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel. 5 Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath; and he came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. 6 And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done. 7 And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

3 And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees in the carcase of the lion. 9 And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating,
Honey from the lion’s carcase.  JUDGES XIV. 10—17.

Samson’s marriage feast.

and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion.

10 So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do. 11 And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. 12 And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me 1 within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty change of garments: 13 But if ye cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it. 14 And he said unto them, Out of the eater came forth meat,

And out of the strong came forth sweetness.

And they could not in three days expound the riddle. 15 And it came to pass on the seventh day of that she said unto Samson’s wife, 16 Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, 17 lest we burn thee and thy father’s house with fire: have ye called us 1 to take that we have? 18 is it not so? And Samson’s wife wept before him, and said, 19 Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee? 17 And she wept before him 17 || the seven

(10:12) cp. Gen. xxix. 27. 2 Chron. viii. 7 (cp. Selden, Uxor Heb. ii. 11), and the account of the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee (John ii. 1).

This Marriage Feast at Timnath was the critical point in Samson’s career. At the Marriage Feast of Cana in Galilee, Christ manifested forth His glory (John ii. 11). But at this marriage in Timnath, Samson betrayed the first signs of moral weakness and degeneracy.

11. when they saw him] when they saw how goodly and strong a man he was.

— they brought thirty companions partly in honour of him, and partly perhaps in dread of what he might do to the Philistines.

12. a riddle] as was usual in Oriental entertainments: Bochart, Hieroz. Pt ii. lib. iv. c. 12.

The word rendered riddle (chidah) properly signifies something which is hard to be known. It is there in the victory of Christ over the Tempter. How much comfort does he feel in knowing that He who conquered the Tempter will enable him to conquer also! The defeat of Satan by means of the Word of God—for Christ used no instrument against Satan but the Scriptures (see Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10)—makes us feel a new sweetness and relish for the Scriptures, and says, “How sweet are thy words unto my taste, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” (Ps. cxix. 103.) Cp. S. Augustine c. Faust. Man. xii. 32, who says, “censumque leges ipsius regni terrae, quae contra Christianam crescentur, non jam perferatur fetitada dulcedini evangelicae praeclare omne munimenta preclare.”

See also S. Jerome in Job xii. and in Nahum, cap. iii., who applies this history, where Samson shows food from the carcase of the lion, to the benefits derived by the Christian Church from conflicts with Heresy; he says, “Interfectus est levi (a Christo) et falsis dogmatibus confutatus, de comedente exivit os, et de fortis exivit dux.” The Creeds of the Church are due to the assaults of false Teachers, whom the Church has overthrown. They are Honey from the carcase of Heresy. There is no Samson to whom the lion may not yield honey; there is no Christian who may not derive spiritual food from those things which try his faith, and courage, and threaten to destroy him.

—he told not them] as yet Samson is humble and modest, and cherishes the grace of the Spirit within him, and is still a type of Christ (see e. 6).

Would to God that Samson had been as careful in cherishing grace as he was courageous in killing the lion! (S. Ambrose de Spir. Sanct., lib. ii. prolog.)

10. a feast] Heb. mishkeh. wərōw (Sept.); cp. Gen. xi. 3; xxi. 8; xl. 20. 1 Sam. xxv. 36. This feast lasted seven days
days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him: and she told the riddle to the children of her people. 18 And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down,

What is sweeter than honey? And what is stronger than a lion?

And he said unto them, If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle. 19 And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoils, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle.

And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house. 20 But Samson's wife 9 was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.

XV. 1 But it came to pass within a while after, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with a kid; and he said, I will go in to my wife into the chamber. But her father would not suffer him to go in. 2 And her father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion: is not her younger sister fairer than she? 3 And Samson said concerning them, Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure. 4 And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took 5 firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. 5 And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and

his secret, not because he loves her, but because she vexes him with her bold unmaidlike importunity. And when she has extorted his secret from him, she divulges it to the children of her people, showing that she has little love for her husband, whom she had overcome by her tears and entreaties.

19. the Spirit of the Lord came upon him] came mightily: the same word is used as in v. 6. Here also the Sept. has ἡ αὐτοῦ, beast; and Vulg. has “certum,” rushed on him. Though Samson had acted weakly, yet God would punish the Philistines by his means; and would prove the supremacy of the God of Israel, whom they dishonoured, and whose people they oppressed.

— their spoils] the garments drawn off from them: the root of the word used is στήλα, to draw off; to despoil (Gen. 29:25).— his anger was kindled] another consequence of his moral weakness.

— he went up to his father's house] reversing the Divine decree, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife” (Gen. ii. 24). He left his wife for his father and mother.

20. Samson's wife] Literally, Samson's wife became (wife) to his companion who had been his friend; that is, who had been the friend of the bridegroom. Until the marriage feast of Timnath, Samson had been an eminent type of Christ; but at and after that marriage feast, though still in some respects a type of Christ, yet it is with many admixtures of sin, which sully the resemblance and change the type into a contrast.

The Marriage Feast of Cana was the starting-point of Christ's glory; the Marriage Feast of Timnath was the beginning of Samson's shame. Both of them went forth, full of the Spirit, to espouse a bride. Both overcame a lion (see v. 5). Both drew honey from the carcase, and gave of it to others (see v. 9). Both shunned worldly fame (vs. 6, 9). Both came to a Marriage Feast. Both put forth parables (v. 12).

But now mark the contrast. Christ is meek and lowly of heart, and yet He is Head over His Church, and maintains His dignity and majesty, and suffers no one to intrude upon His Headship; and rebukes even His blessed mother (John ii. 4), and calls even St. Peter Satan, when he would dissuade Him from suffering (Mark xii. 22).

Here was the point of divergence between Samson and Christ.

And what was the consequence? Samson loses his bride, Christ ever keeps His spouse.

Samson's bride is given to the "bridegroom's friend;" but hear what John the Baptist, the true friend of the Divine Bridegroom, says, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled" (John iii. 29).
6. burnt her and her father with fire. A consequence of her unfaithfulness to her husband. So the false harlot-church will be destroyed, even by her own people (Rev. xviii. 10).

7. will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease.] As if there were any rest for revenge!

8. *hip and thigh.* Literally, *hip to thigh.* A proverb like the German *Arm und Bein.* (Wiclif.) Another explanation is given by Gesenius, p. 502, who says that to smite men "leg upon thigh" is to cut them in pieces, so that one limb lay on the other; so Vulg. Other versions render it by a parallel expression, "from foot to thigh," we might say, "from hand to foot." The sense seems to be that he disabled them from fighting against Israel.

— rock *Etam*] In Judah; probably near Bethlehem (see 2 Chron. xxi. 6); now Urisa (Robinson, Grove), a little to the south of Bethlehem, and north of Tekoa (cp. Wilson, p. 4). 9. *Lehi* jawbone. Perhaps so called from the exploit described in vs. 16, 17, and here named so by anticipation (Josephus). It was near Bethlehem (see vs. 8); and cp. Grove, ii. 117. II. ii. 90; and *I Vulg.,* which renders it *Lehi.*

10. *men of Judah*] This conduct of the men of Judah, saying that the Philistines are their rulers (vs. 11), and delivering *S Immerson to them, may be compared to that of the Jews, saying, "We have no king but Caesar" (John xix. 15), and delivering up Christ to the Romans.

11. *As they did unto me, so have I done unto them*] Another specimen of a vindictive spirit. It is not because they are enemies of God and of Israel, but because they injured me—S Immerson—that I have destroyed them.

Observe how egotistical he has now become; he, who before had said nothing of his own mighty acts, now says, "I shall be more blameless than they, thought I do them a displeasure" (vs. 9). Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease (v. 7). The climax is in v. 16. He ascribes none of his acts to God.

14. *the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him*] See xlv. 6. The Spirit still strives with him and for him; and uses him as an instrument against the enemies of God and of Israel, although Samson himself was seeking only to gratify his own personal revenge (v. 7). God overrules evil for good. He uses the bad passions of men, such as a Samson, a J oehu, a Henry VIII., for the accomplishment of His own purposes, in punishing His enemies, and in advancing the Truth.

15. *a new jawbone*] A fresh jawbone, lately cut off (Gen. 325). — a thousand] Samgar had slain six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad (iii. 31). The promise to Israel was, "One man of you shall chase a thousand" (Josh. xxiii. 10). A greater miracle was wrought "in the time of wheat harvest" (cp. v. 1), viz., at the first Pentecost, when 3000 were converted by the preaching of Peter and of the other Apostles filled with the Spirit of God (Acts ii. 41).

16. *With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps,* With the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.
17 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand, and called that place || Ramath-lehi.

18 And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, \( ^{6} \) Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised? 19 But God clave an hollow place that was in || the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, \( ^{h} \) his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof || En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day.

20 And he judged Israel \( ^{1} \) in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

He seems to have judged South-west Israel during twenty years of their servitude of the Philistines.

There is also something more of spiritual significance in the gushing forth of the fountain from the jawbone which Samson had cast away. God can make His grace to flow from the most despised instruments. Samson himself was like this jawbone, only an instrument; he too might be cast away; but still God could restore him, and make power to flow from him.

John xii. 24: \( ^{24} \) And when he had said this, he went forth through the midst of the city, and passed over the brook Kishon, and cast down the jawbone of an ass, and there it was, \\

Samson’s Acts.

Review of the Forgoing Chapter.
The history in this chapter brings out the important truth that men and churches may possess great spiritual gifts and yet be very defective in spiritual grace; and that the greatest gifts profit nothing without Divine grace.

In the New Testament, that lesson is taught by the history of the Church of Corinth, which was richly endowed with spiritual gifts (\( ^{xvi. \text{xxi.} 14} \)) but was very deficient in spiritual grace, without which, as St. Paul teaches her, all spiritual gifts are unavailing. —Charity or Love (1 Cor. xiii. 1-8). She was not proud of her knowledge and gifts, but used her supernatural gifts in vain-glories self-display (1 Cor. xiv. 23). Here is a parallel to the case of Samson in the history before us. Like Samson, she was distracted by evil passions; and, a great deal like Samson, she was a victim of carnal lusts. She defiled that body which was a temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 16).

What, therefore, does the Holy Apostle say \( ^{?} \)? "Though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. Charity suffers nothing, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth" (1 Cor. xiii. 4-6).

These words of St. Paul are like a divine comment on Samson’s history. He began well, but was betrayed into pride and presumption; he was lusted at his great gifts; he vaunted himself, and was puffed up, and sought his own, and was delivered over by God to his own wayward will, and to his carnal appetites. Therefore his gifts were robbed of him, and, as we shall see, he fell a victim to his own ill-used strength, and his crown of glory and sanctity was taken off by a harlot’s hand; his Nazarite locks were first entangled by her in her web, and then snatched off; his eyes were put out, he was cheated by the Philistines and carried to Gaza. He groans in a mill, and is mocked by the worshippers of Dagon, and dies there.

Samson’s history has been treated by some as if it were the history of scenes in the wilds of geology. So, Lord Kelvin, and others. Against this latter opinion it may be objected, that the words are, "God clave the unetch, which seems much more applicable to the mortar of the jaw than to a place in the rock.
Carries the gates of Gaza

JOSEPHUS XVI. 1—5. toward Hebron. Delilah.

JUDGES XVI. 1 Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there a harlot, and went in unto her. 2 And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. 3 And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.

4 And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. 5 And the lords of the Philistines came up measure by the abundance of their revelations (2 Cor. xii. 7), and need perpetual watchfulness and self-control; that they must keep their souls low, as a child that is weaned from its mother (Ps. xxxi. 3). God deals kindly with them, when He sends them a thorn in the flesh, as He did to St. Paul (2 Cor. xii. 7). It teaches them to pray. God sends us for His own ends. He that can not bear a thorn to His will, and a thing that would not leave them destitute of His manifold gifts, and it warns them ever to add the petition that He would not leave them destitute of grace to use them always to His honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Collect for St. Barnabas' Day.)

CH. XVI. I. Gaza] about thirty-five miles s.w. of its native place, and one of the fortified cities of the Philistines: see Josh. iii. 3.

— an harlot] Though Samson was brave, and could strangle a lion, he could not stifle his own lust; he burst the bands of the Philistines, but not of his own passions; he burnt the harvest of his enemies, but the harvest of his own virtue was burnt by the flame of loveless lust. (S. Ambrose, Apol. ii. 3.)

Because he presumed on his strength, God gave him up to temptation, that he might learn how weak he was, when left to himself. Samson was a Nazarite, and abstained from wine and strong drink; and yet he was a victim of the lusts of the flesh. Men and churches, when they defend one part of their spiritual fortress against Satan, are prone to imagine themselves safe, and are thrown off their guard even by their own self-confidence, and are taken by storm at some other point. Mahomet denies wine to the Mussulman; but he has opened a door to carnal lusts and the vilest affections. It is only God's grace which can keep the citizen safe at all points.

2. were girded] as they thought, of their prey.

3. the doors of the gate] the leaves (valves) of the gate.

— carried them up—Hebron] Literally, and made them go up to the head of the mountain which is in face of Hebron.

SAMSON CARRIES THE GATES OF GAZA TOWARD HEBRON.

Josephus says (Antt. v. 8. 10) that he carried them "to the mountain that is above Hebron;" but the Sacred Text does not say this.

Hebron is about thirty-five miles s. of Gaza. It is therefore more remarkable, that the mountain, to which Samson bore those doors, &c., should be mentioned with relation to Hebron.

The hill here specified is supposed to be El-Moutar, a little to the s.e. of Gaza. There is a magnificent view eastward, of the mountain range of Hebron, and it might be described as in face of al-peneg of Hebron; as Nebi is described as in face of Jericho (Deut. xxxii. 49), from which it is about twenty miles.

But why is this mountain connected with Hebron?

Probably on account of the history of Hebron, as the place where Abraham dwelt, and where the bodies of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah, were buried; and to Hebron was brought the body of Moses, when he was anointed king of Judah: see below, on 2 Sam. ii. 1—4.

Is there not something prophetic in this mention of Hebron?

Samson was a type of Christ in supernatural spiritual gifts; and a contrast to Christ in his abuse of them. As S. Augustine says (Serm. 369), "in co quod virtutes et mirabilia operatur est Samson, Caput Ecclesiae Christum significavit . . . ubi incantavit ego, qui in Eclesiis sunt pecatorum, figuravit."

Here is the special value of his history. It shows the power of the Spirit, and points out the sins by which those gifts are made unprofitable to them who have them. Thus this history is a warning; and it sends us to Christ as our perfect Example and Teacher in the right use to be made of spiritual gifts, and as displaying the glorious reward to which such are leads. Samson goes to Gaza to a harlot; he defiles the body sanctified to God; he lies till midnight; the Philistines think that he is in their hands; the gates of the city are fastened with bolts at dawn; his strength and delight are tears away the doors of the city Gaza, which means strong, fortified; and the two posts, bar and all, and puts them on his shoulders, and carries them to the top of the mountain in face of Hebron.

Christ was with His Host that day in the fortress of the strong man, Satau (Matt. xiii. 29). The strong man kept his palace, and his goods were in peace; but the stronger than he came upon him (Luke xi. 22). Christ has come to Gaza, to wed to Himself a pure Virgin, His Church, which He loves and purchases for Himself with His own precious Blood; and whose life flows from His most precious side, as He sleeps upon the Cross; and whom He sanctifies and cleanseth, that He may present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing (Eph. v. 27). Christ's enemies thought that he was lying a prisoner in the grave. They sealed the stone, and set a watch; but He arose from the sleep of death at midnight, and broke the bars of iron asunder (Acts xii. 10; xiii. 29. Ps. xi. 9), and carried the gates of the spiritual Gaza in triumph on His shoulders. "Aperit passus est Christus, in secreto surrexit Christus. Tollit portas civitatis, aperit portas Inferni; abatit portas Mortis, ascendit in caemum Montis. Novissum Eum resurrectur, ex incesus ascalis" (S. Augus, Serm. 364). Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them by His Cross (Col. i. 15). Christ ascended up on high, and set captive captive (Eph. iv. 8, 9), and went far beyond the hill in face of Hebron. He went even to Hebron himself, that is, He gave a joyful assurance to all the Patriarchs, and to all the seed of Abraham, even to all the saints of God, whose bodies sleep in Him, that they have now a certain pledge of a glorious Resurrection and a triumphant Ascension through Him. He proved Himself to be the true David (who was anointed at Hebron), to be in very deed the King of the Jews, as even Pilate described Him by the title of the Cross. As the Prophet says, The Breaker is come up before them; they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it; and their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them" (Mic. i. 13. Cp. N. Pearson, Art. vi.).

4. And it came to pass afterward] Samson did not profit by previous warning, but went and ran into another temptations.

Parum fida expertus allegeris ex mora primum conunilia, qui debuitcaverre vel postules, Dilexit multier fidicerarim copulam non declaravit; eam sibi futura mox calis pestem invicit."

(S. Ambrose, s. 19.)

— he loved a woman] She is not called Samson's wife, as the woman of Timnath is (xiv. 10), she was not his wife, but a harlot (so Ambrose, Ep. ii. 8; Jerome, Epist. ad Evang.).

in the valley of Sorek] on the s. and s.w. of Hebron, his own birth-place (Ezech.); Samson was taken in a snare close to his own home.

Delilah is not called a daughter of the Philistines, as the woman of Timnath is (xiv. 2, 4), and as was the harlot of Gaza (c. 1). There is no reason to believe that she was either his wife or a Philistine; and it is to be regretted that Milton has represented her as both, in his "Samson Agonistes."

She was a light, veinal woman of Samson's own tribe, the tribe of Dan; she is called a harlot of Palestine by Josephus (s. v. 18), and she was suborned with the money of the Philistines (s. v.) to betray him to them (ep. r. 18). She was a female Judas. Hence we see that the "lords of the Philistines" are described as coming up to her (cs. 19); and she
unto her, and said unto her, ‘Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

6 And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee. 7 And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. 8 Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. 9 Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.

10 And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound. 11 And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. 12 Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liers in wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.

13 And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou wavest the seven locks of my head with the web. 14 And she fastened it with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web.

15 And she said unto him, ‘How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine eye

professed love for Samson, when she said, ‘The Philistines’ (nine enemies, as well as thine) ‘are upon thee, Samson’ (ver. 9. 12. 14. 20). He was the more easily caught in the snare because he could not imagine that a woman of Israel would betray him; but so it was.

5. eleven hundred pieces] the same amount as was dedicated by the mother of Michal to the Lord for idolatrous purposes (xvii. 3), and whence an idol was made, which afterwards became a snare and a curse to Samson’s tribe, the tribe of Dan (xvii. 30; 31); a remarkable coincidence. Dr. Lightfoot (i. 60) sees a judicial redistribution here on the tribe of Dan. Samson’s capture was subsequent to their idiocy. — siter] Delilah is bribed by money to betray Samson, as Judas was to betray Christ. ‘Venditur Christus in Joseph unto Leduc; venditrur Christus in Samson sub Ledge; venditur a Judae Judae sub Gratia’ (Prosper Aquilan. de Prom. ii. 22).

6. Delilah] effeminata, eufeebling, from dalal, to hang (Gen. 29: 15; Keil, 319). 7. shall I be weak] be made weak; from Heb. celalab, to be sick and feeble (Gen. 27:9).

8. seven] The same number as the locks of his head (v. 13), and as the gifts of the Spirit (Isa. xli. 2. Cp. Rev. i. 4; iii. i. iv. 5).

9. in the chamber] rather, in a chamber; that is, not in the same chamber, but in an inner room. Cp. Sept. here, which has the lieurs in wait came out of the chamber.

10. and told me lies] Samson replied to Delilah’s temptations by three lies; Christ replied to the Devil’s temptation by three sayings from the Scripture of Truth.

11. that never were occupied] with which nothing has been done.

12. locks of my head] He speaks of his head and his hair, the seat of his strength; and he is on the point of betraying the city. He is now on the verge of the precipice. ‘Terind de mysterio deponenti, jam lispuro prophet’ (S. Ambrose, Ep. 15). The long hair of the Nazarite did not hang loose, but was plaited and braided into locks (Spencer de Leg. Heb. iii. 6, tom. ii. p. 695).

13. and she fastened it with the pin] Before these words we must supply some such a sentence as the following:—And if thou fastenest it with the pin, I shall be weak as any other man; and she wove his locks with the web. Houbigant supposes that these words have fallen out of the MSS. by reason of the bawltetinger; but this does not seem probable. They are supplied, more or less fully, in some ancient Versions, as Sept., Vulg., Arabic, but not in Targum Jonathan nor Syriac.

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The word used for pin (yathad, from yathad, to fix: Gen. 376) is also used to describe the pin of a tent (see iv. 21, 22).

It is not the weaver’s beam (1 Sam. xviii. 7), nor the oxdin, or shuttle; but some instrument by which the web was fixed.

On the instruments of weaving and their names, see Winer, R. W. B. ii. 679; Bevan in B. D. ii. 1724. The looms shown in Egyptian sculptures, and still subsisting in the East, must not be confounded with the ponderous apparatus of modern hand-loom weavers, but were simple and comparatively light. Samson told Delilah that if the long locks of his hair were woven in with the web, he would become weak as any other man. This was done: and, to make the matter more sure, she fastened the web with the hair woven in it with a strong pin or nail to the wall or to the floor (Dr. Kitto).

— of the beam] rather, of the thing woven. Heb. ereg, texture, from arug, to weave; hence ἁλαθαρίον (Genesis 76; Proverbs, 149).
Samson reveals his secret,

**JUDGES XVI. 16—22.** is shorn, blinded, imprisoned.

drought unto death] he has forgotten the warning from the woman at Timnath, to whom importunities he yielded, and by whom he was betrayed: see xiv. 15, 16. Satan used Eve against Adam, and Job’s wife against Job; he ensnared Samson by the woman of Timnath and by Delilah; and David by Bathsheba; and Solomon by strange women; but the Seed of the woman broke all his snares at the threefold temptation; and suffering in the human body which he received from a Woman, the Blessed Virgin Mary, he destroyed the Enemy, by dying on the cross (Heb. ii. 14), on which he seemed to be caught and entangled, as Samson in the web of Delilah; and by the cross he triumphed over Satan and over Death (Col. ii. 14, 15).

16. **he told her all his heart** Not that he imagined that Delilah, or any one else, would be able to make use of the secret against him. He had no idea that any one would dare to approach him so closely as to shave off his seven locks. He did not think it possible that this should be done without his knowledge, and he did not dream of any one being able to do it against his will. But the Lord had now given him over to a reprobate mind, and what he did not imagine to be possible, now came to pass.

Delilah, a Hebrew woman, bribed by worldly gifts, professing love to Samson, and yet conspiring against him, and shearing him of his crown of sanctity and glory, is like a false Church professing love for Christ, and yet moved by carnal desires of worldly wealth and aggrandizement, and desiring for their sake to rob Christ of His Supremacy.

—a **Nazarite unto God** See xiii. 5.

17. **brought money** the wages of iniquity.

18. **he caused me to sleep upon her knees** perhaps by some soporific drug. Samson’s conscience had been lulled to sleep by his own sin; and God punished him by sleep.

—she **called for a man** to shave off the locks; she feared to disturb him in his slumber.

—**to shave off the seven locks of his head** the signs of his dedication to God: see xiii. 5, and on Num. vi. 2. 5. Delilah caused Samson to be shorn of his seven locks, the crown of his strength, sanctity, and glory; but it was not till after that he himself had suggested and permitted that these seven locks should be woven in her web (v. 13). “Sanctification capillarum Delia libris turpent in et cercatissimam diutum est” (S. Jerome in Exk. xlv.). The Christian Nazarite cannot be shorn of his seven locks—those gifts of the Spirit (I. x. 2; cp. Num. vi. 5)—until he has himself allowed them to be entangled in the web of some worldly Delilah. But when he has done this, then he has, as it were, put into his hands the shears to be used upon his own head; and having forfeited grace, he is then shorn of his glory.

—**to afflict him** humble with insult: cp. xiv. 21. Such is the sense of the Hebrew anah, in piel (Gen. 612). Hence

Samson has **turbulents**. So the Devil acts, when he has caught his victims in the snare. He mocks with insults, and racks with torments those whom he has bewitched with flatteries: cp. 1 Kings xiii. 21.

19. **I will go out as at other times** He confidently presumes on his own strength, which was due to God, as if it was inherent in himself and still remained in him, although he had lost his hair, the mark of his dedication to God, and although he had basely surrendered that strength to a crafty and venomous harlot.

—and **shake myself** as if he had nothing to do but to shake himself, in order to shake off his enemies.

—he **wist not that the Lord was departed from him** For he had sacrificed the badge of his consecration to the Lord, and had deserted his crown by surrendering it to a harlot: yet he did not know that the Lord had forsaken him; so little did he realize the truth that his strength depended on his obedience to God, and that this was tested by his keeping his Nazarite Vow involuntarily.

20. **put out his eyes** He had already been morally and spiritually blinded by sin; his eyes were the first offenders which betrayed him to evil desires, and in them he is punished (Mishna Sota, c. 8). His name, Samson, signifies sun, but now by his own sin the sunlight is eclipsed.

—to **Gaza** Gaza had been the scene of his sin (v. 1, 2), and is now made the scene of his punishment. He is carried a prisoner to Gaza, whence he had carried away the goods of the city.

—and **bound him** he has been already led captive by his own lusts.

—**letters** two chains.

—**did grind** he drugged as a slave. He had already enslaved himself (Exod. xi. 5; xii. 29. Isa. xlvii. 2).

21. **the hair of his head began to grow** probably his prison and his blindness taught him humility and dependence on God: see xx. 25.

—and **after he was shaven** immediately from the time of his being shorn.

Are we then to say that his hair was of such importance? "Tantumque ergo momenti habere crines, ut unamhucus eis virtus invicta dureat; tonso autem capite fortitudo ominis soteretur? Non igitur, ut tantam vim corporalis capillarum putamus; sunt quidam crines religiosae et fideli," says S. Ambrose de Spirit, S.uct., I. prolog. It is not said that his strength returned because his hair began to grow again; but after that he had prayed to God for strength, then his strength was put forth, and he conquered his enemies (v. 28). As a Nazarite, Samson was consecrated to God. The holy seed of sanctification remained in him, although he had grieved the Spirit; and though latent, it was ready to sprout up again, on his repentance and prayer to God. To adopt the words of S. Ambrose, the spiritual hair of Samson’s piety and faith began to grow again

Sept. has **turbulents**. So the Devil acts, when he has caught his victims in the snare. He mocks with insults, and racks with torments those whom he has bewitched with flatteries: cp. 1 Kings xiii. 21.
Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. 24 And when the people saw him, they 
 praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us. 25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars;
 And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. 27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. 28 And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. 29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one I Or, he leant on them. with his right hand, and of the other with his left. 30 And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and 

They set Samson between the pillars, as Christ was set on the Cross. “Expansas manus ad duas columnas, quasi ad duas ligna crucis, Samson extatit, et adversarios suas interruptus oppressit. Hisus passus est interficius persecutorum (S. Augustine, Scrm. 364). How fully verified was this in Christ!

26. Suffer me that I may feel the pillars! Some have supposed that this house was covered with a circular dome, like a kiosk, the roofs of which are supported by four columns, one at each side, and two in the centre (Faber, Shaw, Keil); others, that the roof was flat, as the roofs in Gaza are now, and supported by arches on huge columns, and that the building was, like the present buildings of Gaza, on a hill near a steep declivity, and that by the removal of the central columns the building was precipitated down the precipice (Dr. Thomson, p. 533).

28. Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God] Here is evidence of repentance and faith. Samson has been chastened by adversity. He no longer regards himself as the source of his own strength, but looks up to heaven, and prays the Lord God to send him power and might from above.

— that I may be avenged—for my two eyes! Even now he feels more keenly for himself and for his own wrongs (see xv. 3. 11), than for the outrage done to the Lord.

How different was the prayer of Him who stretched out His two hands upon the Cross, and prayed for His enemies, who cruelled Him, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke xix. 34)!

29. on which it was borne up] Rather, and he leaned upon them.

30. Let me die] How different from the prayer of Christ, “Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit” (Luke xxi. 40)!

— with the Philistines! But the Christian prayer is,—Let me die the death of the righteous (Num. xxvii. 10).

There are three Nazarites in the New Testament: John the Baptist, and St. James the Less, bishop of Jerusalem, and, temporally, St. Paul (see Acts xxi. 24). All these died the deaths of Martyrs for the Truth. Compare their deaths with that of Samson.

Some of the ancient Fathers suppose, that since his name is honourably mentioned in Heb. xi. 32, the prayer was a right one, and that he was prompted to utter it by a Divine impulse (S. Augustin, de Civ. Del. i. 21; cf. Ambrose, Epist. iv. 27, 28). On this subject see Natalis Alex., Hist. Ercl. tom. iii. disp. xx.; Woeners' Dilac, Quest. vi.; Gratius de Jure Belli ii. 19. 5. O. v. Gerlach, in Keil, p. 325.

Some may have felt that his life was a monument of his own shame, and of the victory of the Philistines and of Dagon their god, and so brought dishonour to Jehovah. He did not, however, leave God to work out His own vindication by lawful
Samson destroys more enemies JUDGES XVI. 31. XVII. 1. at his death, than in his life.

the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

31 Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and buried him up, and "buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the buryingplace of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

XVII. 1 And there was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.

Preliminary Note to Chapters XVII.—XXI.

The last verse of the foregoing chapter may be considered as closing the first division of the history of the Israelites.

The remaining portion of this Book, consisting of five chapters, is added by way of illustration, and exhibits historical specimens of various forms of spiritual and moral degeneracy, which characterized the period contained in these Ausios, but without any exact specification of the precise time in which these events occurred; cp. above, Introduction, p. 81.

The mention of Jonathan, the grandson of Moses, in xvii. 30 (if that is the true reading), by the author of Judges, the grandson of Aaron, in chapt. xx. 28, seems to point to a time not long after the death of Joshua (cp. Josh. xxiv. 33). Theobald (Qu. 27) rightly observes, that the Sacred Writer did not introduce these incidents in their regular order of time; because he would not intertend to load theBrains of his history; but that he means to present to the reader a connected and instructive narrative, which may serve to illustrate the character of the Israelites, and may lead him to consider the principle and cause of the moral corruption which prevails among every people, and to impress upon him the necessity of maintaining a strict adherence to the Divine Law.

The first of these five chapters, the xivth, presents a portrait of the social and domestic life of that time in regard to the worship of God.

O Blessed Saviour, our better Samson! Thou diest conquer in dying, and triumphing upon the chariot of the Cross, didst lead captivity captive. The law, sin, death, hell, had never been vanquished but by Thy death. All our life, liberty, and glory spring out of thy most precious blood (Rom. viii. 17).

31. Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and buried him up, and "buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the buryingplace of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

XVII. 1 And there was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.
2 And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it. And his mother said, *Blessed be thou of the Lord, my son.* 3 And when he had restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the Lord from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it unto thee. 4 Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother *took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them* to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah.

5 And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons who became his priest. 6 In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

7 And there was a young man out of Beth-lehem-judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. 8 And the man departed.

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Nations and Churches, in the latter days (which, as we know from the sure voice of Prophecy, will be days of degeneracy and defection of distress and confusion—see Matt. xxiv. 4—12, 37—42, 2 Thess. i. 2. Thess. iii. 1—7)—not unlike those described in this Book, will be seen in the course of the narrative. Both these Levites, ministers of God's Law, were connected with Bethlehem; and both of them, as we shall see, stood in this light of the contrast to Him who was born at Bethlehem, and was made "a minister of the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. viii. 2). Jesus Christ (see on xvii. 7; xix. 1).

Ch. XVII. 1. of mount Ephraim] Even in the place where Joshua dwelt, and was buried (Josh. xxiv. 30).

— whose name was Micah Which signifies "who is like Jehovah?" and yet he was so forgetful of the meaning of his own name as to be a sinner of it in his own house, and to consecrate one of his own sons to be a priest in the idol temple there.

— were taken from thee] The first thing recorded of this time of anarchy and confusion is an act of robbery, committed on a mother by her son.

— about which thou cursedst] Denouncing an anathema on the thief, if he did not discover himself (see Lev. v. 1). 

— of mine ears] So that I heard the anathema, and was terr Ified by it. 

— Blessed] and not accused.

3. I had wholly dedicated] Literally, sanctifying, I sanctified.

had a graven image Heb. pesel. See Deut. vii. 25; xii. 3, where God commands the destruction of the peselim of Canaan: cp. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Jer. ii. 47.

— a molten image] Heb. rashesh, the word applied to the molten calf at Horeb (Exod. xxxii. 6. Deut. ix. 16), and to molten images generally (Exod. xxxiv. 17. Lev. xxiv. 4. Num. xxxii. 52).

Some have inferred from xvii. 14—18, that the word here rendered molten image (masach) was only like a pedstal to the pesel, or graven image (see Hengst. Auth. ii. 95, 96; Keil, 320), but this is hardly probable.

The meaning seems to be that Micah and his mother designed to gain the favour of Heaven (see v. 3) by combining various kinds of worship. There was the ephod, representing the worship of the Tabernacle of the Lord; the teraphim, representing the objects of Syrian worship; and the graven image and the molten image, representing the objects of Canaanith worship; all these were united together by Micah in his own house, which became a Pantheon. Surely, then, he might think, since I thus conciliate all, I cannot miss the favour of heaven.

The Idolatry of Micah.

5. an house of gods] Rather, a house of God. The money had been dedicated to the Lord (v. 3), although for the making of idols; Micah intended to worship the Lord (v. 13); but he would do it in his own way, as Gideon had done before him (see xvii. 27), and as Jeroboam did afterwards (1 Kings xii. 28).

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... an ephod] In imitation of the robe of the High Priest, with the breastplate and precious stones (Exod. xvii. 28—xxviii. 4). It has been supposed by some, that the Ephod was used to clothe one of the images, and that the teraphim were identical with the other image (Ewald, Alterth. 250—258; Stanley, 290); but the Sacred Historian appears to distinguish them as four separate objects: the ephod was not for the image, but for the ministering priest.

— and teraphim] Small images of household gods, such as those of the Syrian Laban (see above on Gen. xxxi. 19). Here was an introduction of something new; not an imitation of what was the Tabernacle.

The graven image seems to have become afterwards the central and principal object of worship, and the ephod and teraphim to have been subordinate to it (see xvii. 30). It was finally the most conspicuous object, like the statue of a heathen temple. But Micah supposed himself to have a variety of deities in his household; for he says to the Danites (xviii. 24), "Ye have taken away my gods, which I made."

— consecrated one of his sons] Though neither he himself was qualified to consecrate, nor his son to be consecrated. Such is the progress of will-worship. Thus he was a forerunner of "Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin" (1 Kings xii. 31; xv. 33).

Micah emulates and exceeds his mother in idolatry, and hands it down to his son, "a priest of his own begetting, of his own consecration; what monsters does man's imagination produce when it is forsaken by God?" (Sp. Hall.)

6. no king] Neither God nor man was their ruler.

— every man did that which was right in his own eyes] Every man did what was right in his own eyes, and what was wrong in the eyes of God.

7. of Beth-lehem-judah—a Levite] The Bethlehem-judah, so distinguished from the city of the same name in Zebulun (Josh. xix. 15). The Bethlehem here mentioned was the future place of birth of David and of Christ.

This Levite of Bethlehem-judah stands forth in the history in striking contrast with Him who was God's faithful minister and well-beloved Son, who was born at Bethlehem-judah, and came to abolish idolatry, and to establish in the world the pure worship of God: cp. note below on xix. 1.

— of the family of Judah] These words, which are not found in the Syriac and Arabic and in the Cod. Vat. xi. 19, have been supposed by some (as Houbigant) to be an interpolation; but they are found in the Hebrew MSS, hitherto collated. They mean, either that this Levite was of the tribe of Judah by his mother's side (Theodoret), or that he had become naturalized in Judah. Or perhaps the words ought rather to be connected with Bethlehem than with the Levite; and then the sense would be, that instead of dwelling in a Levitical city, he wandered about and sojourned in Bethlehem, which did not belong to any family of Levi (for it was not a Levitical city), but to a family of Judah.

This roving life of the Levite is mentioned as a feature of those distracted times. The words "a Levite of Bethlehem" and "I go to sojourn where I may find a place" by which he describes himself (v. 9), imply a restless character of U
of the city from Beth-lehem-judah to sojourn where he could find a place: and he came to mount Ephraim to the house of Micah, f as he journeyed. 

9 And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I am a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place. 10 And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and || a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in. 11 And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him as one of his sons. 12 And Micah 1 consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah. 13 Then said Micah, Now I know that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.

XVIII. 1 In *those days there was no king in Israel: and in those days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto that day all their inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel. 2 And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts, ♦ men of valour, from *Zorah, and from Eshtaol, 4 to spy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search the land: who when they came to mount Ephraim, to the 5 house of Micah, they lodged there. 3 When they were by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite: and they turned in thither, and said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what makest thou in this place? and what hast thou here? 4 And he said unto them, Thus and thus dealth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his priest. 5 And they said unto him, *Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous. 6 And the priest said unto them, *Go in peace: before the Lord is your way wherein ye go.

those days, in which, perhaps, the Levitical maintenance was withheld, and the Levites were reduced by distress to a vagrant life of mendicancy: cp. above, Introduction, pp. 81, 82. 9—11. I go to sojourn where I may find a place] Want of regular Levitical maintenance seems to have driven the Levite to a wandering life; and he is attracted to Mount Ephraim by the fame of Micah’s superstitious zeal; and he is allured by Micah’s offer of maintenance to be a minister of idolatry. Lack of honest means of livelihood draws the Levite into the dangers of idolatrous patronage. In the Church of God in all times, particularly modern times, and especially in the Roman Catholic countries of Europe, the incidents of this story of Micah and the Levite find too frequently their counterpart. The abolition of the divinely instituted system of Tithes, the denial of a decent and honourable maintenance to the Clergy, and the consequent penury and ignorance of the Priesthood, have driven many to resort to unworthy devices for raising money for their subsistence. Many have been reduced to subsist on Masses; and their livelihood is identified with the maintenance of the doctrines of Transubstantiation and Purgatory. Some have been tempted to seek for gain by legendary fables of apparitions and miracle-working images, and other cheats and impostures. The narrative of Micah and his images, and his itinerant Levite, is an epitome of the history of Superstition.

10. a father] Cp. xviii. 19. 2 Kings vi. 21; xiii. 14. Joseph is called “a father to Pharaoh” (Gen. xlv. 8).

11. ten shekels] a paltry pitance. Micah had robbed his mother of 1100 shekels of silver, and he allows his Priest ten. His religion, designed to bridle the favour of heaven by a crafty compromise and strange medley of devotion (see vv. 4, 5), was, in fact, an offshoot of selfishness: cp. v. 13. — by the year] Literally, for the days: cp. Lev. xxv. 29.

1 Sam. xxvii. 7. — a suit of apparel] a regular supply of clothing; see Gen. 45. 22. — consecrated the Levite] a further progress in will-worship. Micah knew that certain persons were set apart to perform certain offices in the sanctuary; and knowing this he prefers this Levite to his own son, whom he had consecrated to be a priest; and he presumes to consecrate this Levite to the priesthood on his own authority. — his priest] not the Lord’s priest. — in the house of Micah] not in the Lord’s house, but in a house of idols (v. 14). 13. the Lord will do me good] He combines superstition and profaneness with selfishness, and flatters himself that the Lord, whose known laws he had broken, will do him good; seeing he is a Levite to his priest—a Levite whom he himself has consecrated to the priesthood! He fancies that he can cheat God. Such is the infatuation and blindness of the human heart, when it has swerved from God’s Will and Word.

Cn. XVIII. I. In those days] some time after the death of Joshua. Neither he, nor the elders who outlived him, would have tolerated the idolatry of Micah, and of the tribe of Dan (xviii. 50), which was immediately consequent upon it. — the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance] That is, they sought an extension of what they had received, which was not ample enough for their desires (see v. 2, and Josh. xix. 47); they therefore sent forth five men to discover some country which they might occupy with their surplus population. 2. Zorah] See xii. 25; and Josh. xix. 46. — they lodged there] at Mount Ephraim. 3. they knew the voice of the young man the Levite] who had led a wandering life (xvii. 7, 8); perhaps they were acquainted with him, and knew that they might presume on his compliance with their wishes. 4. Thus and thus] Literally, according to this and that. Cp. 2 Sam. xi. 25. — I am his priest] He does not tell them that Micah had consecrated him (xvii. 12). 5. Ask counsel . . . of God] of Elohim. They do not presume to call Micah’s house the house of the Lord; but the priest ventures to say, “Go in peace: before the Lord is your way.”
Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people who were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in any thing; and they were far from the Zidonians, and had no business with any man. And they came unto their brethren to Zarah and Eshtaul: and their brethren said unto them, What say ye?

And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and are ye still? be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess the land. When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: for God hath given it into your hands; a place where is no want of any thing that is in the earth.

And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zarah and out of Eshtaul, six hundred men appointed with weapons of war. And they went up, and pitched in Kirjath-jearim, in Judah: wherefore they called that place Mahanah-dan unto this day: behold, it is behind Kirjath-jearim.

And they passed thence unto mount Ephraim, and came unto the house of Micah. Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do. And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah, and saluted him. And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate. And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, and came in thither, and took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the six hundred men that were appointed with weapons of war. And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the

7 Judges of 517 cp. see and 25 see and now n 15 • their vii. but behold, see and

9 Heb. possever, of their restrain.

3. Laish called Leshem in Josh. xix. 47; now Tell-el-Kadi, near the site of Paness, or Casarren Philippi (Vandervelde). The Liddon, a small stream, rises at the foot of the circular hill, gilt around by trees, where Laish formerly stood (Dr. Thomson, p. 219).

— they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians] who were strong, enriched by commerce, and demoralized; and by whom Laish had probably been colonized; see v. 27.

The word rendered they dwell, is feminine in the original; and the words, quiet and secure, are masculine; the former referring to the whole population abstractedly, the other to the male inhabitants in the concrete. The population dwelt there—literally, sat—in a self-complacent security, and the inhabitants were indolent and self-confident.

— and there was no magistrate] Literally, there was no one in the land, putting (an offender) to shame in any thing (by punishing his crimes): see Genesis, p. 400, under the word calam; possessing restraint—that is, holding and exercising rule, by which any one might be restrained from doing wrong: see Genesis. 370. 618, under the words garash and ashar. The social condition here described was one of anarchy; and its consequence, was that Laish became an easy prey to the invaders.

From for the Zidonians: Zidon was probably their native city.

— no business with any man] no friendly connexion or alliance; their distance from Zidon, and their independent, unconnected, and unneighborly temper, and careless self-confidence and laxy lawlessness, led to their destruction.

9. it is very good] The beauty of its well-watered, luxuriant plain are described by Dr. Thomson, 214. 216.

10. God hath given it! It had not fallen to their lot by God's appointment at Shiloh: but they make use of an oracle of Micah's idolatrous house to justify their aggression, and call the answer of that oracle the voice of God: see v. 5, 6.

11. appointed joined, Sept., Vulg.: cp. Genesis 261, on the word chosen, to gird.

12. Kirjath-jearim] city of woods, now Kirjat Enab, about six miles w. of Jerusalem: see Joshua 17; and 1 Samuel vi. 21; vii. 1. 1 Chronicles li. 50.

Mahanah-dan] camp of Dan: see xii. 25.

14. ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image] See on xvii. 13. These things (they resolve) shall consecrate their new colony at Laish. The boldest bandits seek for a religious sanction to their brigandage. The ephod is here mentioned first; it was that which connected Miah's house with the worship of Jehovah; and in this heterogeneous assemblage of objects, which were combined in the domestic pantheon of Miah, the ephod (the idolatrous caricature of the robe of the High Priest of Jehovah) was naturally the most important in the eyes of the Priest, and was secured first by him (v. 20); but afterwards the graven images became the paramount objects of devotion (vv. 30, 31). Will-worship ever grows in boldness; its appetite becomes more and more ravenous, and craves more stimulating food: and such is the insatiable craving to which it is given up by God for its sin, that the most glaring and flagrant idolatry is the most agreeable in its eyes, and is greedily gorged down by its insatiable voracity.

15. saluted him] Asked him of his welfare (Genesis xxiii. 27. Exod. xviii. 7).

17. and the priest stood: While the five men were in Miah's house, the priest was standing at the gate of the city with the 600 men. Probably they detained him there, that he might not interfere with their five men, while they dismantled Miah's domestic oratory of its idolatrous furniture.

18. the carved image, the ephod] There is no definite article the in the original, before the word pesel, graven image; the other words, ephod, teraphim, and carved image, have the definitive article. Some therefore render the words thus, the ephod-image — i.e. the image which belonged to the ephod worn by the priest when he consulted the image (Kittel), but this seems questionable. Cp. v. 20, where the article stands before pesel and ephod.
molten image. Then said the priest unto them, What do ye? And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest: is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel? And the priest’s heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people. So they turned and departed, and put the little ones and the cattle and the carriage before them.

And when they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that were in the houses near to Micah’s house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan. And they cried unto the children of Dan. And they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company? And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away: and what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee? And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household. And the children of Dan went their way: and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back unto his house.

And they took the things which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and came unto Laish, unto a people that were at quiet and secure: and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire.

And there was no deliverer, because it was far from Zidon, and they had no business with any man; and it was in the valley that lieth by Beth-rehob. And they built a city, and dwelt therein.

And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel: howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.

And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the

Thus idolatry passed from one family and infected a tribe; and it passed from the tribe of Dan and infected all Israel.

Dan apostatized from the religion of their fathers; and king Jeroboam, when he would choose a site for his golden calf in the northern portion of his kingdom, fixed upon Dan. “And the thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan” (1 Kings xii. 30). Thus the idolatry of a household led by degrees to the idolatry of the nation, and to its utter ruin and dispersion, even to this day. A solemn warning for the Church of God, and for the Nations of Christendom: see above, Introduction, p. 51.

The children of Dan are the first persons mentioned in Scripture as having set up idolatry publicly as a tribe. The name of Dan stands therefore as a by-word in Holy Writ. It is another name for idolatry.

The prophecy of Jacob concerning Dan had an ominous sound, which has since events have explained (see above on Gen. xlix. 17). The name of Dan is excluded from the list of the tribes of the spiritual Israel, in the vision of the Sealed, in the Apocalypse of St. John (see below on Rev. vii. 4, p. 148). This omission contains a solemn warning, that idolaters will have no place in the Church glorified in heaven. “Without, are idolaters” (Rev. xxii. 15).

— Jonathan] Supposed by some to be the name of the Levite whom they had brought with them, as their priest, from the house of Micah, but this is doubtful (see the next note but one). His name was Jonathan, i.e. “gift of Jehovah,” but like Micah (see xvii. 1), he was so forgetful of the meaning of his own name, as to be a minister of apostasy from the Lord whose name he bore.

— the son of Gershom] The name of one of the sons of Moses (Exod. ii. 21, 22; xviii. 3. 1 Chron. xxiii. 15.)

— of Manasseh] Or rather, perhaps, of Moses. This is the
Idolatry in Dan.  

JUDGES XVIII. 31. XIX. 1, 2.  

The Levite’s concubine.  

tribe of Dan * until the day of the captivity of the land.  

And they set up Micaiah’s graven image, which he made, * all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.  

XIX. 1 And it came to pass in those days, * when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Beth-lehem-judah.  

And his concubine played the whore against him, and went away from him unto her father’s house to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there four whole months.  

reading of S. Jerome, the Vulgate, and of three Hebrew MSS. of De Rossi, and in some ancient MSS. of the Sept. see Kennicott, Vet. Test. Diss. Gener., vol. ii. p. 10, § 21, Appendix, who considers, what to be the true reading. That Moses is the true reading here, is affirmed by the Talmud, Bara Batra, ed. 500, b. (ed. Vent. 1516). In many Hebrew MSS. (see Kennicott, p. 500) the latter son is suspended over the men and skin, so as to introduce a correction from Moses to Manasseh. The reason alleged by De Rossi for this supposed correction is, that the copysts desired to name the great Hebrew Lawgiver from the obloquy of having any descendant among the first promoters of idolatry in Israel (see Kiuchi on xviii. 7; and Heren, Tiberias, 5. 119, who observes that the Ark was the centre of national life, and that its captivity was the captivity of the nation: see also Stanley, 384.  

There is no difficulty in the use of the word land here; the true meaning of the word rendered captivity, is, making bare by deficiency (see Gesen. 570); and when the Ark was taken by the Philistines, the Land was shorn of its glory, as the wife of Phinehas said, using the same Hebrew verb (jelah) as is used here, “The glory is departed from Israel” (1 Sam. iv. 21. Cp. Job xx. 28. Isa. v. 13. Jer. i. 3. Lam. i. 3. Hos. x. 5).  

Ch. XIX. 1 in those days] not long after Joshua’s death, for Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was priest at this time (xx. 28. Cp. Josh. xii. 13; xxiv. 33).  

The sin of the Levite and its consequences.  

— a certain Levite sojourning * not dwelling in a Levitical city, but wandering from place to place, like the Levite who confessed to be unfruitful in his barrenness, in xvi. 25;  

— on the side of mount Ephraim] the north side, toward Shiloh, who took to him a concubine] not a wife, as Christ has done, espousing to Himself the Church in holy wedlock. This word concubine, so often repeated in the Hebrew history, suggests its proper moral. Here was a Levite, a minister of God’s sanctuary, a teacher of God’s Law, setting a vicious example by a degradation of womanhood and desecration of marriage. He in “took to him a concubine out of Beth-lehem-judah—  

As in the former history, the Levite of Bethel-judah (see xvii. 7), who swerved from the Law of God, of which he was a minister, and made himself, for love of luxury, to become a mid-actor of idolatry, stands in striking contrast to Him who was born at Bethlehem-judah, and who fulfilled the Word of God, and brought back the religion of God’s people to its original purity, and transfigured the dim shadows of the Levitical Law into the glorious substances of the Gospel; so likewise this other Levite stands forth in this history in striking contrast to Him who was the Seed of the Woman, born of a Woman at Bethel-judah, and who raised Womanhood to high estate by His Incarnation, and consecrated and beautified Marriage, and in “took to him a concubine out of Bethlehem-judah—  

— the day of the captivity of the land] the Philistines in the time of El (1 Sam. iv. 22—23), as is explained by what is said in the following verse—viz., that “the graven image remained all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.” And this is further illustrated by the language of the Psalmist: “He,” the Lord, “forsook the Tabernacle of Shiloh, and delivered His strength into captivity, His glory into the enemies’ hands” (Ps. cxxxv. 60, 61. Cp. 1 Sam. iv. 21). Selden de Dios Syris, i. c. 2.  

It is not probable (as Kiuchi observes) that this idolotrous shrine should have been allowed to remain during the reign of David. We hear of the golden calf of Jeroboam at this place, but nothing of these idolatrous abominations standing there at the same time. We hear of the golden calf of Bethel denounced by the man of God from Judah, sent for that purpose by God (1 Kings xii. 1, 2). Surely if this graven image were set up at that time, we should have heard of some denunciations of it. Would it have been built all by Judahmen, when he overthrew the altar at Bethel (2 Kings xxii. 15, 16)?  

There does not therefore seem to be any ground for the opinion that the Sacred Writer is speaking of the captivity of other land under Solomon’s reign, and that the Ark was under this captivity.  

To conclude, the Ark was in Shiloh, the Ark was at Bethel, the Ark was in Jerusalem. The Ark was in Jerusalem when the Ark was in Shiloh. Thus the Ark has at different periods been three times in Jerusalem, and has been there at Jerusalem ever since, and has been there at the time of the captivity of the land.  

The Ark is now for the first time set up at Jerusalem, and Jerusalem is a Levitical city. It is as if we were told that “Sion is a city of God, an holy place, where the Jews might dwell.” (Ps. lxxvi. 8.)  

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3 And her husband arose, and went after her, to speak \* friendly unto her, and to bring her again, having his servant with him, and a couple of asses: and she brought him into her father’s house: and when the father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him. And his father in law, the damsel’s father, retained him; and he abode with him three days: so they did eat and drink, and lodged there. 5 And it came to pass on the fourth day, when they arose early in the morning, that he rose up to depart: and the damsel’s father said unto his son in law, \* Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way. 6 And they sat down, and did eat and drink both of them together: for the damsel’s father had said unto the man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all night, and let thine heart be merry. 7 And when the man rose up to depart, his father in law urged him: therefore he lodged there again. 8 And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damsel’s father said, Comfort thine heart, I pray thee. And they tarried \* until afternoon, and they did eat both of them. 9 And when the man rose up to depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant, his father in law, the damsel’s father, said unto him, Behold, now the day \* draweth toward evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, \* the day growtheth to an end, lodge here, that thine heart may be merry; and to morrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go \* home. 10 But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, and came \* over against \* Jebus, which is Jerusalem; and there were with him two asses saddled, his concubine also was with him. 11 And when they were by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in to this city \* of the Jebusites, and lodge in it. 12 And his master said unto him, We will not turn aside hither into the city of a stranger, that is not of the children of Israel; we will pass \* to Gibeah. 13 And he said unto his servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of these places to lodge all night, in Gibeah, or in \* Ramah. 14 And they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down upon them when they were by Gibeah, which belongeth to Benjamin. 15 And they turned aside thither, to go in \* and lodge in Gibeah: and when he went in, he sat him down in a street of the city: for \* there was no man that \* took them into his house to lodging.

16 And, behold, there came an old man from \* his work out of the field at even, which \* was also of mount Ephraim; and he sojourned in Gibeah: but the men of the place \* were Benjamites. 17 And when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw a wayfaring man in the street of the city: and the old man said, Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou? 18 And he said unto him, We \* are passing from Beth-lehem-judah toward the side of mount Ephraim; from thence am I: and I went to Beth-lehem-judah, but I \* am now going to \* the house of

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3. to speak friendly \* Literally, to speak to her heart: but he did not act in a like spirit. 6. \* couple of asses \* One for her, and one for himself. 9. \* behold, the day groweth to an end \* Observe the declining of the day: the declining, in Heb. chanah, infinitive, from chanah, to bend (Gen. 29:1. So Sept., Vulg., Targ., Arab., Syr.). 9. \* lodge \* he uses the plural number as well as the singular, because he is addressing his daughter as well as her husband.

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10. Jebus \* The Canaanitish name of Jerusalem, two hours from Bethlehem (Robinson). See Josh. x. 1; xxvi. 53. 12. Gibeah \* of Benjamin, afterwards the residence of Saul (1 Sam. x. 26; xi. 4): about one hour and a quarter north of Jerusalem; now Tell-el-Ful (Robinson, Vandewalt). It is to be regretted that the inhabitants are called "Gibeonites" in the heading of the chapter in the Authorized Version. 13. Ramah \* of Benjamin, now El-Rihan, one half-hour north of Gibeah, six miles north of Jerusalem (Vandewalt). 15. a street \* a broad place; platea (Gen. vi. 2). 18. and that took them in \* Literally, receiving or gathering them in.
The men of Gibeah

JUDGES XIX. 10—28. abuse her.

The Lord; and there is no man that 
+ Heb. gathered, ver. 12. +
19 Yet there is both straw and provender for our asses; and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man which is with thy servants: there is no want of any thing. 20 And the old man said, Peace be with thee; howsoever let all thy wants lie upon me; only lodge not in the street. 21 So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink.

22 Now as they were making their hearts merry, behold, + the men of the city, certain + sons of Belial, beset the house round about, and beat at the door, and spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him. 23 And + the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, nay, I pray you, do not so wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this folly. 24 Behold, here is my daughter a maiden, and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not so vile a thing. 25 But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they + knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go.

26 Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man’s house where her lord was, till it was light. 27 And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at the door of the house, and her hands were upon the threshold. 28 And he said unto her, Up, and let us be going. But + none answered. Then the man took her up + ch. 20. 8. upon an ass, and the man rose up, and gat him unto his place.

* does not appear that he was going to Shiloh, but to Mount Ephraim. + The original word ought rather to be rendered, I am one who walk in the house of the Lord (Schmidt, Keil, Gesen. p. 224).

This was one of the causes of his complaint—though I am one of those who walk in the Lord’s house, and minister there, yet no one here admits me under his roof.

19. there is both straw] I want none of these things, only lodging; and yet no one gives it me.

21. *] Literally, he mixed provender; consisting of several kinds of grain, vetches, &c. (Gesen. 122, 129); he gave of his own, and did not use what the Levite brought with him.

22. sons of Belial] Literally, sons of worthlessness, or lawlessness: see note on Deut. xiii. 13; below, xx. 13.

In strictness of language, Belial is not a proper name in the Old Testament; and there is a remarkable propriety in the use of our great national poet, Milton, who says with his usual accuracy, referring to events in this Book (Paradise Lost, book i. p. 19):—

in Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lued
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself; to him so temple stood,
Or altar smok’d; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns Athelas, as did Eli’s sons, who fill’d
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage: and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, frown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Exposé’d a matron to avoid worse rape.”

These men in Gibeah of Benjamin were like those of Sodom (Gen. xix. 4). Such was the moral corruption of the city.
Then said the children of Israel, Tell us, how was this wickedness? 4 And the Levite, the husband of the woman that was slain, answered and said, 5 I came into Gibeah that belongeth to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge. 6 And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and beset the house round about upon me by night, and thought to have slain me: 7 and my concubine have they forced, that she is dead. 8 And I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel: for they have committed lewdness and folly in Israel. 9 Behold, ye are all children of Israel; give here your advice and counsel.

And all the people arose as one man, saying, We will not any of us go to his tent, neither will we any of us turn into his house. 10 But now this shall be the thing which we will do to Gibeah; we will go up by lot against it: 11 And we will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and an
The Israelites are defeated

JUDGES XX. 11—22. by the Benjamites.

hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victual for the people, that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have that in Israel.

11 So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, 1 knit together as one man. 12 And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness is this that is done among you? 13 Now therefore deliver us the men, 16 the children of Belial, which are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and 2 put away evil from Israel. But the children of Benjamin would not hearken to the voice of their brethren the children of Israel: 14 But the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah, to go out to battle against the children of Israel.

15 And the children of Benjamin were numbered at that time out of the cities twenty and six thousand men that drew sword, beside the inhabitants of Gibeah, which were numbered seven hundred chosen men. 16 Among all this people there were seven hundred chosen men 3 lefthanded; every one could sling stones at an hair breadth, and not miss. 17 And the men of Israel, beside Benjamin, were numbered four hundred thousand men that drew sword: all these were men of war.

18 And the children of Israel arose, and 3 went up to the house of God, and 4 asked counsel of God, and said, Which of us shall go up first to the battle against the children of Benjamin? And the LORD said, Judah shall go up first.

19 And the children of Israel rose up in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah. 20 And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin; and the men of Israel put themselves in array to fight against them at Gibeah.

21 And 1 the children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah, and destroyed down to the ground of the Israelites that day twenty and two thousand men.

22 And the people the men of Israel encouraged themselves, and set their battle again in array in the place where they put themselves in array the first time.
25. went up and went before the Lord. They were now brought down from their arrogance; but their repentance was imperfect, and they required further chastisement and humiliation. Before, they had asked of God (Elohim): now they are drawn a little nearer to Him as the God of Israel, and ask of Him as the Lord (Jehovah). They are now described as "before the Lord." Had they now come to Shiloh? This seems probable (cp. xxi. 12). The reason of their former punishment is seen in its effects. But they need further discipline. They have not yet learnt their lesson of obedience. There is not as yet any mention of fasting, there is not as yet any offering of sacrifice to the Lord. We hear nothing as yet of Phinehas and the Ark. They must therefore learn by further chastisement to seek for the favour of the Lord in the ways of His own appointment, and then, but not till then, will they have an answer of peace. Cp. vv. 26, 27. — Go up against him. He does not promise them victory, but sends them to learn a lesson of humility by defeat.

26. eighteen thousand. In the former engagement, Judah had led the way, and Israel had been defeated by Benjamin; but now "the children of Israel"—i.e., the eleven tribes, are defeated by one tribe, a proof that God was against them; they therefore humble themselves before Him.

27. When all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto the house of God. Here, at last, the whole nation is brought to own its dependence on God, and to seek for guidance from Him in His own appointed way. They all came, as one man, to the house of God.

The rendering has high authority; it is that of Sept., Arabic, Syriac, Targum Jon.; and of many modern Expositors, as Hengstenberg, Author ii. 45, 46; Keil, and others. But the camp of Israel is at Shiloh in the next chapter (xxii. 12), and that seems to be called the house of God in xxi. 2. However this may be, we now feel that the Israelites were somewhat humbled; they went, and sat there before the Lord, and they fasted until even, and offered burnt sacrifices and peace-offerings before the Lord, the God of Israel, as the Lord of Hosts and God of Victory, who alone gives deliverance and safety (see Exod. xx. 24; xxiv. 5. Lev. vii. 16; below, xxi. 4. 1 Sam. xii. 9. 2 Sam. xxiv. 25), and inquired of the Lord in the place where the Ark and the High Priest were.

28. And Phinehas. This is also the first time in the history of this conflict that we hear of the High Priest of God. At this crisis of the struggle, Phinehas is presented to us as standing before the Ark, and as consulted by Israel, as he ought to have been at the first (see above on v. 15); and they ask of him, who had the Urin and Thummim, whether they should go up, or cease? They were indeed humbled for a time, and God gave them victory; but their cruel execution of their rash vow, in the destruction of Jabesh-gilead (xxi. 10, 12), shows that they had not learnt mercy from suffering, and that God had not dealt too severely with them by punishing them with two defeats, but that He might justly have chastened them, even by a third discomfiture.

29. And set liers in wait. They are no longer self-confident, as before.

30. The highways. Where the roads parted into two ways, one going to Bethel, the other to Gibeah.
out of their places, even out of the meadows of Gibeon. And there came against Gibeon ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was sore: but they knew not that evil was near them. And the Lord smote Benjamin before Israel: and the children of Israel destroyed of the Benjaminites that day twenty and five thousand and an hundred men: all these drew the sword.

So the children of Benjamin saw that they were smitten: for the men of Israel gave place to the Benjaminites, because they trusted unto the liers in wait which they had set beside Gibeon. And the liers in wait hasted, and rushed upon Gibeon; and the liers in wait drew themselves along, and smote all the city with the edge of the sword. Now there was an appointed sign between the men of Israel and the liers in wait, that they should make a great flame with smoke rise up out of the city. And when the men of Israel retired in the battle, Benjamin began to smite and kill of the men of Israel about thirty persons: for they said, Surely they are smitten down before us, as in the first battle. But when the flame began to arise out of the city with a pillar of smoke, the Benjaminites looked behind them, and, behold, the flame of the city ascended up to heaven. And when the men of Israel turned again, the men of Benjamin were amazed: for they saw that evil was come upon them. Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel unto the way of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them; and them which came out of the cities they destroyed in the midst of them. Thus they inclosed the Benjaminites round about, and chased them, and trode them down with ease over against Gibeon toward the sunrising. And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men; all these were men of valour.

And they turned and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of Rimmon: and they gleaned of them in the highways five thousand men; and pursued hard after them unto Gidom, and slew two thousand men of them. So that all which fell that day of Benjamin were twenty and five thousand men that drew the sword; all these were men of valour. But six hundred men turned and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months.

And the men of Israel turned again upon the children of Benjamin, and smote them with the edge of the sword, as well the men of every city, as the beast, and all that came to hand: also they set on fire all the cities that they came to.

XXI. 1 Now the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpeh, saying, There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife. And the people came to the house of God, and abode there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore; And said, O Lord God of Israel, why is this

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35. twenty and five thousand—men] Such was the result of the battle (see v. 45), the particulars of which are afterwards more minutely described (ver. 26—46).
36. [Gidon] probably between Gibeon and Rimmon: see v. 47.
37. six hundred men turned] It would seem that the tribe of Benjamin was reduced to this number. There were at first 27,000 men (v. 15). Since 25,000 fell in the battle, ought not the residue to have been 1700 men? How is this difference to be accounted for? Probably by the number of those Benjaminites who had fallen in the two former engagements.
38. [Rimmon] or, of pomegranates, a conical chalk hill, fifteen miles s. of Jerusalem, six miles s. of Bethel; there is a village there now called Rimmon (Robinson). There are four

caverns there, two on the east, and two on the west (Finn, Vandenhöcke).
39. turned again upon the children of Benjamin] and they treated them as if they had been Canaanites.

Cfr. XXI. 1. had sworn in Mizpeh] before the battles described in the former chapter (see x. 4). They had not taken counsel of God, and had sworn a rash oath, an oath of merciless cruelty, and now they rue their sin.
2. to the house of God] probably Shiloh: see v. 12.
3. why is this come to pass?] They deplore the consequences of their own wilfulness and forgetfulness of God. If they had sought to Him who was their King for guidance, none of these evils would have occurred.
come to pass in Israel, that there should be to day one tribe lacking in Israel? 21 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people rose early, and built there an altar, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.

5 And the children of Israel said, Who is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the Lord? 6 For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the Lord to Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death. 6 And the children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day. 7 How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the Lord that we will not give them of our daughters to wives? 8 And they said, What one is there of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the Lord?

And, behold, there came none to the camp from Jabesh-gilead to the assembly. 9 For the people were numbered, and, behold, there were none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there. 10 And the congregation sent out twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children. 11 And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man. 12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

13 And the whole congregation sent some to speak to the children of Benjamin, that were in the rock Rimmon, and to || call peaceably unto them. 14 And Benjamin came again at that time; and they gave them wives which they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead: and yet so they sufficed them not. 15 And the people repented them for Benjamin, because that the Lord had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

16 Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin? 17 And they said, There must be an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel. 18 Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: 19 for the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a wife to Benjamin.

19 Then they said, Behold, there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh yearly in a place which is on the north side of Beth-el, || on the east side || of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebanon. 20 Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards; 21 And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch — in the land of Canaan — That is, they brought them from Jabesh-gilead, which was on the eastern side of the Jordan.

Judges XXI. 4—21.

Smites Jabesh-gilead.

4. built there an altar] as Solomon afterwards did (1 Kings viii. 64). — and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings] See xx. 26. 5. a great oath] another rash oath; this was a cherem, an oath of execration and extermination (Lev. xxvii. 29).

8. none . . . . from Jabesh-gilead] the metropolis of Gilead, beyond Jordan, six miles from Pella, in the way to Gerasa (Euseb.), now perhaps Et-Deir, on the southern brow of Wady-Jabel (Robinson), about twelve miles N. of the ford Jabok (cp. Josephus v. 2. 11; vi. 14. 8). It seems to have been connected with Benjamin by special ties of affection. Cp. 1 Sam. xi. 1—15; xxxi. 13. 12. virginis, [C ] Cp. Num. xxxi. 17. 156
you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. 22 And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, || Be favourable unto them for our sakes: because we reserved not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not give unto them at this time, that ye should be guilty. 23 And the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them. 24 And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance.

25 * In those days there was no king in Israel: * every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

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**21. his wife**] This word wife is repeated three times, as if they now recognized the evils resulting from the degradation of women into concubines; see xix. 1.

— **of the daughters of Shiloh**] Shiloh itself, where the Tabernacle of God stood, was to be made the scene of this act of violence, and it was to be done at a religious festival, by the consent and advice of the elders of Israel (p. 16). Need we be surprised that we hear of licentiousness of the priests themselves, Hophni and Phinehas, at the same place? See 1 Sam. ii.

22. **Cp. Introduction above, p. 82.**

23. **Be favourable unto them**] Rather, grant them us, concede to us this favour; give these virgins to us, for we did not reserve to each of them his wife in the war (with Jabesh-gilead), for ye did not give them (i. e., ye did not grant these virgins to them of your own free will), in this case ye would be guilty; but since they have taken them by force, and see ask them of you, therefore you are not guilty of perjury.

Thus, by means of violence and equivocation, the difficulty arising from the rash oath is got over.

25. **there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.**] Such is the Sacred Historian’s comment on this narrative of confusion; and thus he prepares the way for the record of a better condition of things under David; the King of Judah and Israel, whose genealogy and history are described in the next following Books, of Ruth and Samuel, and who was the ancestor and type of the Divine King of Israel, Jesus Christ, to Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**
INTRODUCTION TO RUTH.

Two Books of the Old Testament are inscribed with the names of women, the Book of Ruth, and the Book of Esther. In the Book of Esther, a Hebrew woman is married to Ahasuerus, the King of Persia and Media. In the Book of Ruth, a woman of Moab becomes the wife of Boaz, of the house of Judah, in the city of Bethlehem. In the marriages of these women we have a prophetic view of the future union of Jew and Gentile in Him who is the Seed of the woman, and who was born at Bethlehem, of the royal house of David.

The Book of Ruth is rightly annexed to the Book of Judges, and placed before the Books of Samuel, in our Bibles, as it is in the Septuagint Version and in the Vulgate. This position seems to be assigned to it by the first words of the Book itself, "It came to pass in the days when the Judges ruled," and by the genealogy at the close of the Book, which ends with the name of David, and connects this Book with David's history, recorded in the Books of Samuel, which immediately follow it.

In the Hebrew Bibles, it is true, the Book of Ruth is not placed after the Book of Judges, among the "Former Prophets," as they are called; but it is classed among "the Cethubim," or Hagiographa, immediately after the Song of Solomon, and before the Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther.

That arrangement is due to Liturgical causes. It arises from the fact, that this Book, like the others with which it is there associated, was appointed to be read in the Synagogues at a special season of the year. The Song of Solomon was read at the Passover; the Book of Ruth at Pentecost; the Lamentations on the East of the Ninth Month, which commemorated the desolation of Jerusalem and of the Temple; Ecclesiastes was read at the Feast of Tabernacles; and Esther at the Feast of Purim. But, as to its substance, the Jews rightly recognize the Book of Ruth as intimately connected with the Book of Judges, and as forming the connecting link between that Book and the Books of Samuel. Josephus relates the history of Ruth immediately after that of Samson. The place which it occupies in the Septuagint Version, next to the Book of Judges, is another evidence of the same fact; and it is stated by Origen and S. Jerome, that in their days the Jews joined the Book of Ruth in the same roll with the Book of Judges; and it rightly occupies this place in the version of Luther, and in our own Authorized Version, and in almost all modern translations of the Bible.

The Book of Ruth forms a beautiful contrast to that which precedes it—the Book of Judges. In the Book of Judges, we have had a succession of dark scenes of defection from God, of rebellion against Him, of idolatry, and all its unhappy results, famines, oppressions of Israel, national discord, confusion, bloodshed, especially toward the close of that Book, in the mournful history of Samson, in the idolatry of Micah and of the Tribe of Dan, and in the outrage at Gibeah, in the slaughter of the forty thousand of Israel by their brethren of Benjamin, and in the almost total extinction of the tribe of Benjamin by the sword of Israel; and in the rash oath of Israel, and in the lawless scene in a religious solemnity at Shiloh, the seat of the Tabernacle, and in the last words of the Sacred Historian, uttering, as it were, a funeral dirge, in mournful tones of sorrow and despondency, "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." At the close of that Book we seem to behold an overclouded sunset, almost a dark eclipse, of the glory of Israel.

1 Elias Levita, Prof. tert. Masoreth Hammasoreth, p. 19; Carpzov, Int. in V. T., pp. 195, 196.
2 Josèphus, Antt. v. 9. 1.
INTRODUCTION TO RUTH.

But how joyous is the transition from the Book of Judges to the Book of Ruth! We are transported from the gloomy scenery of cloudy days, to the sunny fields around Bethlehem Ephrata. We see them shining in the golden light of harvest. "The valleys stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing."

The Book of Ruth is like some beautiful landscape of Claude, with its soft mellow hues of quiet eventide, and the peaceful expanse of its calm lake, placed side by side with some stern picture of Salvator Rosa, exhibiting the shock of armies and the storm of war; and receiving more beauty from the chiaro-oscuro of the contrast. Or, if we may adopt another comparison, derived from classical Literature, the Book of Ruth, coming next after the Book of Judges, is like a transition from the dark, terrific scenes of a tragedy of Aeschylus, to the fresh and beautiful landscapes of some pastoral idyl of Theocritus, transporting us to the rural Thalysia, or harvest-home, under the shade of elms and poplars, on the banks of the Halis, or to the flowery meadows and sheep-walks on those of the Arethusa or Anapus.

In the Book of Ruth we are charmed with scenes equally beautiful, hallowed by piety and love.

We see the lord of the harvest, Boaz, coming forth in the morning to his reapers, and greeting them with a religious salutation, "The Lord be with you;" and they answer, "The Lord bless thee." The harvest-field is consecrated to the Lord; it is "a field which the Lord has blessed."

We see a damsel of Moab, gleaning in the fields of Bethlehem from morning to evening. She had been married to Mahlon, a native of Bethlehem, who had been constrained by famine to leave it, with his father, and mother Naomi, and brother Chilion, and had gone into the land of Moab, and had there married this damsel, who now gleans in these fields of Bethlehem. In times of trial and distress, she, herself a widow, clave to her widowed mother-in-law. Her sister-in-law, Orpah, had bidden farewell to both; but Ruth left her own people and her father's house to follow Naomi, now a widow, and childless, on her return to Bethlehem;

"Intreat me not to leave thee (she said),
Or to return from following after thee;
For whither thou goest, I will go;
And where thou lodgest, I will lodge;
Thy People shall be my People,
And thy God my God;
Where thou diest, will I die,
And there will I be buried:
The Lord do so to me, and more also,
If ought but death part thee and me."

The piety and love of this Moabitish proselyte had their reward. She became the wife of Boaz, the ancestor of Jesse and of David, and her name has a place near to that of Rahab, the proselyte of Jericho, in the Genealogy of our Blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, in the Gospel of St. Matthew.

Why was the Book of Ruth written? is a question which is asked by an ancient Bishop and Father of the Church.

Doubtless, as he suggests, it was designed to teach salutary lessons of godliness and virtue, by her bright example in times of severe trial, and by the happy consequences of her faith and obedience.

In days of public degeneracy and national apostasy, such as those of the Judges, the beautiful picture, which is here presented to us, of the private piety of Boaz and his reapers in the harvest-field, and of his kind and merciful treatment of the stranger from Moab, and of his watchful oversight of his labourers, and of his fatherly relation to them, and of his conscientious sense of duty, and of his strict observance of the Divine law with regard to property and marriage, suggests the consolatory reflection, that in times of great national wickedness, when there is, as it were, a foaming forth of iniquity and shame on the turbid surface of society, there is still a silent, quiet, calm, clear under-current of piety in households, in the harvest-fields of rural Bethlehems, where holy words are spoken, and holy thoughts abide.

And much more, this other comfort is supplied in evil days by this history. It shows that when men and Nations are falling away from God and His Church, yet Missionary work is not at a

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1 Ps. lxxv. 14.
2 Ibid. i. 68. 117; vii. 161.
3 Theocritus, Idyl. vii. 1. 8.
4 ch. i 16, 17.
5 Matt. i. 5.
6 Theodoret, Qu. in Ruth.
7 Jude 13.
INTRODUCTION

standstill, but is steadily and peacefully going on; and while the faith of Israel fails, a Ruth comes forth from Moab to Bethlehem, and is joined to the Church of God.

The history of Ruth in the dark days of the Judges, is like that bright gleam of sunshine which is shed on the black cloud of our Lord’s prophetic description of the World, before His Second Advent: “Iniquity will abound,” “Charity will wax cold;” and the faith will be hard to find1. Yet we also know, from the same Divine lips, that, notwithstanding all these hindrances, “this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all Nations—and then shall the End come2.”

Why was the Book of Ruth written? we may ask again, with that ancient Writer above mentioned3. And with him our answer must also be, “Principally for the sake of Christ the Lord; for He sprang from her.” The Divine Evangelist, St. Matthew, would teach us (as S. Jerome observes) that Christ was born not only for the sake of the Jews, but for the Gentiles also; and not only for the sake of the righteous, but for sinners; and therefore he has inserted in the Genealogy of Christ the names of four women; two of them were once Gentiles, Rahab and Ruth, and one of these had been formerly a sinner; and the names of the other two are Bathsheba and Thamar4.

This history was written for the sake of Christ and of His Church.

It supplies some connecting links in the chain of evidence which proves the truth of Jacob’s prophecy, that Shiloh or Messiah would come of Judah5. Here we have a statement of the succession from Judah, in an unbroken line, to David6.

Further, as Christian Antiquity testifies7, Ruth the Moabitess, leaving her national idolatries, and coming forth in faith and love with her mother-in-law to Bethlehem, and laying herself down as a humble handmaid and suppliant at the feet of Boaz of Judah, on the threshing-floor, and espoused to him at that place, which afterwards witnessed the Nativity of Christ, the Son of God, Who came forth from heaven as a Bridegroom to join our nature to the Divine in an indissoluble union in Himself, and to espouse a spiritual Ruth, the Universal Church, whom He has purchased to Himself with His own most precious Blood,—is a signal figure of that Church, to whom the sweet Psalmist of Bethlehem says, in the inspired language of prophecy—

>“Hearken, O daughter, and consider,  
Incline thine ear;  
Forget also thine own people and thy father’s house,  
So shall the King have pleasure in thy beauty;  
For he is thy Lord God,  
And worship thou Him;  
Instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children,  
Whom thou mayest make princes in all lands.”

Boaz himself, as represented in this history, is in many respects a figure of Christ. His name, signifying strength, is expressive of Christ. He is of Bethlehem, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David; so is Christ. Boaz comes forth, as the lord of the harvest, among the reapers, so does Christ; he winnows on his threshing-floor, so does Christ8, who is proclaimed by the Baptist as having “His fan in His hand,” that He may “throughly purge His floor.” He falls asleep; and when he awakes he espouses to himself Ruth the Moabitess, and redeems her inheritance, as the next of kin to her departed husband. Christ made Himself next of kin to us, by taking our nature, the nature of those who were dead in sin. He fell asleep in death on the Cross; and when He awoke, by His Resurrection, He redeemed our inheritance for us, and espoused to Himself a spiritual Ruth, a Church from all Nations; and He has raised up thereby a spiritual seed, glorious for evermore.

Was it altogether without Divine providence that the events of this Book occurred not only at

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3 Theodoret, Qu. 1.  
4 The names of Ruth, the heathen Moabitess, and Rahab, the Canaanitish woman, are inserted by the Evangelist in Christ’s genealogy, “ut ostenderet non doligimentum esse Christum ex peccatoribus nasci, qui venerat ut omnium peccata deleret, utque Gentium vocavit a Christo facienda in Ruth Gentili presignificaretur.”

5 Cp. note below on Matt. i. 3; and Dr. Mill on the Genealogies, pp. 157, 158.

6 See on Gen. xxix. 10.

7 See below, ch. iv. 12—22.

8 See Origen, ii. p. 478. S. Ambrose de Fide, iii. 10, 169.

“Christus est Sponsus, cui illa venit ex gentibus sponsa.” Cp. S. Ambrose in Lucan, lib. iii.; and S. Jerome ad Jovinianum, lib. 1, “Ruth in typum secessionis,” Epist. ad Paulin. 50. S. Cyril. ad Matth. i. Prosper Agnan. de Prom. i. 23, “Ruth aliena gentes ex Moabitis veniens, sub lege Dei, ea eget quia figuram gestarent Ecclesiae venientes ex gentibus;” and so Bede, Quest. in Ruth, who says, that this book is a prophecy pre-signifying the espousals of the Universal Church to Christ.

9 Ps. xlv. 11, 12, 17, a Psalm used by the Church when she celebrates Christ’s birth at Bethlehem.

10 Matt. iii. 12. See on ch. iii. 2; and iii. 9, on the typical character of the threshing-floor in Scripture.
TO RUTH.

a place, Bethlehem, which is consecrated for ever in the Gospels as the birth-place of "Emmanuel, God with us," "God manifest in the flesh," the Divine Bridegroom of the Church; but that they occurred at a time which has been solemnized by the great events for which He came into the world? Ruth came to Bethlehem at the Passover, the season of Christ's Death and Resurrection. She gleaned in the fields of Boaz for seven weeks till Pentecost; and the Marriage of Ruth, the figure of the Gentile Church, with Boaz, seems to have been celebrated at that time when the Divine Bridegroom gave the Dowry of the Holy Ghost to the Church, whom He had redeemed, and whom He enabled by that gift to preach the Gospel to all the World, and to raise up children to Himself in all lands and ages of the world. The marriage of Ruth with Boaz was celebrated at Pentecost—at that season when the great Lord of the Harvest sent forth His Apostolic Reapers into the fields white unto harvest, to gather His Wheat into His garner—the garner of Heaven.

The Author of the Book of Ruth has been supposed by many of the Rabbis to be Samuel the Prophet; and this opinion has been adopted by Isidorus, Abulensis, Genebrardus, and many others.

It has been alleged by some (as Eichhorn, Bertholdt, De Wette, and Ewald), that it must be of much later date, on account of the Chaldaisms which occur in it (ii. 8, 9. 21; iii. 3, 4). But such a history as that of Ruth the Moabitess, espoused to Boaz of the house of Judah, could hardly have been written after the Babylonish captivity; and, if written then, would not have been admitted into the Sacred Canon; because, at that time, marriages with Moabitish women were deemed to be unlawful; and these Chaldaisms ought rather to be called archaisms, and are signs of antiquity and authenticity; they do not occur in the narrative, but in the dialogue. They are very appropriate in a book which gives a view of quiet scenes of domestic life, and are vestiges of the ancient colloquial language of Palestine.

"The Book of Ruth (says a recent learned writer) contains no marks of its date. It is most likely to have been written when the memory was most fresh. The only custom which is related, that of giving the shoe in witness of a covenant, belongs to a very simple time, and may well have fallen into desuetude soon after David's time. The language has this remarkable characteristic, that the forms which look like Chaldaisms, occur in conversation, and so represent the language of peasant life, the narrative Hebrew being good. The history itself took place a century before David. The right of kindred in redeeming the land is a Levitical law (Lev. xxv. 25); the custom that such redemption, in the case of a childless widow, involved marriage with her (Ruth iv. 5), is something beyond, not against, the Levitical Law; for the deceased had no brothers left."

The most recent commentaries on this book are those of Rosenmüller, Dereser, Riegler, Mozger, Bertheau, Keil, 1863, and Wright, Rev. C. H. II., 1864.

1 ch. i. 22. 2 ch. ii. 23. For which reason this Book is appointed to be read in the synagogues at Pentecost.
3 See Ezra ix. 1, 2. Neh. xiii. 25, 26.
5 Dr. Pusey, Lectures on Daniel, p. 312, 1864.
6 See ch. iv. 7.
I. NOW it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

3 And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

6 Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

9 The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and

CHAP. 1. Now] Heb. vaw: see on Josh. i. 1, and Judg. i. 1, and Wright here.

— in the days when the judges ruled] In those days of ungodliness, distress, and confusion, when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (xvii. 6; xxi. 25). The present history is a gleam of light in the darkness of that time. Cp. above, Introduction, p. 160.

— there was a famine] perhaps that described in Judg. vi. 3, 4, in the days of Gilson: cp. Hengst., Anth. ii. 113. The Targum Jonathan and many of the Rabbis assert that it was in the days of Hizam of Bethleham (Judg. xii. 8), whom they suppose to be the same as Boaz. Josephus (Antt. v. 3. 1) says that this famine was in the days of Elia.

— Beth-lehem-judah] Bethleham was the origin of degeneracy and sorrow in the two melancholy histories at the close of the Book of Judges (xvii. 7; xix. 1, 2), but is now by a happy recovery to become the source of restoration and gladness in Boaz, David, and Christ.

A similar contrast is seen in those two histories, as compared with that of Samuel the Prophet. A Leete, in Michael's house at Mount Ephraim, was the minister of idolatry (Judg. xvii. 1—8); and a Leete of Mount Ephraim was a principal agent in the scene of sin in Judg. xix. 1, 25—20; and a Leete of Mount Ephraim,—namely, Samuel the Prophet,—was the great restorer of piety and virtue (1 Sam. i. 1; ii. 18).

2. Elimelech] God is King.

— Naomi] or, rather, Naomi: cp. Sept., Vulg., Syr.; pleasant, gracious (Gesen.).
And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? or, nay, Mara; They will return with me: there is still another son, but also I go a little further apace.

Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, or, I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons; would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth cleave unto her.

And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. And Ruth said, ||'Intreat me not to leave thee, Or to return from following after thee: For whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: Thy people shall be my people, And thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, And there will I be buried: The Lord do so to me, and more also, If thou return not unto the house of my father's brethren. When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi? And she said unto them, Call me rather ||Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

11. that they may be your husbands] She recognizes them as conforming to the Levitical Law of marriage (Deut. xxiv. 5). They were therefore proselytes.

12. Would ye tarry for them] or, rather, would ye tarry on these accounts, for these reasons? The promissial plural neuter form taken here used is represented by some as a Chaldee (cp. Dan. ii. 6; ix. 29. Keil, p. 360; but see Wright, p. 161). Such dialectic forms as these (which occur in the dialogues of this Book, not in the narrative) seem to indicate that the writer was representing the colloquial language of the time: cp. Keil, pp. 363-365.

— would ye stay? would ye be shot up? would ye shoot up yourselves? As to the form of the verb, cp. Isa. ix. 4. Ps. lxxi.

3. Gesen. 005. Wright, 13. — for it grieveth me much for your sakes] rather, with bitterness (Heb. way) to me more than to you (yer vilom) since the hand of the Lord is gone forth against me. So Sept., which has וב יבש ויבש, not ויבש ויבש, and so Syr. and Arabic: cp. Gen. xin. 9. You may have husbands and children; but I can never expect to have either.

— At this speech of Naomi, her daughters-in-law lifted up her voice, and wept for her.

14. Orpah kissed her mother in law] and took leave of her.

15. her gods] such as Chemosh (Num. xxii. 29: see Jfegner, Dubis, p. 191).

16. Intreat me not] rather, Force me not—do not such violence to me. There is an antithetical character in these words which gives it almost the character of a musical chant: perhaps it was often on the lips of maidens of Israel; and it may well be adopted by the Church, coming from her ancient home, the heathen world, and clinging to Christ, and dwelling, as it were, at Bethlehem: cp. Ps. xlv. 10.

Hearken, O daughter, and consider; Incline thine ear; Forget also thine own people, And thy Father's house; So shall the King have pleasure in thy beauty, For He is thy Lord God, And worship thou Him.

And the rhythmical movement in Rom. viii. 35.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" following on a similar movement in re. 33, 34.

19. all the city was moved about them] was in a commotion concerning them (cp. 1 Sam. iv. 5. 1 Kings i 45), saying, Is this Naomi?—is it she who went forth with a husband and two sons; now sad and without them?

20. Call me not Naomi] Call me not Naomi (see re. 2), please not, but call me Mara, bitter: so Sept. See above, re. 13, and Exod. xvi. 23 on the waters of Marah.

21. hath testified against me] Literally, hath answered against me: cp. Exod. xv. 16. 2 Sam. i. 15. Job xii. 17. Mal. iii. 5.

— the Almighty] See Gen. xvii. 1. 

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22. they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest] at the Passover (Lev. xxiii. 10, 11); and see Targum of Jonathan here, who says, "On that day the children of Israel begin to reap the wave-sheaf of barley."

In the next chapter (v. 23) it is related, that Ruth gleaned in the field of Boaz "unto the end of barley harvest and of harvest." This book was therefore appointed by the ancient Hebrew Church to be read in the Synagogues at the feast of weeks, or Pentecost, when the wheat harvest began: see above, Introduction, p. 160.

In this incident, there is also, it seems, a typical meaning, relative to Christ and the Church, see Introdr., p. 161.

Cu II. 1. a kinsman] a friend; a person known: γερον, Sept.; a mighty man of wealth] The words are here used generally signifying a mighty man of valour (see Judg. vi. 15; xi. 1); and a man of wealth, ability, or virtue. Cep. Gen. xxxiv. 29; xviii. 6. Exod. xviii. 21; and Genes., p. 275.

— Boaz] which signifies strength (πιστευω, 221); and this name was therefore given to one of the pillars of Solomon's temple (1 Kings vii. 21. 2 Chron. iii. 27). The name Boaz forms a contrast to that of Ruth's former husband, Mahlon, which signifies weakness (i. 2). On its typical sense, see Introduction, p. 161.

2. and glean ears] Literally, and glean among the ears.

— in whose sight I shall find grace] In the Mosaic Law, God commanded to leave the gleanings for the poor, stranger, fatherless, and widow (Lev. xix. 10; xxii. 12. Deut. xxiv. 19). Ruth was poor, a stranger, and a widow, and probably fatherless.

3. she went . . . gleaned in the field after the reapers] I was delighted (says Dr. Thomson) with a sight in the fields at Bethlehem. The reapers were cutting barley; and after every country woman and children gleaning, just as Ruth did. And in the evening you might see some poor maiden sitting by the road-side, and beating out with a stick or stone wheat which she had gathered, as Ruth did (Dr. Thomson, L. ii. 647).

— her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers,

— The Lord be with you.

And they answered him, The Lord bless thee.

5. Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this? And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

6. Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.

7. Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

11. And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, t ill that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the
Boaz blesses Ruth.

Ruth II. 12—21.

Boaz is near of kin to Ruth.

death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knowest not heretofore. 12 But the Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. 13 Then she said, ¶”Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens. 14 And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left. 15 And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not: 16 And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.

17 So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her “that she had reserved after she was sufficed. 18 And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did 1 take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man’s name is whome I with whom I wrought to day is Boaz. 19 And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, ¶Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, ¶one of our next kinsmen. 20 And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt

11. thou hast left—the land of thy nativity, and art come, &c.] as Abraham did. Was not Abraham in the mind of Boaz when he said this? There seems also to be another reference to the Book of Genesis in what follows: ¶The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward, &c. ¶Thou hast done as Abraham did, and God will be thy reward, as He was Abraham’s.” Cp. Gen. xv. 1. Here also is a figure of the Gentile Church coming to Christ: see Ps. xlv. 11—17. — heretofore.] Literally, yesterday, and the day before; 12. of the Lord God of Israel.] Though Boaz himself will reward her, yet in his piety and modesty, he considers that reward as coming not from himself, but from God, the Lord, the Author and Giver of all, to whom he commends her for protection and recompense. — under whose wings?] a figure of speech derived from Deut. xxiii. 11; and adopted by the Psalmist (Ps. xxxvi. 8; lxi. 2); and by Christ Himself (Matt. xxiii. 27). There seems to be something prophetic in these words of Boaz, the ancestor and figure of Christ. Ruth coming to Bethlehem, came for shelter under the wings of the Lord God of Israel. And as we shall see, she came for shelter under the wing of Boaz (see on iii. 9), and so was a type of the Gentile Church coming to Christ, God and Man, for shelter under His Wing: see the note there. — friendly] to the heart. — be not like unto] literally, be not as—that is, not on a par with them. — vinegar.] Heb. chomet, a cooling and refreshing drink, made of sour wine mingled with oil; still used in the East (Rossmiller, Morgan, iii. 68; Winer, i. 519. Cp. Plin., N. H. xxviii. 297; Theocrit., Idyll. x. 115). The meals in the harvest-fields at Bethlehem at the present time are what they were in Ruth’s days. There is the dipping of the morsel in wine, and the parched corn, which is made by boiling up the best ears, not the ripe, which are plucked with the stalk attached, and tied in small parcels; a blazing fire is kindled with dry grass, and the corn heads are held in it until the chaff is mostly burnt off, and the grain thus sufficiently roasted is to be eaten (Dr. Thomson, p. 818). Cp. Robinson, ii. 304, who says “at Rabbibeh, on the road from Gaza to Hebron, on May 22, in one field, nearly 200 reapers and gleaners at work; a few were taking refreshment,” he adds, “and offered us of their parched corn.” — and left] reserved it for her mother-in-law: see v. 18. — one of our next kinsmen.] — one of our next kinsmen. — that hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen. And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt
keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest. 22 And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they may meet thee not in any other field. 23 So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law.

III. 1 Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, 2 shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? 2 And now is not Boaz of our kindred, 3 with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor. 3 Wash thyself therefore, 4 and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: 5 but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. 4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and || uncover his feet, and lay thee down; 6 and he will tell thee what thou shalt do. 5 And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

It is also applied to those who were "'avengers of blood," by reason of their consanguinity; see Num. xxvi. 19. Deut. xix. 6. Cp. Wright, p. 57.

Since the reversion of lands, and the office of avenging blood, belonged to the nearest of kin, therefore God signifieth one who is next of kin (see iv. 1. 6. 8); and who, by reason of his kinship, was bound to marry the widow of him who died childless; see xii. 13, and Genesis, p. 151.

By virtue of His Incarnation, the Son of God has become near of kin to us. He is Emmanuel, God with us; God manifest in the flesh. He has joined us to Himself in His own body; He has redeemed our inheritance when lost; He has ransomed us by His own blood; He has conquered our destroyer; He has responded to Himself a Church, which was once joined to another in a heathen land; and the Church now says to Him, "O Lord our God, other lords beside Thee have had dominion over us, but Thee only will we make mention of Thy Name" (Isa. xxvi. 19).

See the sermon of Dr. Arner for the Resurrection, upon the text, Job xiii. 23—27, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," vol. ii. p. 259, where he says, "If we are to have a Redeemer, man he must be of necessity, so is the law of redemption of persons; he must be a brother or next of blood (Lev. xxvi. 25). He must be flesh of our flesh. He must therefore be both God and man; for man alone cannot redeem: God alone may not redeem; but God with man hath may and can." 21. He said unto me also: Rather, even so (may he be blessed of the Lord), for he said unto me.

— Thou shalt keep fast, . . . until they have ended all my harvest. May we not, with due reverence, that there was a mystery in these and the following words; and that they express the duty of the spiritual Ruth to labour in Christ's field, and to cleave steadfastly to Him, and not to stray from His presence into other fields — by my young men! The word rendered young men includes maidens also (Genen, Manzer). Cp. Job i. 19. 22. that they meet thee not in any other field] Literally, that they fell not upon thee in another field, and molest thee, and perhaps drive thee from it.

Ct. III. 1. shall I not seek rest for thee?] Ought not I, who am now old, and cannot protect thee, to seek rest for thee? that is, to seek for thee a condition, that of a wife. "Vita tumult sub presidio marii" (Rosanum. See i. 9, "The Lord grant, ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband.") Naomi is here justifying the advice which she is about to give, and which might, at first, seem liable to objection. 2. And now is not Boaz of our kindred?] Is he not therefore thy husband according to the Divine Law?

In our estimate of this advice, we cannot reasonably suppose that a pious woman like Naomi would not have counselled Ruth to do any thing which was against the Law of God, or the moral sense of good men, such as Boaz. Indeed, if she had done so, she would have alienated and repelled him, instead of gaining his protection; she would have frustrated her own purpose. The claim, which Ruth had to make, could hardly be urged by her publicly in the harvest-field in the light of day.
only to Naomi her mother-in-law, but to the command of God. It was the conduct of one conscious of her own purity of purpose, and willing to encounter suspicion in the discharge of a duty. It was something like the faith of her, whose name is connected with this same place, Bethlehem, the Blessed Virgin Mary, willing to confront the surmises of Joseph her espoused husband, under circumstances which might seem to be suspicious, and trusting to God to clear up her innocence in His own due time. It was observed by Boaz that Boaz praised Ruth, and said to her, “Blessed be thou of the Lord” (e. 10), and commanded her to lie down until the morning (e. 13), appears to be a sufficient justification of her conduct.

Boaz, it seems, was advanced in years; and though Ruth was young (ii. 5), and she came from the land of Moab, yet when surrounded by temptation, she had not swerved from the path of virtue (see v. 10). She obeyed God and her mother-in-law in seeking to have him for her husband. He rightly inferred from her past conduct that her present act was one of modesty and virtue (whatever it might seem to be), and the fact proved that he was right.

Ruth, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, was justified by the event. There is something almost marvellous in the promptitude of his recognition of her innocence and virtue,—“Blessed be thou of the Lord.” Who can say, what the thoughts of Boaz, the ancestor of Christ, may have been in the visions of the night, when he was lying asleep on that threshing-floor at Bethlehem? May we not be permitted to conjecture, that, like Joseph at Bethlehem, he may have been visited with visions of an angel concerning Ruth his future wife (cp. Matt. i. 20)?

Who also can say, what revolutions may have been vouchsafed to Ruth, whose piety and love in an evil age were conspicuous, and doubtless endeared her to God? S. Augustine de Bono Vindicatis, § 10, does not hesitate to suggest (what, indeed, is also intimated in the Chartree Turgum) that Ruth may have had intimations of the future Coming of the Messiah, and may have heard from her origin from the tribe of Judah, and that she herself was to be a blessed instrument in God’s hands for that glorious consummation.

9. [Heb. הָעָלָה (and turned himself) was astonished when he awoke, and turned himself (literally, he went over: see Judg. xvi. 29. Job vi. 18), and saw a woman at his feet.

9. spread—thy skirt] Literally, thy wings, πτερόν (Sept.): it is used only here and xlii. 13. The Targum says, “under whose wings thou art come to trust.” This prayer of Ruth was equivalent to a supplication that he would betroth her to himself (as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it) and make her his wife. In Hebrew marriages, the bridgemeum places his tullith on the head of his bride.

God said to His Church whom He espoused to Himself, “When I passed by thee and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee” (Ezek. xvi. 8). And Isaiah, in the same context, and applying it to the love of the Church to Christ, and of the turning of all churches (represented by the seven women, as the churches are represented by the seven candlesticks, Rev. i. 20) to Christ, says, “In that day, seven women shall take hold of one man, saying... Let us be called by thy name” (Isa. iv. 1): cp. Zech. viii. 23, where the same truth is expressed with a variety in the figure of speech, “Ten men of all languages shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”

In considering the conduct of Ruth at this time, we must not only bear in mind the circumstances stated in the foregoing note, but we must also recollect that she was a typical person, and that her acts were prophetic. Ruth was a Moabitess, and she had come to Bethlehem of Judah, the future birth-place of David and of God’s Anointed. As in the case of Rahab, she left her country, and was engrafted (as a wild olive-branch, Rom. xi. 17) into Israel, is a figure of the Gentile Church coming to Christ. Jesus Christ, the Divine Boaz, of Bethlehem, is, (as the Lord, the Harvester, the Victor of the World, His threshing-floor (Matt. xiii. 39), is in God’s, the Redeemer of her inheritance, her near of kin by reason of His Incarnation, the Comforter of her widowhood, her Husband and her Deliverer. The yearning affection, and the devout humility with which the Church comes to Christ, is represented by Ruth coming to Boaz as he slept on his threshing-floor, and laying herself down as a suppliant and a servant at his feet.

Adam slept in Paradise, and Eve his bride was formed by God. But his of his own free will (Gen. iii. 24). Boaz slept on the threshing-floor at Bethlehem, and Ruth, his bride, came to him for protection under his wing (Ruth iii. 9). Christ slept in death on the cross at Calvary, and His Bride the Church was formed out of His side (John xix. 34).

The faith and humility of the Church were represented in the Gospel by the act of the woman with the issue of blood, coming behind Christ and laying hold of the hem of His garment (Matt. xiv. 20. Luke viii. 44).

Ruth the widow outward, which literally signifies wing, gives an additional significance to the act. Christ desired to gather the ancient Hebrew Church under the shadow of His wings (Matt. xxiii. 7. Luke xiii. 34), but she refused His tender offer of shelter; and her punishment was to be overshadowed by the dark wing of abomination that made her desolate (see Dan. ix. 27; and note on Matt. xxiv. 15, p. 86).

But the Gentile Church came to Christ, the Son of David, born at Bethlehem, like Ruth the Moabitess to Boaz, his ancestor, at the same place; she came humbly, faithfully, and lovingly, and laid herself at His feet, and craved shelter under the wings of His mercy; for she knew that He who was born there, and is God manifest in the flesh, is her God, or Redeemer, and she flies to Him for safety under the shadow of His wings (Ps. xvii. 8; xxxvi. 7; Ivi. 1; Isi. 4; lix. 7). He is to her and to all “who fear His Name the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings” (Mal. iv. 2).

Therefore we need not hesitate to affirm that Boaz, lying on his threshing-floor, “bent his ear” to the harvest and protecting, even while asleep (see v. 4), was a figure in this respect of Him who is not only, as the Baptist declared, the Divine Bridgegroom (John iii. 29), but also (as the same Baptist proclaimed) the Great Lord of the Harvest, whose threshing-floor is the World, and “whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather the wheat into His garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Matt. iii. 13).

On the typical character of a threshing-floor, as seen in other passages of Scripture, e.g., Gideon’s threshing-floor, see above, note on Judg. vi. 37; the threshing-floor of Aramman the Jebusite, on Moriah, purchased by David, and afterwards the site of the Temple (see 2 Sam. xxi. 19, 25— thou art a near kinsman] thou art goel: see ii. 20.

10. my daughter] Blessed art thou who hast not followed young men, but earnest to one who is to thee as a father (Theodoret).

thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end]
the beginning, inasmuch as thou followest not young men, whether poor or rich. 11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. 12 And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I. 13 Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth: lie down until the morning.

14 And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor. 15 Also he said, Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city.

16 And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her. 17 And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law. 18 Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

IV. 1 Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down. 2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down. 3 And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selcheth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's: 4 And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem

Literally, thou hast bettered thy latter loving-kindness above thy former: in that thou hast not thought of thyself, nor hast been swayed by thy own feelings, but hast considered how thou mayest best fulfil the Law of God, and continue the name of the departed: cp. iv. 10.


14. before one could know another] Literally, before a man would know his companion (cp. Sept.); i.e. in the grey dusk of the morning (Syriac, Arabic).

On the Hebrew word be-terem, more commonly be-terem, rendered before, see Ps. xc. 2. Prov. viii. 23. Job xii. 21. Gesen. 325. Wright, 50. 15. Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor] A good heart is no less afraid of a scandal than of a sin (Sp. Heb.).

The literal rendering is, let it not be known that the woman, or this woman, came into the floor (Hebrew). The Targum implies that these words were said to the labourers who were with Boaz at the floor.

16. the veil] mantle: cp. Isa. iii. 22. 17. she went into the city] Rather, he (i.e. Boaz) went into the city: the verb is masculine, and so Targum. Boaz left his harvest work, and went into the city to find the nearer kinsman, and to do what is related in the next chapter. Ruth returned to her mother-in-law.


Cn. IV. 1. Then went Boaz up] Bethlehem being on a hill: cp. iii. 3, where he is said to go down to his threshing-floor. 168 — the gate] where the business of the city was transacted (Gen. xix. 1; xxxiv. 20. Deut. xvi. 18; xxi. 19. Wright). 19. Ho, such an one?] The Hebrew words pellin almoni are derived from palah, to distinguish, to point out; and atom, to conceal (Green, ch. 674), and signify a person who is pointed out, but whose name is concealed: cp. Greek ἀνώνυμος, and ἄνωνυμος.

Doubtless Boaz knew his name; but the Sacred Writer might reasonably be unwilling to record it.

By declining a duty, this kinsman forfeited a privilege; and Boaz, by doing the duty, which the nearer kinsman declined, became an ancestor of Christ.

3. Naomi—selleth a parcel of land] or, rather, Naomi hath sold the parcel of land, which was our brother (or kinsman) Elimelech's. Naomi had already sold her interest in the land during the terms of years that intervened between the date of the sale and the year of Jubilee, when the land would revert to the representatives of Elimelech, and the nearest of kin could gain immediate possession of the land by redeeming it; that is, by paying the worth of the land during the term of years which still remained to the Jubilee.

4. And I thought to advertise thee] Literally, I said I will uncover thine ear: ἀπαντάω τῇ ὠντὶ σου (Sept.), by lifting up the hair which covers it: cp. 1 Sam. ix. 15. 2 Sam. vii. 27. — before the inhabitants] or, rather, in the presence of those who are sitting here: so Sept., Vulp. Arabic, Syriac. In short, if thou wilt redeem it So 50 MSS. in Kennicott.

Many printed editions have erroneously the third person, i.e. if he will not redeem it.

he said, I will redeem it] he is ready to redeem the field; but when he finds that he must marry Ruth with it, he changes his mind and says, I cannot redeem it (c. 6).

He is a representative of that class of persons who are

His promise to Ruth. RUTH III. 11—18. IV. 1—4. His appeal to the kinsman
Boaz redeems it; marries Ruth.

5 Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. 6 And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it. 7 Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel. 8 Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

9 And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. 10 Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.

11 And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses.

k The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel:

And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah,

of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman.

13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto

ready to help the Church of God, as long as it suits their worldly interest, but decline to do so when such conduct seems to contravene it. Here was his trial. Observe what he lost by refusing to do what was right. The name of Boaz is honoured by the Church of God, and stands in Christ's genealogy, and shines for ever in the Gospel, as well as in the Old Testament, but the name of the nearest kinsman is hidden in darkness.

In a spiritual sense, this man, who was next of kin, but who declined to espouse Ruth and redeem her inheritance for her, and who draws off his shoe, and gives up her and her inheritance to Boaz, the figure of Christ, may represent the reluctance and inability of the mere natural man to undertake and effect the work of doing and suffering, which has been done and suffered by the true God, the Divine Boaz, for the espousal of the Church, and the redemption of her inheritance, Jesus Christ. "He looked, and there was none to help, and He wondered that there was none to upload" (Isa. lxxxiii. 5). "None of them could redeem his brother" (Ps. xlix. 7, 8). That must be done by Christ, who only could do it.

5. of the hand of Naomi. With the kinsman's life-interest, after the jubilee, in the field of her deceased husband, Eglileech. Besides this, Ruth, as the widow of Eglileech's son Mahlon, had a reversionary interest in it after Naomi; and therefore, in the case supposed, there was a purchase to be made of the present interest of the present occupier for the term of years to the Jubilee, and of two other reversionary interests; first, the interest of Naomi, and next of the interest of Ruth (cp. Num. xxvii. 9), and in the purchase of the latter there was no obligation involved to raise up seed to Mahlon, her deceased husband, who had died without issue: see Lev. xxv. 24, and Deut. xxv. 7—10; and cp. Selden de Successionibus, cap. 15 and 16, and Maison de Donatien, cap. 6.

6. let I mar mine own inheritance by investing money in the purchase of land which will not belong to me, but to my son whom Ruth may bear; and if I have only one son by her, that son will not be regarded as mine, but as the son of Mahlon, Ruth's deceased husband, to whom I shall have raised up seed; and that son will have my inheritance, and it will be called by Mahlon's name, and not mine.

7. in former time. This does not necessarily imply that, when this Book was written, the custom had become obsolete, but that it was one of great antiquity. It was not prescribed by the Divine Law, and is not the same as that in Deut. xxv. 9, though it seems to have been grounded on it.

— man plucked off his shoe, and gave it. In token of a transfer of property; and in acknowledgment that he, to whom the shoe was given, might tread on the property as his own by the same right as he, who gave the shoe, had formerly trodden upon it: cp. Selden de Jure Nat., cap. 5, and de Successionibus, cap. 15; Heffer, p. 192.

8. he drew off his shoe. Cp. S. Ambrose de Fide iii. 5, who observes that, in Holy Scripture, Moses, when receiving, as a servant, a command from the Angel of the Lord, which was Christ, is commanded to loose his own shoe (Exod. iii. 5), and so Joshua (v. 15); but the friend of the Divine Bridegroom declares that he is not worthy to stoop down and loose His shoe (Luke iii. 16). Christ is the Goel or Redeemer whose shoe is never drawn off. His work of redemption is for eternity.

9. the returning prodigal in the Gospel has shoes put on his feet (Luke xv. 22): he is reinstated in the lost inheritance. We, when reconciled to God in Christ, have our "feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace" (Eph. vi. 15).

10. the gate of his place. Bethlem. A benediction from the Lord has been an essential accompaniment of Marriage, since Marriage was first instituted by God in Paradise (Gen. ii. 22; xxiv. 60, 67). Thoradile, Rites of the Church, p. 241). And yet, alas! in some countries of Christianland, in these later days, Marriage has been degraded to a mere civil contract.

— Rachel. Rachel is put before Leah, as the true wife of Jacob, and as connected with Bethlem (Gen. xxxv. 16). — Which two did build. Cp. Gen. xvi. 2; xxx. 3, where the same figure is used.

— be famous. Literally, call a name, make a name to sound. These words are prophetic, for thence came the birth of Him who has made Bethlem famous in all the world (Theodore).
Ruth bears a son, Obed, the forerunner of David.

13. the Lord gave her] by a special blessing. Boaz, it seems, was advanced in years.
15. a restorer—a nourisher] This was true literally in her case; and it is true spiritually to all the World, which has been restored and nourished by Him who was born at Bethlehem from this seed according to the flesh (Theodoret).
16. in her bosom] as her own child.
17. Now is Marah turned back again to Naomi, and Orpah, if she hear this in Moab, cannot but envy at her sister’s happiness. O the sure and bountiful payments of the Almighty! Who ever came under His wing in vain? Who ever lost by trusting Him? Who ever forsaked the Moab of this world for the true Israel, and did not rejoice in the exchange? (Sp. Hall.)
20. Ram begat Amminadab] the father-in-law of Aaron, who married Elisheba (Exod. vi. 23).
22. Nahshon begat Salmon] the husband of Rahab (Matt. i. 5). He is called Salma 1 Chron. i. 11. This variation of names, where a final is substituted for an and on, is not uncommon (Ewald, § 165).

How is this genealogy to be reconciled with chronology? Two replies have been offered to this question, viz.:
(1) From the Exodus to the fourth year of King Solomon were 450 years (see 1 Kings vii. 1, 2). And since the Wanderings in the wilderness were forty years, therefore from the entrance into Canaan to the fourth year of Solomon were 440 years. David lived 70 years, and therefore from the entrance into Canaan to David’s birth was 366 years. It has been supposed by some that Rahab gave birth to Boaz about 42 years after the entrance into Canaan; and that Boaz had lived 102 years before he begat Obed; and that Obed lived 111 years before he begat Jesse; and that Jesse lived 111 years before he begat David; and thus the 366 years have been made out. Such calculations as these, with some modifications as to details, have been adopted by Serarius, Bonifrusius, Bp. Patrick, Spanheim, Carpzov, Int. ad V. T. p. 205; and as Spanheim observes, there may have been a special design of Divine Providence to grant children in old age to the ancestors of Christ, for Whose birth the world waited patiently for many hundreds of years.
(2) Others have affirmed that some links are omitted in this genealogy; e.g. that Boaz was not the son, but great-grandson of Salmon and Rahab; and some of the Rabbis, and Lignanes, and A Lepide, and Drs. W. I. Mill on the Genealogies (pp. 121, 125), who supposes that the Holy Spirit may have had a special purpose in bringing Rahab and Ruth into close juxtaposition; the former (Rahab), the Gentile Proselyte, “whose faith beheld in the God of Israel the sure eventual extinguisher of the powers of idolatry and wickedness; the latter, Ruth, that other Gentile Proselyte, who discerned in the same God, and in the Church of His redeemed, the only eligible portion and sure resting-place in the world.” All the persons here mentioned in the genealogy are distinguished men: it is not unlikely that some lesser note may have been omitted. It is observable that the same thing is done in the genealogy of Saul (see on 1 Sam. ix. 1). Cp. Nathan Alex., Hist. Eccl. tom. iii. diss. xvii.; Swenhusius, p. 68; Eichhorn, p. 582; Winer, ii. 517; Kell, Einleitung, d. A. T. p. 413, and on Ruth, p. 382.

Which of these two opinions is preferable, may be left to the judgment of the learned reader. Here the allegation of some, that there are numerical errors in the MSS. of the Bible in those passages which describe the chronology of the Judges, is partly grounded on a mistaken reading and rendering of Acts xiii. 20; see the note there.

p. All the names of this genealogy, Pharez, Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse, David, are found connected with each other in both the Genealogies of Christ (cp. the Sept. here with Matt. i. 3—6. Luke iii. 31—33). Of those two Genealogies, the one, that of St. Matthew, descends from Abraham and David to Christ, and has a special reference to the Hebrew people, as showing that Jesus of Nazareth is the seed of David and Abraham. That of St. Luke, which mounts up from Christ, the Second Adam, to the First Adam and to God, has a relation to all mankind, and shows that all nations are reconciled to God in Christ; and here (as already has been observed in the Introduction to this Book), in the union of Ruth the Moabitess with Boaz of Bethlehem, the future birth-place of Christ, we have a foreshadowing of the Mystical Union and Marriage between Christ and the Gentile World, and of the junction of Jew and Gentile in one Body in Him, to Whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed all glory and praise, now and for evermore. Amen.
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INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

The Books of Samuel properly form one Book. They are represented as such in the Hebrew Manuscripts, where they are entitled "The Book of Samuel" or "Samuel." The name sometimes given to them, "The First and Second Book of Kings," is derived from the Greek and Latin Versions, and serves to mark their connexion with those Books, which are so called in the Hebrew Original.

The Books of Samuel are like a continuation of the Books of Judges and Ruth. The earlier chapters of the First Book of Samuel place us in the times of Eli, one of the last of the Judges, when the Ark was still at Shiloh. Samuel himself is a Judge of Israel; and he anoints Saul the first King; he also anoints David, whose genealogy has been presented to us at the close of the Book of Ruth. Thus the Books of Samuel have a retrospective character. They also look forward. They close with the last words of David, and display him erecting an altar to God on the spot which was afterwards to become the site of the Temple built by his son Solomon.

But while the Books of Samuel have thus an intermediate position, they form also a distinct whole. They hold a place of their own, and perform a peculiar work, not only in relation to the Hebrew Nation, but in a higher function, as preparing the way for Christ. The holy Apostle St. Peter marks their character in this respect when he says, "All the prophets from Samuel... have foretold of these days," the days of Christ and the Gospel (Acts iii. 24).

In this Book (let us be allowed with the Hebrews to regard it as one) there is, as it were, a pensive tone of sadness and sorrow, mourning over the present, and yet a festive air of hope and joy, yearning for the future. That future has its consummation in Christ.

This double character of the Book meets us at the beginning of it. There we see the pious Hannah at Shiloh. Hannah is regarded by the ancient Expositors as a type of the Christian Church, for a long time barren, and mocked by her rival, the Jewish Synagogue, but at last breaking forth into singing, with a rapturous ecstasy of thankfulness to God.

The Magnificat of Hannah in the Tabernacle of Shiloh is an evangelical song, chanted by the spirit of Prophecy under the Levitical Law. It is a prelude and overture to the Gospel. It is a connecting link of sweet and sacred melody between the Magnificat of Miriam after the triumphant passage of the Red Sea—symbolizing the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ—and the Magnificat of the Blessed Virgin Mary, after the Annunciation of His Birth.

At a time of national degeneracy, when the Sanctuary of God was desecrated by the sins of the Priests who ministered there, and when Eli their father, the High Priest and Judge of Israel, restrained them not, Hannah proclaimed the supremacy of Jehovah. Hannah is the first person in the Bible who invokes Him as the "Lord of Hosts." Thenceforth that title became the usual appellation of the Most High. As the Name Jehovah had acquired new significance in the revelations of Horeb to Moses, and marked a new epoch in the history of Israel, so the title Jehovah Sabaoth ushered in with a voice of power a new period in the national annals of Israel. It declared the sovereignty of the God of the Hebrew People, in opposition to the rival claims of false deities worshipped by the heathen—such as the Sun and Moon, and host of heaven, and such as the gods of Philistia—and it was also a divine protest against the worldly policy of God's own People Israel, impatient of His supremacy, and craving for themselves an earthly king, and relying on physical strength and secular support.

Hannah, the devout mother of Samuel the Prophet, asserted the incommunicable attributes,
and adored the divine majesty, of the Lord of Hosts; and was enabled by the Holy Ghost to behold from afar the revelation of His glory in that future kingdom,—of which the monarchy of David, who was to be anointed by her son Samuel, was a type—the kingdom of Christ. "The Lord," she said, "shall give strength unto His King, and exalt the horn of His Anointed."

The divinely-inspired Song of Hannah, as we shall see, is like a golden key for the interpretation of the whole Book. In tones of sadness, the Book proceeds to describe the profligacy and profaneness of Eli's sons. But the child Samuel shines forth in bright and quiet contrast, in that dark picture. The child is made a Prophet to the aged Priest, and proceeds to him the doom of his house. The Philistines are used by God as His instruments for chastising the Priesthood and the People of Israel. The Priests and the People rely on the external ordinances of religion; and send for the Ark from Shiloh to the camp at Aphek. But God would show them by a terrible example that all outward forms, without inward holiness, are hollow, profitless, and vain. He punished their presumption by allowing the Ark—the visible symbol of His own Divine Presence, which had led them to so many victories for four hundred years, from Sinai to Shiloh—to fall into the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines, and to be carried in triumph to Ashdod, and to be placed as a trophy in the temple of their god Dagon. But there he would still prove Himself to be "the Lord of Hosts." Dagon should fall down prostrate before Him, and own the supremacy of Jehovah; and the Ark should be brought back to its own land, not by the agency of Israel, but by the hands of the Philistines themselves.

Notwithstanding these divine interventions, Israel was not yet awakened from its spiritual lethargy. Shiloh had been pillaged by the Philistines; the Tabernacle was removed from it. The Ark was in banishment, separated from the Tabernacle. The functions of the Levitical Priesthood were in abeyance. The National Church seemed to be lying in desolation and ruin. But still God was "the Lord of Hosts." Cities may be spoiled, Men and Nations may fail, but God never fails. His supremacy is indefeasible, and in times of national apostasy it is displayed with greater prominence and in clearer light, even through men's defections. At such a time as that, God raised up Samuel. Samuel, when a child, had been called by God at Shiloh, the Sanctuary of the Lord of Hosts. But Shiloh had passed away as a dream, never to return. Samuel had ministered before the Ark in the Tabernacle; but the Ark was now severed from the Tabernacle: both of them lay almost forgotten, in neglect and obscurity.

Samuel, when a child, had been commissioned by God to announce the woes which were coming on Eli and his house. Those prophecies had now been fulfilled. The Lord was with Samuel, and "did let none of his words fall to the ground; and all Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a Prophet of the Lord."

After the return of the Ark to Kirjath-jearim, Samuel came forth and preached repentance; and gathered the people to Mizpeh, and proclaimed a fast, and sacrificed and cried to the Lord. The Lord heard the cry, and thunders out of heaven in token of approval, and gave to Israel a great victory over the Philistines at the self-same place, Ebenezer, where they had been before discomfited by the Philistines, and where the Ark of God had been taken; and "the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel."

Here was a striking contrast; Israel had been smitten, although the Ark was present with them, and the Priests had been slain, and the Ark had been taken by the Philistines. But Samuel, without the Ark, was victorious over the same enemies at the same place; and that place became a memorable one in the history of the Hebrew Nation; "Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name Ebenezer (or stone of help), saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

But here we are encountered by objections.

Samuel was not a Priest; he was only a Levite. And yet he offered sacrifices to God. And he did this, not in one fixed place, at the Tabernacle, or in the presence of the Ark, but in various places, such as at Mizpeh, and at Gilgal; and we hear no remonstrance made by God against those acts as irregular; on the contrary, they appear to be acceptable to Him, and were followed by signal tokens of His favour.
Some persons in our own days have taken occasion to comment on these proceedings as indications that either the Pentateuch did not exist in the days of Samuel, or that it could not have been generally known. The Pentateuch prescribes in the clearest terms that sacrifices should be offered by the Aaronical Priesthood, at the door of the Tabernacle, or at the one place where the Lord should choose to set His name there.⁴

If this command had been known to Samuel, would he not (it is asked) have observed it? Would the Hebrew Nation have connived at such infractions of the Levitical Law without any expostulation on their part? Would sacrifices, offered in contravention of God's Law, have been accepted by Him who enacted it?

This is one form which the comments on Samuel's acts have assumed.⁵

Here, then, it appears that the history of Samuel, as related in this Book which bears his name, has been used as an argument against the credibility of the Books of Moses.

Other allegations, also, which seem to require notice, have been derived from it.

In the sacred history of the Old and New Testament the name of Samuel is commemorated with signal honour. In the Psalms he is distinguished among those who call upon the Name of the Lord⁶, and are heard most graciously by Him. In the prophecies of Jeremiah, God couples Samuel with Moses as exercising special power by his intercessions.⁷ Samuel is introduced in the New Testament by St. Peter,⁸ as standing at the head of the goodly company of prophets.

And yet in this Book, which bears Samuel's name, he is displayed to us as doing priestly acts, although he was not a priest; and as sacrificing in various places, although God had commanded that sacrifices should be offered to Him in one place.

Hence Samuel has been described by some as a second Gideon,⁹ fashioning an Ephod for himself, according to his own device; or, like another Micah,¹⁰ making for himself a sanctuary and teraphim of his own, and worshipping God according to ways of his own imagination.¹¹

The inferences from this estimate of Samuel's acts are obvious. They have been used as proofs that compliance with God's requirements, as to the order and ministrations of His worship and service, are of secondary importance, and are even regarded by Him as indifferent. If Samuel could assume the functions of the Levitical Priesthood, and not only be blameless in God's sight, but be specially honoured by Him, why, it may be asked, should we speak in harsh language of what we are wont to call "schismatical intrusions into the Christian Priesthood?" and why should the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the Christian Church be assigned and restricted with superstitious reserve and narrow-minded jealousy to a special order of men, set apart and solemnly appointed for that purpose?

These are important questions. How are they to be answered?

Samuel, it is true, was not a Priest, but only a Levite, and he performed priestly acts in various places. But his case was altogether extraordinary. He had an express commission from God to do what he did; and the anomalous and exceptional character of the times, in which he lived and acted, gave a peculiar reason for this extraordinary commission from God.

Almighty God is the only Author and Governor of every Priesthood, whether Patriarchal, Aaronic, or Christian. All the authority, by which the Priests of His Church have acted, now act, or ever will act, is derived from Him alone. His Priests are only instruments in His hands. He is the Sovereign Agent who works by them. They are channels of grace which flows from Him Who is its only source.

⁵ In Bp. Colenso on the Pentateuch, Part V. These objections had been raised by Pater, De Wette, and others, and may be seen stated with force and confidence by Dr. Davidson (Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 523), who says, "In the Books of Kings the Deuteronomical Legislation is pre-supposed, in which the unity of worship in Jerusalem was strictly enjoined; but in the Books of Samuel it is related that altars were erected and sacrifices offered to Jehovah in other places than that where the Ark was deposited, without any hint of illegality or of Jehovah's displeasure. On the contrary, such sacrifices are viewed as acceptable to God." 1 Sam. vii. 5—17; ix. 19; x. 3; xiv. 35; xvi. 2.
⁶ Bp. Colenso says, p. 155, referring to the history before us, "On all hands we are met with difficulties and direct contradictions of the Mosaic Law," and p. 157, "All the conditions of the Priesthood, as we gather from the more authentic history, were in those days utterly at variance with the laws and examples of the Pentateuch." (p. 159).
⁷ Ps. xix. 6. ⁸ Acts iii. 24. ⁹ See Judg. viii. 7. ¹⁰ Compare the remarks on Gideon and Micah, Chapter xi. ¹¹ May it not be hoped, that Dean Stanley may be induced to reconsider the following statement in his Lectures on the Jewish Church, First Series, p. 394, "Samuel dwelt in his own birthplace, and, like Gideon or like Micah, made it a sanctuary of his own?" cp. 2nd series, p. 83, where Uzziah's act (in touching the Ark, 2 Sam. vi. 7) is called an "unexplained sin?" and cp. his remarks on what is called Samuel's "anti-sacerdotal character," 1st series, p. 405. Surely, it is remarkable, that the restoration of the regular worship of God by the Priests and Levites, after a time of confusion, is ascribed in Holy Scripture to the influence of Samuel (see below, on 1 Chron. ix. 22).
INTRODUCTION TO THE

It is God’s ordinary will and desire, that men should receive grace, by means of those instruments and channels which He appoints for the dispensing and conveying it; and that they should receive it at the places, and in the manner, of His divine appointment. Men are tied to the use of the means which God appoints; but God’s power is not tied to the means which are appointed by Him. And though the human instruments and channels may fail, yet the Divine Agent and Source never fails. Nay, rather, the working of His Almighty power, and the abundance of His exhaustless love, are more magnified in days of human degeneracy; and it is then most clearly shewn, that God is the Almighty Agent and the Only Source of all grace to all.

This is precisely what was manifested in the days of Samuel. He had received a call from God, when He was ministering as a child before the Ark, in the Tabernacle at Shiloh. But, for the sins of the People and the Priesthood, the Ark was taken, the Tabernacle was removed, and Shiloh was dismantled and destroyed. And during the whole time of Samuel, the Ark was never again united to the Tabernacle. The reason for bringing the sacrifices to the door of the Tabernacle was set aside by the removal of the Ark, which was the very heart and soul of the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle had become like a cenotaph. There was no one place to which sacrifices could be brought in compliance with the Levitical Law. It was not till after Samuel’s death that the Law revived. The Ark was brought up by David to Mount Zion; but it was not till the Temple was built on Moriah, and the Ark was settled in it by Solomon, that the requirements of the Levitical Law, prescribing that sacrifices should be brought to the place which the Lord had chosen, could take effect.

Then the Law awoke, and after this choice of a place was made by God, and the Ark was settled there, then the offering of sacrifice in any other place, and by any other hands, than those of the family of Aaron (except by God’s express commission) was contrary to God’s will. Such an act would have been like the gainsaying of Korah. Such was the sin of Jeroboam. Hence, also, the punishment of Uzziah the king of Judah, smitten with leprosy, for presuming to perform a priestly act, namely, to burn incense.

Yet further. The offering of sacrifices in different places by Samuel, who was not a priest, and the favourable acceptance of those sacrifices by God, served another very important purpose of the highest kind. It not only showed God’s supremacy, and man’s subordination to Him, but it was preparatory to another higher and more spiritual dispensation, that of the Gospel, and of the priesthood of Christ. It weaned the minds of the faithful Israelites from dwelling on any one place in their own land, as the centre of the Visible Church, or from regarding one earthly family among themselves, such as that of Aaron, as the only priestly Ministry of God’s Sanctuary. It prepared them for the transfer of the priesthood from Aaron to Christ, and for the universal diffusion of God’s grace, and for the universal extension of His kingdom, in the days of the Messiah, when “in every place incense would be offered to His name, and a pure offering.”

Thus, the priesthood of Samuel was preparatory to the priesthood of Christ. The prophetic declaration of God Himself to Eli, the priest, at Shiloh, when the Tabernacle was profaned by his sons, was, “I will raise Me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in my heart, and in my mind, and I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before mine Anointed for ever.” This prophecy had indeed a preparatory accomplishment in Samuel, who was not of the family of Aaron, and who was specially raised up by God, in days of priestly degeneracy, to do priestly acts; and it had another fulfilment afterwards in Zadok; but it reached its consummation in Christ, Who was not of the seed of Aaron, or of the tribe of Levi, and Who was raised up by God, when the Jewish Church and priesthood were lying in degradation and confusion, and Who joined the priesthood and the kingdom in one everlasting bond of union, in Himself.

We are thus led on to observe, that the Book of Samuel occupies an unique place, and has a special value and interest, as revealing the Kingdom of Christ. It is the first book in Holy Scripture which declares the Incarnation of Christ as King—in a particular family—the family of David. It is the first book in Scripture, which announced that the Kingdom founded in Him, raised up from the seed of David, would be universal and everlasting. Here also the prophetic song of Hannah gives the clue to the interpretation of this history. “The Lord,” she says, “shall judge the ends of the earth;” that is, His kingdom will be established in all nations. “He shall give strength unto His King, and exalt the horn of His Anointed;”—the Messiah, or Christ; Who was to come of David, and sit on His throne for ever.

3 See below, on ch. iv. 6; vii. 9. 15; ix. 12; and note above, on Deut. xii. 5.
4 2 Chron. xxvi. 18—21.
5 Mal. i. 11.
6 See ch. ii. 35. See below, on Luke xi. 2.
7 See above, on Luke xi. 2.
8 See ch. ii. 10, and note there.
It was God's design that Israel in due time should have a king. God had promised to Abraham and to Jacob that kings should arise from them, and Jacob had foretold that "the sceptre should not depart from Judah till Shiloh came," in whom it was to be settled for ever; and Balaam had prophesied that "a sceptre should arise out of Israel;" and God Himself had been pleased to give laws preparatory to the establishment of the kingdom, and for the better regulation of it.

The sin of Israel in the days of Samuel with regard to the kingdom consisted in not waiting for God's time, in which He might think fit to give them a king. It consisted in antedating that season, by a rude seizure and impatient grasp of human anticipation, and in asking for a king in order that they might be like other nations, and that their king might lead them forth to battle, and deliver them from their enemies,—as if it was not a special privilege to be unlike other nations, in being directly under God's rule; and as if God had not always delivered them from their enemies, whenever they were obedient to Him!

But God often accommodates and adjusts His doings to men's devices, in order that they may see by experience how evil a thing it is to follow their own inclinations, instead of conforming to His will, and tarrying His leisure. So it was with Israel. God gave them a king in compliance with their wish, a king endued with many gifts and graces, and adapted by his physical strength and prowess to their carnal reliance on material force and support. The fair beginnings of Saul, his modesty, prudence, clemency, and success; his subsequent degeneracy when he was elated by victory, and puffed up by his royal dignity; his vain-glory, self-confidence, and disobedience to God speaking to him first by Samuel, and next in a direct command from Himself; his hypocrisy and formalism; his rejection and desertion by God; his visitation from an Evil Spirit; his envy, hatred, and malignant persecution of David, his deliverer and benefactor, and even of his own son; his desolation, distress, distraction, despondency, and despair; his resort to the witch of Endor for counsel from Samuel when dead, whom he had disobeyed when living; his shameful defeat by the Philistines, and his wretched death on Mount Gilboa by his own hand; and the succession of David in his room—all these events are full of deep moral interest, and fraught with warning, admonition, and instruction, both in faith and practice.

But the history of Saul's monarchy acquires fresh value for us, and is seen to have a profounder meaning, when it is viewed, as the ancient Christian Church has taught us to regard it, in its relation to Jesus Christ, who was foreshadowed by David and his hereditary kingdom, and who was promised to Abraham and Jacob, and whom Balaam pre-announced and proclaimed from afar, and of whom Hannah prophesied when she said, "The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth, and He shall give strength to His King, and exalt the horn of His Anointed."

Saul had no successor of his own line; and his kingdom was introductory to that of David, who had an uninterrupted succession even to the days of Christ. Saul foreshadowed the Jewish dispensation, preparatory to the Kingdom of Christ, and giving way to it. The Hebrew kingdom was contemplated in the counsels of God; the monarchy of Saul came in, as it were, accidentally and parenthetically. So it was with the Levitical Law. "It was added because of transgressions," it was preliminary and transitory, and introductory to the Kingdom of Christ.

The beginnings of the Jewish dispensation, as long as the Hebrew nation was humble, submissive, and obedient to God, were, like the beginnings of Saul, fair and promising, and were marked by extraordinary tokens of God's marvellous favour and protection. But it became self-confident and vain-glorious. It degenerated, like Saul. It persecuted the true David, and was forsaken and rejected by God. It resorted to false prophets. The Jewish Nation became like Saul at the Cave of Endor; and God, by the mouth of His prophets, and of Christ Himself, revealed to it its doom, as He had done to Saul by Samuel at that cave. The Jewish Nation fell by its own hand, and was spoiled by heathen armies, as Saul was by the Philistines. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself."

But God's mercy triumphed over man's sin. In the family of Saul there was a faithful remnant. Jonathan, the loving and beloved friend of David, he who was very pleasant unto David, and whose love to him "was wonderful, passing the love of women," stands forth in beautiful contrast to Saul, his father; and is a type of those faithful Israelites who loved Christ for His own sake.

Although the Jewish Nation was to melt away and be absorbed into Christ's Kingdom, as Jonathan's

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9 Gen. xviii. 6. 16; xxxv. 11.
1 See above, Gen. xlix. 10.
2 Num. xxiv. 17.
3 Deut. xvii. 14—20.
4 Ps. xlv. 16; see above, on Num. xxii. 20; and below, Rev. xxii. 11.
5 As will be seen in the following notes; see, for example, on ch. xv. 28; xx. 42; and below, p. xiv.
6 See below, Introduction to St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, p. 191.
7 See on Gal. iii. 19.
8 Hos. xiii. 9.
9 Ch. i. 26.
kingdom was merged in David's, yet those loving and faithful Jonathans believed the Divine David even when persecuted and rejected by His own people.

Saul of Tarsus, "of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews," first a persecutor of the Church, then an Apostle and Martyr for Christ, is the evangelical contrast to Saul of Gibeah. And the son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth, lame and impotent in his feet, and thus a striking contrast to the physical stature and strength of his grandfather Saul—but shewing his reverence for David by bowing before him when king, and admitted by David to be a constant guest in his palace at his own table—is surely a beautiful type of all true Israelites bending before Christ. The slowness by which David, who had been anointed in early youth to the Kingdom by Samuel, attained to his predicted Sovereignty, notwithstanding many hindrances on the part of Saul and others, which were overruled by God into helps for that attainment, is a remarkable evidence of the truth of Prophecy in the mouth of Samuel; and it was also a prophetic foreshadowing of the slow progress of the Kingdom of Christ, the Divine David, to its triumphant consummation.

Who can read of Samuel's visit to Bethlehem, and of David's private communion there, by the express appointment of God, without thinking of the spiritual union of Christ and the Divine David when born in privacy at Bethlehem? The successive unions of David, first at Bethlehem and afterwards twice at Hebron, first as King of Judah, next as King of all the Tribes of Israel, find their Evangelical counterpart in the successive unions of Jesus Christ. David, designated as King by Samuel the prophet, and miraculously preserved by God, and at length victorious and reigning at Jerusalem, after many years of danger and hair-breadth escapes, is a figure of Christ, resisted and persecuted, but finally, according to the voice of Prophecy, triumphant and supreme in the heavenly Jerusalem.

The victory of David over the Philistine Champion Goliath, defying the armies of Israel for forty days, is a rehearsal of Christ's Temptation and victory a thousand years afterwards.

The sweet music of David, exorcising the Evil Spirit which possessed Saul, is a melodious prelude to that Divine Voice which cast out Evil Spirits from the Saul of the Jewish nation. The persecutions which David endured from Saul are like prophetic revealings of the bitter malignity with which the true David was pursued by that nation. David's compassionate and forgiving spirit toward Saul, and his lament at his death, has its holy gushing-forth and overflow in Christ's tears over Jerusalem, and in His dying prayer for his murderers.

The ascent of David in triumph to Mount Zion, as recorded in this Book and celebrated in David's Psalms, is happily connected by the Christian Church with the Ascension of Christ to the heavenly Jerusalem, and with the Coming of the Holy Ghost from heaven.

The tardy and interrupted progress, by which the Ark of God was at length brought up to Zion, after many delays, checks, and hindrances, is a representation of the course of the Church of Christ in this world, in a long and weary pilgrimage, attended by many sorrows, trials, and human shortcomings and imperfections; but at length, after patient struggles, brought up to the altitude which the Divine David has already reached, and where He has prepared a place for her, and where she will rest for ever in an everlasting Temple built by Him Who is the true Solomon, or Prince of Peace, as well as the mighty Conqueror, the Divine David.

The divine promise of perpetuity and everlasting dominion to David's Seed follows the narrative of the ascent of the Ark to Mount Zion, and of David's desire to build a house for the Lord.

That promise has received its fulfilment in Christ, born of David's seed in David's City. The victories of David, consequent on the settlement of the Ark on Zion, have their full spiritual accomplishment in the triumphs of Christ and of His Gospel, and will be consummated at the Great Day, when Christ will put all enemies under His feet, for of Him the Lord says, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion;" "Sit thou on My right hand till I make thy foes Thy footstool."

The history proceeds to relate the sin of David. This narrative belongs to that class of Scripture records which serve the purpose of shewing, that, though the most eminent Saints of the Old Testament were Types of Christ, yet that they fall far short of the Divine Antitype. Their failings remind us that they are figures and shadows, and are not the substance itself. Their human blunders teach us not to dwell on them, but to look forward and upward to the High and Holy One,

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1 See below, on ch. xiv. 1; xviii. 1—4; xx. 42.
2 See below, on ix. 2; x. 11, 16.
3 See below, on 2 Sam. ix. 6.
4 See this exhibited in detail in the notes on 1 Sam. xvii. 4.
5 16. 40—51.
6 See below, on 2 Sam. vii., Preliminary Note.
7 See below, Preliminary Note to 2 Sam. vii., and that chapter throughout.
8 2 Sam. viii.
9 2 Sam. viii, Ps. ii. 6.
in whom no spot or stain of imperfection is seen. In the unsullied purity of Christ there is always a contrast to what is faulty in the Type. We have seen this already in the history of the Patriarchs and of the Judges.

So it is with David, regarded as a figure of Christ. David sinned by lust and murder, and the history of his sin serves to bring out more clearly the purity and love of Christ. It is not without a spiritual meaning, that the holy Evangelist, St. Matthew, introduces the name of her who had been the wife of Uriah, in the genealogy of Christ, and relates that she was the mother of Solomon. St. Matthew reminds us there, that the Son of God vouchsafed to take our nature in a line which had been tainted by the sins of a Tamar, a Rahab, and a Bathsheba, and He thus shows that penitent sinners of every nation may find mercy in Him.

Our Divine David joined to Himself a Spouse formerly stained by sin, like Bathsheba, and united her to Himself in pure mystical wedlock, and begat by her a holy seed, a “Jedidiah, beloved of the Lord,” who was also called Solomon; for from this union of Christ with our Nature we have peace with God, and are “accepted in the Beloved.”

The above remarks may be extended to the remaining scenes of David’s life. David is punished for his sin, by the rebellion of Absalom his son, and by the revolt of his people, and is driven from Jerusalem. This history brings before our eyes in many particulars a picture of the treatment which the Divine David, Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, experienced from His own children the Jews, and from His own city, Jerusalem. The parallelism in the incidents of the two histories is too striking to escape the notice of even the most cursory reader. The return of David to Jerusalem, after the rebellion of Absalom, and after Absalom himself was slain, and the eagerness of Judah to receive him, and the mention of the loyalty of those who welcomed him in his return, and the sorrow of David for his son’s miserable end, have already in part received an evangelical accomplishment in the overthrow of Christ’s enemies; and exhibit to the inner eye a view of His tender compassion for their sufferings consequent on their rebellion. They have also a prophetic significance, and will hereafter be seen to have a complete fulfilment in Christ, the true King of Judah, received and adored as such by the faithful remnant of His ancient people the Jews turning to Him with contrite hearts, and saying, with plaudits of joy, “Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the Highest.”

Some persons have expressed surprise that the death of David is not mentioned in this book. It contains his hymn of thanksgiving for the mercies of his past life. It sets down his “last words.” It concludes with a narrative of the erection of the altar on the threshing-floor of Araunah on the cessation of the pestilence, and describes the offering of sacrifices on the site purchased by David, the spot where the Temple was afterwards erected by Solomon his son. But it says nothing of David’s death.

Why was this?

The reason will appear from a consideration of the true character of this book.

The Book of Samuel is connected with the Book of Judges by its beginning, and with the Book of Kings by its ending; and is yet a well-organized and complete whole in itself. It is not (as some have most erroneously imagined) a congeries of ill-digested materials, and of fruitless repetitions. It is a prophetic history of real events, preparing the way for the Priesthood and Kingdom and Prophetic Office of Christ; and foreshadowing them. We have seen in the history of the Pentateuch that there is no break or interruption in the narrative, but the history of one Patriarch gradually melts into the history of another; and by this blending together and shading off of one history into another, we have a clearer prophetic view of the character and office of Christ, in their various phases, which could not be in any degree adequately represented by any one of the Patriarchs individually. We shall also see that the Prophet Elijah passes almost imperceptibly into his successor the prophet Elisha, by the transmission of his mantle and of his spirit, so that into the sons of the prophets could say, “The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha;” and thus Elisha and Elisha together symbolize the unbroken continuation of Christ’s working after His Ascension, and the manifesta-

1 See above, on Gen. xxvii. 17; and Introduction to Judges, pp. 78, 79.
2 See below, Preliminary Note to 2 Sam. xi.
3 See 2 Sam. xxii. 25. Eph. i. 6.
4 See below, Preliminary Note to ch. xxv.
5 See note below, on ch. xviii. 33.
6 See 2 Sam. xix. 14, 15, 31.
7 See 2 Sam. xxii.
8 2 Sam. xxiii.
9 2 Sam. xxiii. 1-7.
10 See on 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. 18–25.
11 See 2 Chron. lii. 1.
12 See below, note on Gen. xxxiv. 1.
13 E. g. Bertheau, De Wette, Gramberg, Graf, Theanis, and others: cp. Davidson, Introduction, ii. 513. This notion has been ably refuted by Dr. Keil, Einleitung in d. a. Test., pp. 166—170: cp. Häusnerick, Einleitung, ii. 133–149.
14 The reader will bear in mind that these Books, and the Books of Joshua, Judges, and Kings, are called “the former Prophets” by the Hebrews: see Hengster, Thesaurus, p. 453.
15 See above, note on Gen. xxxiv. 1.
tion of His presence and spirit in the Apostles and their successors to the end of the world. We have seen also that the virtue of Christ's One and All-sufficient Sacrifice, with all its manifold meanings and phases, which could not be represented by one kind of sacrifice in the Levitical Law, is symbolized by a group of various sacrifices clustering together in the Levitical Ritual.  

So it is with the histories of David and Solomon. The one melts into the other. There is no break in the story. David utters his last words; but he does not die. Solomon succeeds to the throne of Israel, while David, his father, is still alive. David rises again, as it were, into youth and glory in Solomon; and so the double character of Christ, the King of all faithful Israelites, the true David, and also the true Solomon, is symbolized. In David we see Christ the Conqueror—the Man of War—the Lord of Hosts. In Solomon we see Him Who is the Builder of the Temple of His Church, the all-wise, and all-glorious King, the Prince of Peace. The history of the glorious end of David is reserved for the Book of Chronicles, where he is seen, on the eve of death, with Solomon at his side, in the assembly of the Princes and People of Israel, at Jerusalem; and so the Father and the Son are, as it were, blended into one.

There is one point more, intimately connected with what has been said, which seems to demand attention. The Book of Samuel marks a memorable epoch in Hebrew history in the institution of a particular office, continued thenceforth for many hundred years, the office of Prophet.

This institution of the Prophetic office was a natural consequence of the degeneracy of the Priesthood, in such times as those of Eli’s sons; and it was a result of the erection of the earthly Monarchy, in Saul. Hebrew Prophecy is supplementary to the defects of the Hebrew Priesthood; it discharges its functions in times of national confusion and ruin; and it was directive of the actions, and corrective of the aberrations, of the Hebrew Monarchy and Hebrew People. It was to the Hebrew Priesthood, and to the Hebrew Monarchy, in a far higher sense, what the most enlightened Equity is to human Law. It was to them what the calm wisdom of the lyrical Chorus in the Greek drama was to the frailties of the actors in the dialogue. It was an impersonation of the Eternal Godhead itself; supplying the defects of sinful humanity, and controlling its passions, and regulating its practice, and punishing its sins.

Those Hebrew Dispensations—the Kingdom, the Priesthood, the Prophetical Office—were only for a time; and they all had their appropriate functions in preparing the way for Christ, the Universal Prophet, Priest, and King. Christ is the Eternal King; His is the never-failing Priesthood. He is the all-wise Prophet. In Christ all the attributes of Samuel, as Prophet and as Priest (raised up from another family than that of Aaron) are united with the royal prerogatives of David and Solomon. In Christ’s Priesthood there are no defects to be supplied; in His Kingdom there are no errors to be rectified; and therefore the Hebrew Kingdom, Priesthood, and Prophecy, are all concentrated in Christ; they coalesce, and are harmonized, and dwell together in loving union in Him, to Whom all the Prophets bear witness by their words and deeds, and in Whom all the Kings, Priests, and Prophets of the Hebrew Dispensation culminate, as their consummation, and of Whom Moses said to Israel, “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thy brethren like unto me; unto Him shall ye hearken.” (Deut. xviii. 15—19. See Acts iii. 22; vii. 27.)

Such considerations as these, which have now been submitted to the reader, in reference to the office and acts of Samuel, Saul, and David, whose history forms the subject of this Book, seem to suggest strong arguments for its divine Inspiration. An uninspired Annalist could hardly have treated the history of Samuel, Saul, and David in such a manner as to display preparatory and prophetic foreshadowings of the Office and Work of Christ, as Prophet, Priest, and King, and of the history of Judaism in relation to Him. The history of this Book is written in such a method as to be pre-adjusted in a marvellous manner to the mysterious revelations of the Gospel, which was preached to the world a thousand years after the events which are here narrated.

If the remarks here offered are well grounded, and they are little more than an expansion and development of what the Ancient Church has taught on this subject, then here surely is a proof

7 See above, on Leviticus, Introduction, pp. ii. and iii, ch. iii. 1.  
8 See below, Preliminary Note to 1 Chron. xxviii.; and the end of that Book.  
9 See below, on 1 Sam. ix. 1; and on 1 Kings xvii., Preliminary Note, and above on Judg. viii.: cp. Bengelkenberg, Authentic. i. 146.  
1 As, for example, the language of S. Jerome (Epist. 50 ad Paulinum iv. p. 572), "Samuel (i.e. the Book of Samuel) in Heli mortaō, et in occasione Saul, veterem Legem abolitum monstrat; porre in Sadeh, atque David, novi Sacerdotii novique Imperii Sacramenta testatur:" cp. S. Augustine in Ps. li., and in Ps. lvi., and especially S. Augustine de Civitate Dei, xvii. 4: "Procursus civitatis Dei, ubi pervenit ad Regum tempora, quando David, Saula reprobata, ita regnum primus obtinuit, ut ejus posteri in terrae Jerusalem diuturnae successione regnanti, dedict figuram re gestae significavit aequus praemuniantis de rerum mutatione futuram, quod attestat ad duo Testamenta, Vetus et Novum, ubi Sacerdotium Regnumque mutaturum est per Sacerdotem eundemque Regem, Novum et Semipternum, qui est Christus Iesus."
that this Book was composed under the guidance of Him with Whom "a thousand years are as one day."

On the Authorship and Date of the Books of Samuel.

Many early Expositors, Jewish and Christian, have supposed that there is a reference to the Books of Samuel in 1 Chron. xxix. 29; "Now the acts of David the King, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the Seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the Seer;" and they were of opinion that the books now called the books of Samuel owed their origin to Samuel, Nathan, and Gad. The Hebrew word here rendered book is dibri, which may mean either words or acts. Indeed, in the former part of this verse it is rendered acts in our version. Inasmuch, however, as Nathan and Gad were prophets, whose duty it was to speak God's word rather than to act as rulers of the people, there seems good reason to prefer the rendering words or books in this particular passage. And though we cannot speak with certainty on the subject, it seems unreasonable to regard as altogether erroneous the opinion above recited, that the author of the Chronicles, in the passage just quoted, may refer to written compositions of Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, and that these writings are extant in these books which bear the name of Samuel.

That the books of Samuel were written at an early period, considerably before the date of the composition of the books of Kings, is almost universally admitted. The style is of the purest Hebrew, free from Chaldaism. It has been argued by some, that the date of its composition cannot be earlier than the days of Jeroboam, on account of the expression in 1 Sam. xxxvii. 6, "Wherefore Ziklag pertaineth to the Kings of Judah unto this day." But this does not seem to be a valid inference. The historian is speaking of the Kings of Judah, as contradistinguished from the rulers of the Philistines, and not as contrasted with the Kings of Israel. Even in David's time Judah was regarded as entire in itself. Arguments for a date later than the beginning of Solomon's reign, have been attempted to be deduced by some from the use of the word nabi (prophet) in 1 Sam. ix. 9, and from the phrase mentioned as a proverb, "Is Saul among the prophets?" (in x. 12) and from the expression, "unto this day" (1 Sam. v. 5; vi. 18; xxx. 25; 2 Sam. iv. 3; vi. 8). But these appear to be of little weight. It seems most probable that the Books of Samuel were written at intervals during the times of Samuel, Saul, David, and the earlier years of Solomon.

The period comprised in this book is about 120 years, terminating at about b.c. 1016.

The ancient commentaries on these books are specified below, p. 1, to which may be added the two homilies of Origen; the Questiones of Thodoret and S. Augustin, the Apologia Sancti David by S. Ambrose, the Commentaries of S. Gregory the Great, and of Isidorus Hispalensis, and of Bede; the expositions of Bonfrater, Sanctius, Serarius, A Lapide; of Calvin, P. Martyr, Brentius, Burmann, Willett, S. Schmidt, Drusius, Bp. Patrick, Le Clerc, and of the more recent works of Henschel, Königsfeld, Thennius, and Keil.


S. Augustine (de Civitate Dei, xvii. 4), having admired the poverty and meagerness of that kind of expository Criticism, which would interpret the Song of Hannah as a mere hymn of thanksgiving for the birth of a child to herself, instead of regarding it as a divine prophecy, reaching forward from her own times to Christ, asks this question, whether the reader of this Scripture ought not to recognize in Hannah a figure of the Church of God? "Nonne agnostis per hanc mulierem, cujus etiam nomine, id est Anna, Gratia ejus interpretatur, ipsum Civitatem Dei, cujus Rex est et conditor Christus, ipsum postremo Dei Gratiam prophetica spiritu locutam, a qua superi ab omnibus ut clamat, et humiles impluant ut surgat? Dicat ergo Ecclesia Christi, Civitas Regis Magni, gratia plena, prope fecundam, dicat quod tantum ante de se prophetatur per os hujus præ matris agnostis;" and then S. Augustin proceeds to show how the song of praise of Hannah for the birth of Samuel, is in a large and prophetic sense a song of the Church for the birth of Christ, and thus concludes: "Hic Anna prophetavit, Samuelis mater, sancti viri, in quo tunc est figura mutatio Veteris Sacerdotii, et nune impeta, quando infirma est (Symmachus Judaicus) quae multa erat in filiis, ut novum laboret in Christo Sacerdotium sterilis, quae peperit septicum;"
THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL,

OTHERWISE CALLED,

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

I. \^ NOW there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was \^ Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, \^ an Ephrathite: \^ And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

\^ And this man went up out of his city \^e yearly \^d to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in \^e Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were the priests of the sanctuary there.

\^a 1 Chron. 6. 27. b 1 Chron. 6. 27. c Ex. 23. 14. d Deut. 16. 16. e Luke 2. 41. f Numb. from year to year. g Deut. 12. 5, 6, 7. h Josh. 18. 1.

\[1^\text{Under this name (Jeromiam) is here cited the author of the "Questiones Hebræicas in Libros Regum," which are contained in the editions of S. Jerome, App. tom. ii., ed. Bened., Paris, 1639. In some recent publications these "Questions" have been attributed to S. Jerome.}

\[2^\text{In the following notes on the Books of Samuel and Kings the reader will also find references to the valuable commentary attributed to Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons in the fifth century. It was written by a later author, a contemporary of S. Gregory, to whom he refers, lib. iii. c. 22; they may be found in Bibl. Patr. Max. vol. vi. pp. 999—1014. The commentary of Angelomus, which has also been used, is contained in Bibl. Patr. Max. xv. 309—413.}

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Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there. And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the Lord had shut up her womb. And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the Lord had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons? So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and he shall have no razor come upon his head.

And it came to pass, as she did continue praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved not, but her voice was heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my heart, and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the Lord, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the Lord remembered her. Wherefore it came to pass, that the time was come after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked of the Lord.

And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. But Hannah went not up; for she said

6. her adversary also provoked her sore] Observe the evil effects of polygamy; cp. Gen. iv. 19; 23; xxxviii. 8.
9. by a post of the temple of the Lord] we hear a portal of the palace of Jehovah. The Tabernacle is called a palace, not on account of its external splendour, but as the royal residence of the Lord, the King of Israel. Cp. iii. 3. Ps. v. 7. Genesis 22. Keil, 19.
11. all the days of his life] Samuel was a Levite, but as such, he was not bound to the service of the sanctuary before he was twenty years of age, and his term of service did not extend beyond fifty (Num. viii. 24, 25); but his mother dedicated him to the Lord's service all the days of his life, not only as a Levite, but as a Nazarite.
20. Samuel] i.e. heard of God; from shama, to hear, and El, God (Genes. 833, 886. Joseph. Antt. v. 10, 3, who interprets the name by shearim): cp. v. 27.

the younger son of Aaron (1 Chron. xxiv. 3), which had now been advanced above that of Eleazar; but that of Eleazar afterward recovered its precedence. See above on Num. xxvii. 12, 13; and below, 1 Kings ii. 27. Joseph. Antt. v. 11. 5. Hengst., Auth. ii. 74, 75. Keil, p. 30.

Josephus says that there were three high priests between Phinehas and Eleazar, Abiazer, Bekki, and Uzzi, who were of the line of Eleazar (1 Chron. vi. 50, 51), so that Eli was the first high priest of the line of Ithamar. Eli was judge of Israel (v. 18) for forty years, as well as high priest.

The 'priests of the Lord' rather, priests of the Lord; there were other priests beside them; this is necessary to be observed in regard to the objections of some, that Eli and his sons would not have sufficed to perform the priestly functions of the sanctuary; cp. Hengst., Auth. ii. 63. It is certain, however, that Eleazar and Phinehas were among the priests, yet Elkanah and Hannah did not separate themselves from the service of the sanctuary where they ministered—a lesson against schism: cp. note below on Matt. x. 4.

4. offered] peace-offerings. 2 Sam. vii. 18; cp. Lev. vii. 31; D oct. xii. 11.

5. a worthy portion] literally, one portion for two persons; Genesis 63; Keil, 18; and so Syriac.
unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will
bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever.
23 And *Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good, tarry until thou have weaned him; only the Lord establish his word. So
the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him. 24 And when she had weaned him, she 6 took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto b the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young. 25 And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. 26 And she said, Oh my lord, 
as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, and brought unto the Lord. 27 For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: 28 Therefore also I have 1 lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth, he shall be lent to the Lord. And he a worshipped the Lord there.

II. 1 And Hannah b prayed, and said,

My heart rejoiceth in the Lord,
Mine horn is exalted in the Lord,
by the gracefulness of this song of Hannah, as if it were of too general and comprehensive a character to be suited to the occasion which it succeeded—the high threats and bitter sarcasms of the Rabbi who assert that it must have been produced by some great national victory of the Hebrew people, or by such an event as the overthrow of Goliath (Stanza, Jewish Church, p. 375; and note to Deut. xii. 11). The true characteristic of Sacred Poetry is, that it is not egotistical. It merges the individual in the Nation, and in the Church Universal. It looks forward from the special occasion which prompts the utterance of thanksgiving, and extends and carries on its power and holy sympathy, into a large and sympathetic outburst of praise to God for His love to all mankind in Christ. Like a pebble cast into a clear and calm lake, it sends forth concentric rings of waves, ever enlarging toward the margin, so that the particular merits of the individual produces ever-expanding undulations of praise. This Magnificat of Hannah is conceived in this spirit. It is not only a song of thanksgiving, it is also a prophecy: it is an utterance of the Holy Ghost moving within her, and making her maternal joy on the birth of Samuel to overgrow in outpourings of thankfulness to God for those greater blessings in CHRIST, of which that birth was an earnest and a pledge; see Augustine de Civ. Dixi. 4; and the remarks of S. Gregory, Euthynius, Angelousus, Sancius, and others L. In this respect it may be combined with the Song of Moses (Deut. xxxii.) and the Song of David: see Preliminary Note to 2 Sam. xxii. “Anna typum Ecclesiae portat.” S. Cyprian, de Orat. Donini, 146.

The Books of Samuel contain certain other divine songs: see xxiii. 7. 2 Sam. i. 17—27; iii. 33; xxxii.; xxxiii. 1—7. Some have supposed them to have been collected and preserved in the “Book of Jasher” (Dr. Lee on Inspiration, p. 406). My heart rejoiceth in the Lord! All the joy of the saints is in the Lord (S. Chrys., Hom. 3, de Annà). “Huius verum est gaudium, quod non de creaturá sed de Creatore suscipitur” (S. Bernard, Epist. 115).

The Targum of Jonathan well says here, “Hannah prayed in the spirit of prophecy, and said,” and the same Chaldee Paraphrase interprets this song as a prophetic announcement of the victories to be gained by Jehovah and His people over their enemies (the Philistines and other Heathen nations), even to the last days; and sums up by saying, “He will give strength to His kings, and will increase the kingdom of His Messiah” (Kimchi). It was, therefore, the opinion of the ancient Hebrew Church that this song is a prophecy of Christ. And ancient Christian Expositors recognize in Hannah a figure of the Christian Church, contrasted with the Jewish Church, and blessing God for His mercies in the Gospel. “Manifestissima Annas in cauto suo mutationem Veteris Testamenti, vel sacerdòli, in Novum Testamentum, vel sacerdotum, qui est Christus” (prophetae viri) (Aquinas).

— Mine horn ] Concerning this figure which first appears here, and reappears in David's Song (2 Sam. xxii. 3), and again in the Song of Zacharias in the Gospel (Luke i. 69), see below on 2 Sam. xxii. 2.

He is dedicated to God. 1 SAMUEL I. 25—28. II. 1. Hannah's song of praise.

The Song of Hannah. Cf. II. 1. And Hannah prayed, and said] This Prayer and Song of Hannah is, as it were, one of the golden links which connect the song of Sarah, on the birth of Isaac (see above, Gen. xxi. 5—6), with the Magnificat of the Blessed Virgin, after the assumption of the Virgin Elizabeth, saluting her as the Mother of Christ: see Luke i. 46—55. Let this divine Song of Hannah be read in the Septuagint, and then let the Magnificat of the Blessed Virgin be read in St. Luke's original, and the connexion of the two will be more clearly recognized. The Holy Ghost inspired both, and he leads on the devout mind from the birth of Samuel to that of Christ. See, for example, the beginnings of each song—

Another link is the triumphal Song of Miriam, after the passage of the Red Sea, and the victory of Jehovah and His people over their enemies (Exod. xv. 20, 26). Another is the Song of Deborah, praising the Lord for delivering His people by the hand of a woman: see Judg. v. All these poetical hymns of thanksgiving, uttered by women, are celebrations of joyful events, which are prophetic foretokens of the universal deliverance and victory achieved by the Incarnation of Christ, the Promised Seed of the woman (Gen. iii. 15).

This is their true meaning, and here is a reply to the objection of some (such as Eruld and Theresia) who except

b Luke 2. 22.
  c ver. 13, 25.
  d ch. 2. 11, 18.
  e 2 Sam. 7. 8.
  f Ex. 21. 6.
  g Ps. 118. 7, 29.
  h Josh. 18. 1.
  i Luke 2. 22.
  j Gen. 42. 15.
  k Matt. 2. 4, 6.
  l Ps. 22. 10, 112, 9.
  m Deut. 12. 5, 6.
  o Phil. 4. 6.
My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; Because I "rejoice in thy salvation.
2 e There is none holy as the Lord: For there is 'none beside thee:
Neither is there any rock like our God.

3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly;
5 Let not 'arrogancy come out of your mouth:
For the Lord is a God of knowledge,
And by him actions are weighed.

The bows of the mighty men are broken,
And they that stumbled are girded with strength.

They that were full have hired out themselves for bread;
And they that were hungry ceased:
So that "the barren hath born seven;
And 'she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

The Lord killeth, and maketh alive:
He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

The Lord "maketh poor, and maketh rich:
He bringeth low, and lifteth up.

And lifteth up the poor out of the dust,
To set them among princes,
And to make them inherit the throne of glory:
For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
And he hath set the world upon them.

He will keep the feet of his saints,
And the wicked shall be silent in darkness;
For by strength shall no man prevail.

The adversaries of the Lord shall be 'broken to pieces;
Out of heaven shall he thunder upon them:
The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth;
And he shall give strength unto his king,
And exalt the horn of his anointed.

2. Neither is there any rock like our God] This figure of the Hebrew is another connecting link which joins together this song, and the song of David, and all of them with Christ: see above, Deut. xxxii. 4; and Preliminary Note to 2 Sam. xxii., and c. 32 of that chapter.

3. Talk no more so exceeding proudly] Hannah generalizes her reply to the taunts of her adversary, who had provoked her for what was the Lord's doing (for "the Lord had shut up her womb," 6), into a lesson of moderation to all who boast themselves against God, who is a God of knowledge, and whose acts are just.

Prophetically these words may be applied to the Christian Church reproving the arrogancy of the Synagogue (Angelomus).
— Let not arrogancy] The negative (not expressed in the Hebrew text) is implied in the foregoing member of the sentence. In the text is lo with an aleph (signifying not), instead of lo with a va (signifying to him). And this passage is reckoned by the Masoretes as one of those fifteen places in which this confusion exists. Cp. Exod. xxi. 8, and Amicitiae, Dissert. p. 469.

by his actions are weighed] that is, His actions are all rightly balanced, and judged (Sept., Vulg., Theodoret, Koil). Or, man's actions are weighed by Him in the balance of His judgment (Targum, Syriac, A Lapide, Ewald). Cp. Prov. xvi. 2; xvii. 2; xxiv. 12.
3 9 With these words of Hannah compare those of Mary, recognizing in her own exaltation a specimen of God's general dealings in raising up the lowly and abasing the proud (Luke i. 55).

5. ceased] i.e. to be hungry,
7, 8. He bringeth low, and lifteth up] The Septuagint has λειτουργεῖ πρὸς τοὺς κατακραυγούμενους αὐτοῦ. Thus the Septuagint Version helps us to connect Hannah and her song of praise with the Blessed Virgin Mary, and her Magnificat, in which we read, κατακραυγεῖς ἀπὸ δρόμων καὶ φωναὶ παντοκράτοροι (Luke i. 52).

Hannah, the type of the Christian Church, prophesies the abasement of the pride and self-righteousness of the Synagogue, and the graces and glory of the meek, who believe in Christ (Origen, Theodoret, Augustine, Angelus, A Lapide).

8. the pillars of the earth] a figurative expression, derived from a palace or temple. The will of God (says S. Basil in Hesem, Hom. 1) is the base and column on which the earth rests. The adversaries of the Lord] The word JEHOVAH stands emphatically at the beginning of this sentence, as in re. 6, 7.
— shall he thunder] fulfilled literally in this history: see vii.
10. — he shall give strength unto his king, And exalt the horn of his anointed] Thus, in this heavenly-inspired song, Hannah prophecies that God in His own appointed time would raise up a king (His king) to His people; and thus this holy and pious woman, in this psalm of praise to God for mercies foreseen as well as past, and in her devout acknowledgment that God only is the Rock (c. 2), and that it is the sole prerogative of God to raise up Princes (vv. 6—8), and to give them
And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. \(^7\) And the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest. \(^8\) Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; \(^9\) they knew not the Lord. \(^10\) And the priest's custom with the people was, \(^a\) that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand; \(^b\) And he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; \(^c\) all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither. \(^d\) Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to rost for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw. \(^e\) And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat \(^f\) presently, and \(^g\) then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force. \(^h\) Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great \(^i\) before the Lord: for men \(^j\) abhorred the offering of the Lord. \(^k\) But Samuel ministered before the Lord, \(^l\) being a child, \(^m\) girded with a linen ephod. \(^n\) Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she \(^o\) came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. \(^p\) And Eli \(^q\) blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The Lord give thee seed of this woman for the || loan which is \(^r\) lent to the Lord. And they went unto their own house. \(^s\) And the Lord \(^t\) visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel \(^u\) grew before the Lord.

Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with \(^v\) the women that \(^w\) assembled at the door of the tabernacle.
enemy's hand" (Ps. lxxvii. 61, 62). He allowed the Ark to be taken by the Philistines, and it was never restored to Shiloh. "The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage. Their Priests (Hophni and Phinehas) were slain with the sword, and there were no widows to make lamentation" (ver. 63, 61).

25. And he said unto them | Eli was the Judge and Priest; and he was bound, in his double character, to punish his sons, and to vindicate the honour of God; but he did not follow up his words with deeds, and he encouraged them by impunity. Cp. the remarks of the Rev. R. W. Evers, Scrup. Btg. i. 114.

26. the judge shall judge him | or, rather, God shall judge him; shall decide between one man and another; and here is place for intercession. The aggrieved party may himself become a mediator for the offender, as Moses was for Miriam when she had spoken against his sister (Num. xx. 11, 12). A man may intercede with God for remission of a penalty due for injury to himself; but who shall venture to entreat for one who has outraged the majesty of God? On the senses of the Hebrew word used in both these clauses, poet., to judge, and in Isaiah, to intercede, see Genesis xxiv. 5.


30. I said indeed] God's promises are conditionable on obedience, as his threats may be averted by repentance (Joah iii. 9, 10).

31. the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thine father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever. And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind:

of the congregation. 23 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. 24 Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people || to transgress. 25 If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them. 26 And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord, and also with men. 27 And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? 28 And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and I gave unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? 29 Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? 30 Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. 31 Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thine father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever. And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind:
This prophecy was fulfilled primarily in Samuel. Samuel, in the interval of confusion (when the regular exercise of the Levitical Ritual and Priesthood was suspended, by the destruction of Shiloh and by the separation of the Ark from the Tabernacle), was raised up in an extraordinary manner, by special commission from God, to perform priestly acts. It had a secondary fulfilment in Zadok, who, on account of his faithfulness to the house of David, was placed by Solomon in the room of Abiathar (1 Kings ii. 27).

But it can only be said to have its full and final accomplishment in Christ, who is the Divine Samuel, and the faithful Priest—the true Zadok, or Righteous One, who has superseded the Aaronic priesthood, and “abideth a Priest for ever” (Heb. vii. 11—28); and has united the Priesthood with the Kingdom everlasting. *S. Hippolytus* (ed. Lagarde, p. 157); *Theodoret*, Qu. 7; and *S. Augustine* of Cev. Dei xvii. 5, who has commented at large on this prophecy in a Christian sense; and see also *Angelous and A Lapide*, and the notes below on 1 Kings ii. 57.

36. *And it shall come to pass* This was fulfilled literally in the distress which afflicted the family of Eli, and in the massacre of his descendants at Nob (xxii. 19); but it is fulfilled in a larger sense in the submission of the Aaronic priesthood to Him “Who abideth a Priest for ever,” and in their humble resort to Him for spiritual food and sustenance, especially in His Holy Word and Sacraments. The curse is taken away, and is changed into blessing, in Christ. *S. Augustine and Theodoret*, Qu. 7; and so *S. Gregory and Procopius* in A Lapide.

**Ch. III. 1. the child Samuel.** He was then twelve years old, says *Josephus* (v. 10—20).

If this was the case, this vision vouchsafed to Samuel, and this message sent by God through him to Eli in the Tabernacle, may suggest a comparison between him at this time and our Blessed Lord when a child of twelve years old, in the Temple, manifesting His Divine Wisdom, so that “all were astonished at His understanding and answers,” and exostupulating with His mother, “Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?” (Luke ii. 46—49.) and, as the child Samuel was not elated by this vision and revelation vouchsafed to him in the Temple, but went humbly to Eli; and, when it was morning, did the daily work prescribed to him (v. 15), so the child Jesus, after the honour paid Him in the Temple, “went down to Nazareth, and was subject to *h* Mary and Joseph” (Luke ii. 51).

— precious] race.

— no open vision] The prophetic vision was not open, extended (cp. Prov. vi. 10), but was contracted on account of the sin of the Priests and people.

2. *his eyes began to wax dim* Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

11. *And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel*; at 2 Kings 21. 12. Jer. 10. 3.
which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. 12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: † when I begin, I will also make an end. 13 || For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he † restrained them not. 14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house a shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever. 15 And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision. 16 Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I. 17 And he said, What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: * God do so to thee, and † more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee. 18 And Samuel told him † every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, ¶ It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good.

19 And Samuel grew, and † the Lord was with him, * and did let none of his words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. 21 And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord. IV. 1 And the word of Samuel † came to all Israel.

Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside a Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek. 2 And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when † they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of † the army in the field about four thousand men. 3 And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherewith hath the Lord smitten us to day before the Philistines? Let us † fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it


The massacre of Eli's descendants by Saul, at Nob, was in part a fulfilment of this prophecy (see xxii. 19).

20. from Dan even to Beer-sheba] from the northern to the southern extremity of the land (see Judg. xx. 1).

Samuel is established to be a Prophet.

— that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord— A very important statement. What Samuel did in offering sacrifices, &c. (see vii. 9), was not (as some seem to imagine) an irregular intrusion into the priestly office. But in a time of great degeneracy and confusion, temporal and spiritual, when the Priesthood itself was polluted, and when the Tabernacle was defiled by deadly sins, and when, in consequence of those sins, the priests were slain by the sword, and the Ark of God was taken, and Shiloh itself was destroyed, and when the exercise of the ordinary functions of the Levitical priesthood was in abeyance, Samuel was specially raised up by God, and received an extraordinary commission from Him who is the Author of all priestly power and authority, to do what he did in maintaining the worship of God; and "all Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba," knew, by visible tokens, that Samuel "was established to be a prophet of the Lord," that is, an interpreter and expounder of God's will to Israel. Observe also what follows; "H. the Lord appeared again literally, added to appear, and He revealed Himself to Samuel by the Word of the Lord, by audible manifestations. This was done in Shiloh, the appointed place of Divine worship. Samuel derived his extraordinary commission from God, in His own House. Consider the circumstances recorded in this chapter. "The Word of God was precious in those days; there was no open vision" (e. 1). God breaks through the silence of many years and reveals Himself to Samuel. Wherefore was this? Samuel had a childlike faith. Therefore he was very dear to God. The words are remarkable, "the child was a child" (see i. 24), and "he grew before the Lord" (ii. 21, 29); he was a child in innocence, humility, simplicity, and holiness. He was holy, amid scenes of unholiness. In spite of the pernicious examples of Eli's sons, the priests of God, the child stood firm; he was true to God in the most trying circumstances. Therefore God revealed Himself to him. The child Samuel was preferred to the aged Eli, the high priest and judge; and thus (as Theodoret remarks) God showed that holy childhood is better than hoar hairs. God revealed to Samuel the things which concerned Eli. See here the fruits of obedience. He was "wiser than the aged," and had "more understanding than his teachers," because he "kept God's commandments" (Ps. cxix. 99, 100), and he was not elated by his revelations: he was meek and docile as before, reverent and dutiful to Eli, who was treated with contempt by his own sons. Therefore he grew on, and the Lord was with him, and gave him more revelations, and "all Israel knew that he was established to be a prophet of the Lord."
cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies. 4 So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring forth from thence the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, b which dwelleth between the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. b And when the ark of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again. e And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And they understood that the ark of the Lord was come into the camp. 7 And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing † heretofore. 8 Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these are the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.

4 6 For strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: † quit yourselves like men, and fight.

And the Philistines fought and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. 11 And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, † were slain.

God had wrought such wonders of old, especially in the passage of Jordan, and in the overthrow of Jericho. But they forget that God only works for those who obey Him. They trusted in the outward means. But God would show that the outward means are of no avail without inward holiness, and therefore He suffered them to be smitten, and allowed the Ark to fall into the hands of their enemies. 12 "Trust ye not in lying words," says the prophet (Jer. vii. 4), "saying, The Temple of the Lord;" but if ye thoroughly amend your ways, "Then will I cause you to dwell in this place for ever and ever" (c. 7). It is observable that God there refers to this history, and says, "Go ye now to Shiloh, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel." (c. 12).

Probably David remembered this history, when, with a clearer faith, he refused to allow the Ark to be carried with him in his retreat before Absalom out of Jerusalem; and even when the priests had brought it forth, he commanded them to carry it back to its place, saying, "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me again and show me both him and his habitation." (2 Sam. xxv. 25).

David, without the Ark visibly present, but with the unseen help of Him who was enthroned on the Ark, triumphed, and was restored to Jerusalem and the Ark. But Israel with the Ark was prosperous, but without the blessing of Him whose Throne the Ark was, fell before their enemies, and were deprived of the Ark, which was taken by the Philistines.

between the cherubins or, on the cherubim.

— the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there. When, therefore, would the Ark profit them, when the priests were profane who ministered before it, and polluted it by their presence? What are more outward Churches of God, when the living Church—the Priests and People—are unholy? The history of Jerusalem supplies the answer (see on Matt. xxiv. 15).

The Philistines—said, God is come into the camp. The Ark is called by the sacred writer "the Ark of the Lord" (Jehovah), but the Philistines, being heathens, say that Elohim is come into the camp; and they speak of God in the plural number. "these mighty Gods." However, they bear witness to the truth, that the Presence of God was enshrined in the Ark; and that the God of Israel had smitten the Egyptians with plagues. Here is a fulfilment of what Moses had prophesied (Exod. xv. 14). "Sorrow shall take hold of the inhabitants of Palestine." Cp. below, vi. 6.

The Capture of the Ark.

11. the ark of God was taken. The Ark, which Moses had made by God's command at Sinai, and on which the Divine Presence was enshrined in the Holy of Holies; and which had accompanied Israel in their marches through the wilderness, and before which the waters of Jordan had fled backward, and the walls of Jericho had fallen down—thath Ark was taken by idolaters.

Why did God permit this?

1. In order to show that His presence had forsaken Israel, because they had forsaken Him; and especially to punish the Priesthood, which had profaned His Sanctuary by their sins.

2. In order to show that visible ordinances of religion only profit those who have the spirit of religion within them. The Ark of God's visible Church only benefits those who have the Shechinah of His Presence in their hearts. As long as Israel was obedient (see Theodoret, Qu. 10), they might safely trust in the providence of God; but when they trusted in the Ark, neither He nor the Ark would profit them.

The Ark contained the Tables of the Law, and thus showed the sanctity of the Law; and how could the Ark avail those, who broke the Law which was contained in it?

In order to show that though men are bound to use the outward means of grace which God has instituted for the conveyance of His benefits to them, yet God's presence and working are not tied to those means; and that He can act without them.

Thus it was shown that the means of grace are only channels of blessing from Him, and that He is the only source of grace. After the capture of the Ark, the Tabernacle was like a Cenotaph. It was like a body without a soul. And Shiloh itself was soon reduced to desolation.

The Visible Church of Israel seemed then to be lying in ruins. But the God of Israel still lived and acted. And His Sovereign Power and Divine Independence were seen to work more gloriously and graciously even when the Visible Church appeared to be overthrowing. He raised up a Samuel, the most illustrious of Prophets after Moses. He authorized him, though only a Levite, by a special commission, to do the work of a Priest, in offering sacrifices (see above on ii. 20, 21; and below, on vi. 10. 17). He accepted the sacrifices offered by him, as He had accepted those of the Patriarchs who offered sacrifices before the Law. He employed him in anointing Saul first; and then David, the type and ancestor of Christ. He inaugurated, as it were, a new era in Samuel; and prepared the way for the Gospel. He showed that the Apocalyptic Censimony was only a parenthesis and provisional; that the Levitical ordinances were not necessary to God's gracious dealings with His people; that they were shadows which would one day pass away; that they were like a scaffold for building up a house—the Church of Christ—and would one day be removed, when their purpose had been served, and the spiritual house was erected, which is "built on the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself

h 2 Sam. 6. 2. Ps. 80. 1. c Ex. 25. 18. 72. Num. 7. 9. e Num. 16. 3. d I Cor. 16. 13. f ver. 2. Lev. 26. 17. Deut. 11. 25. Ps. 78. 56. 62. e ch. 2. 34. b ch. 2. 31. c Ps. 78. 61. e ch. 2. 31. e Ps. 78. 61. f Heb. died.
And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head. And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told it, all the city cried out. And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What meaneth the noise of the tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli. Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to day out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son? And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken. And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years. And his daughter in law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, near || to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father in law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains || came upon her. And about the time of her death || the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard it. And she named the child || Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband. And she said, The glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken. V. And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it || from Ebenez- er unto Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the being the chief Corner-stone || (Eph. ii. 20). God thus gave a prophetic foreshadowing of what was more fully displayed to the world when the material Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, and the Universal Church of Christ was raised up in its place. (4) By allowing the Ark to fall into the hands of the Philistines and to be brought in triumph into the temple of their god Dagon, and by the wonder that He wrought in that temple, where He made Dagon fall prostrate before the Ark, God gave the Philistines themselves an evidence of His own Divine Sovereignty, and called them to turn from idols, and to worship the true God. 

The ark of God || (see Grove, B. D. ii. 388). The reading of the MSS., yec, is corrected by the Keri to yad, a hand or side. See Gesen. 417. 331; Keil, 42. 18.

The ark of God || The news of its capture was more grievous to Eli than that of the defeat of Israel, and the death of his own sons. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy" (Ps. lixvii. 5, 6). The dying words of Archibishop Whitgift were "Pro Ecclesia Dei."

he had judged Israel forty years || When I read of Eli the Priest, of the sons of Aaron, judging Israel forty years, and of Samuel, certainly a Levite, though not a Priest, going circuit as a judge, itinerant in Israel (1 Sam. vii. 16); and of others of the families of Levi appointed by King David to be judges and officers, not only in all the business of the Lord, but also for the outward business of Israel (2 Sam. xv. 35. I Chron. xxvi. 29, 32); when I observe in the Church Stories, ever since the world had Christian Princes, how ecclesiastical persons have been employed by their sovereigns in their weightiest consultations and affairs of state; I cannot but wonder at those who inveigh against the courts, power, jurisiction, and the temporarililities of Bishops and other Ecclesiastical persons. I speak it not to justify abuses of men, but to justify the lawfulness of the thing (Bp. Sanderson, ii. 240).

bowed herself || sunk on her knees.

Ichabod || No glory (Gesen. 36, 38).

The glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken. || The Ark being the visible centre of the theocratic system of Israel, its capture was the departure of Israel's glory, and is spoken of as the "captivity of the land:" see above, on Judg. xviii. 30; and Ps. lxxxviii. 56-67, "God was wrath, and greatly abhorred Israel," so that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among men, and delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the enemy's hand; He gave His people over also unto the sword: their priests fell by the sword." Cp. Jer. vii. 12; xxvi. 6. Hengst., Anti. ii. 48, 52, 55.

The glory is departed from Israel—so it seemed in the eyes of men. But with God there is "no variability or shadow of turning" (James i. 17); and in that dark night of sorrow to the Hebrew Church and Nation, His glory shone forth most brightly: see above, v. 11. There is no Ichabod to God.

Ch. V. 1. Ashdod || now Eked; see Josh. xiii. 3.


Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth || Dagon fell prostrate before the ark, though the ark was captive. Dagon in his own temple fell down like a prisoner before his conqueror, or like a suppliant before his god. Cp. Josephus, vi. 1. 1. Thus the device designed by the Philistines for the glory of
earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him. Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that came into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day.

6 But the hand of the Lord was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with emerods, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof.

7 And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god. They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about thither.

8 And it was so, that, after they had carried it about, the hand of the Lord was against the city, with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts.

9 Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people.

10 So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay us not, and our people: for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. And the men that died not were smitten with the emerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

11 Their god Dagon, and for the humiliation of Jehovah, redeemed to Dagon's humiliation, and to Jehovah's glory. So it ever has been, and ever will be, with all the contrivances of evil men and of God's enemy, Satan, against His Gospel. They will recall upon their authors, and will tend to the exaltation of Christ and of His Church. "The fierceness of man shall turn to Thy praise, O God" (Ps. cviii. 10).

12 And set him in his place. Their god Dagon could not set up himself, but must be raised from the earth by the hands of his worshippers in his own temple. See the blindness of idolatry! Cp. v. 5.

13 The head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off. The word was not in the original, and would be better omitted; the head and palms of Dagon being cut off, were lying on the threshold. Here was the miracle; and it was very significant. It was done by the divine power. The head and palms of Dagon, the chiefest of his members, the expressions of his strength, were lopped off, and they were lying on the threshold, as if to be trodden under foot by his worshippers.

—only the stump of Dagon was left. The words, the stump of, are not in the original; the sense is—only Dagon, the fish (from dag, a fish), the ignoblest part, was left.

5. Therefore neither the priests...tread on the threshold. Another proof of the obstinate pride and blind infatuation of idolatry. Instead of concluding, as they ought to have done from these miracles, and from other that followed (see vv. 6—12; vi. 1—9), that Dagon was no god, and that his idol ought to be trodden under foot, and that the Lord God of Israel ought to be worshipped, the Philistines turned these miracles themselves into occasions for more supererogations devotion to their idol, although they were constrained to confess that the hand of the God of Israel was upon them, and upon Dagon their god (v. 7). When a Church becomes idolatrous, her case is almost desperate.

After the record of the infatuation of these men of Ashdod, it is refreshing to turn to another scene in the same place. "Philo was found at Azotus" (Acts vii. 40). Perhaps then the joy prophetic of the turning of Philistia to God in Ps. lx. 8; cviii. 8, were fulfilled: see below on Acts vili. 26.

8. Dagon. Notice the origin of the name Dagon, from dag, fish. It seems that Jehovah the God of Israel had a special hatred against Ashdod and Dagon, but that his power would not reach to Gath, which was probably between Ashdod and Ekron (cp. Josh. xiv. 3), and therefore they sent the ark thither. They imagined Him to be a mere local deity; cp. I Kings xx. 28.

This device also recurred upon themselves, and redeemed to the greater glory of God. All the shifts of Satan will issue in his own greater confusion. Observe how he is represented in the Apocalypse as shifting his artifices against the Church of God, and how all are frustrated: see below on Rev. vi. 16.

The site of Gath is not accurately known. It was probably in the interior of Philistia, about ten miles east of Ashdod, at a place called now Tell-es-Sa菲ch, and about the same distance s.s. of Ekron (ibid.).

9. They had emerods. The emerods broke out (Keil).

10. Ekron now Abir, the most w. city of Philistia (Josh. xiii. 3), where Rechab was worshipped (2 Kings ii. 2). The struggles of the Philistines against Jehovah tended only to bring the ark nearer to its own home, and to bring more evils on its enemies. The sufferings of Ekron were worse than those of Ashdod, and the sufferings of Gath were more grievous than those of Ekron. So all the assaults of the enemies of the faith against the Ark of Christ's Church, will serve only to bring her nearer to her heavenly and eternal home.
VI. 1 And the ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines seven months. 2 And the Philistines a called for the priests and the diviners, saying, What shall we do to the ark of the Lord? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place. 3 And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not empty; but in any wise return him: then ye shall be healed, and it shall be known to you why his hand is not removed from you. 4 Then said they, What shall we be the trespass offering which we shall return to him? They answered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague was on you all, and on your lords. 5 Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land. 6 Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts when he had wrought wonderfully among them, 1 did they not let the people go, and they departed? 7 Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them: 8 And take the ark of the Lord, and lay it upon the cart; and put the jewels of gold, which ye return him for a trespass offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go. 9 And see, if it goeth up by the way of his own coast to Beth-shemesh, then he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us.

10 And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home: 11 And they laid the ark of the Lord upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods. 12 And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Beth-shemesh. 13 And they of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it. 14 And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Beth-shemite, and stood there, where there was a great stone: and they clave the

CH. VI. 1. the ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines seven months. So enfeebled and desecrated was Israel by their sins, that they durst not, or would not attempt to recover it. God displayed His own power by bringing back the Ark not by the hands of Israel, but by those of His enemies.

2. the priests and the diviners] who were so controlled and overruled by God, that even their answer was made ministerial to God's glory, as were the prophecies of Balaam and Caiaphas, and the sorecy of the witch at Endor, and the writing of Plate on the cross of Christ.

— the ark of the Lord] They now call it the Ark of Jehovah (cp. v. 8). Before this, they had called it the Ark of the God of Israel (cp. v. 7, 8, 10, 11). The recognition of the God of Israel as the Lord was consequent on what they had seen and suffered from Him.

3. then ye shall be healed] If ye are then healed, then ye shall know, why His hand is not withdrawn from you as long as ye detain the Ark here (Keil).


— on you all] rather, on them all; i.e. on all the people. 6. as the Egyptians] Another testimony from the heathen to the truth of the Pentateuch (see above, iv. 8), and a proof that God's judgments on Egypt were not without salutary effects on idolaters.

7. two milch kine, on which there hath come no yoke] who, naturally, will be restive under a yoke, and will yearn after their calves; their course therefore in another direction was preternatural. God's hand drove them.

8. thereof of the Ark. The Philistines were withheld, it seems, by awe of the Ark from looking into it, and from putting the images of the emerods and the mice into it.

9. Beth-shemesh] now Ain Shems, on the borders of Judah and Dan (see Josh. xv. 10). God directed them, bearing the Ark, to Beth-shemesh, as being a city of the priests (Josh. xxi. 10).

10. lowing as they went] bearing audible witness to their natural and motherly yearning for their calves, and yet preternaturally going away from them.

11. such a cart] about Puntocost.

12. field of Joshua] Observe the name. The Ark was not carried back to the place whence it had been taken, but to Beth-shemesh, a priestly city, and to the field of Joshua; one who bore the same name as he who had brought Israel and the Ark into Canaan, and who was a type of our Jesus, in whose field the Ark of the Church rests. See S. Justin Martyr c. Tryphon. § 132.
wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering unto the Lord. 15 And the Levites took down the ark of the Lord, and the censer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and put them on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the Lord. 16 And when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day.

And these are the golden emerods which the Philistines returned for a trespass offering unto the Lord; for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one; 18 And the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of fenced cities, and of country villages, even unto the great stone of Abel, whereon they set down the ark of the Lord: which stone remaineth unto this day in the field of Joshua, the Beth-shemite.

And he smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter. 20 And the men of Beth-shemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? and to whom shall he go up from us? 21 And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the Lord; come ye down, and fetch it up to you. VII. 1 And the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord.
And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time that was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord. And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashhtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only. And Samuel said, Gather all Israel unto me, that I may judge them.

And they gathered together unto Mispeh, and drew water, and poured it before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.

And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto our God, for we that will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt-offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel; and the Lord heard him. And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great

2. the time was long] nearly fifty years. The Ark was not carried to Shiloh, which had been destroyed by the Philistines. On account of the sin of the Priests, who had ministered there, "God forsook the tabernacle of Silo; and refused the tabernacle of Jonathan." (I Sam. xiv. 3, v. 19.) The Tabernacle (from which the Ark was separated) was removed to Nob, where it remained for some time (xxi. 6), and afterwards to Gibeon (1 Kings iii. 4. 1 Chron. xvi. 39. 2 Chron. i. 2); and there the Tabernacle remained till the Temple was built by Solomon; and it was not till that time that the Ark found a resting-place in the Sanctuary of God. Some suppose the Ark to have been also at Mizpeh (Jerom. in 1 Regum v. 2, p. 15).

5. to Mizpeh which signifies a watch-tower; probably at Nethy Samuell—so called from the supposed tomb of the Prophet Samuel, which is still shown there, surmounted by a mosque, once a skin church. "Nethy Samuell is about 500 feet above the plain, and is one of the most marked places in the vicinity of Jerusalem," which is to the s.e. of it. (Cp. Josh. xxvi. 26. Judg. xx. 1. Robinson, ii. 139—143. Vantassel, p. 335.)

6. the priests were, and poured it out before the Lord; they poured out water, as a sign of their penitential consciousness of their own weakness, and as a token of the outpouring of their own hearts in tears of sorrow for their sins (Targum, Drusina). (Cp. Ps. vi. 6. "Every night wash I my head and water my couch with my tears." Ps. xxii. 14. "I am poured out like water." 2 Sam. xiv. 14. 1 Chron. xi. 18. and Jeremiah, Lam. ii. 18, 19. "O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night; pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord." Jer vii. 17. Lam. i. 16. "Aquila pro lacrimis effusantibus" (S. Gregory, A Lapide).—and fasted] Another sign of repentance. Thus they were reconciled to God, and conquered their enemies. S. Jerome in Jovin. lib. ii.; Tertullian de Jejun. c. 7.

—Samuel judged the children of Israel] He was their ruler as well as their prophet; cp. v. 29.

8. Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God] An evidence of the reality of their repentance and faith in God; and of their reverence for Samuel; and of Samuel’s habitual resort to God in prayer for help. Cp. xii. 19. 23. In Ps. xci. 6 Samuel is specially mentioned as given to prayer, and as prevailing by prayer: "Moses and Aaron among His Priests, and Samuel among them that call upon His Name: these called upon the Lord, and He heard them; and God says (Jer. xv. 1), “Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet My mind could not be toward this people.” Samuel had been given by God, in answer to his mother’s prayers (i. 20), and his whole life seems to have been governed by a sense of the power of prayer, to which his birth was due.

9. Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt-offering wholly. To be a symbol of the total self-dedication of the people, who now brought back by repentance to newness and holiness of heart and life. This offering of the sucking lamb is recorded with special emphasis in Eccles. xlii. 16.

Samuel, though only a Levite, offered a burnt-offering at Mizpeh, because the regular ministers of the Tabernacle, which was separated from the Ark (see above on v. 1, 2), were in abeyance, and God had not yet chosen any fixed place to set His Name there, after the destruction of Shiloh; and Samuel was raised up with a mission to God, to supply the deficiency of this provisional and transitory state of things, and to show that though men are tied to the use of means when appointed by God, yet God’s power and grace are not tied to men, but can work independently of them. And it was the special office of the prophets to teach the Hebrew nation the true meaning of the law, that “the law is spiritual,” and that “mercy is better than sacrifice,” and to hearken, ‘though the fat of rams.’ See above, on lv. 11, and below, on v. 16, and Introductory to this Book, and to say, at the place where the Tabernacle was, and where was the altar of burnt-offering (cp. 1 Chron. i. 29); but Samuel and others, for grave reasons, by special dispensation of God, offered sacrifices in other places, until God chose a fixed place in the Temple of Solomon.

10. the Lord thundered] The Voice of God answered the prayers of Samuel, as on another occasion (xxvii. 17, 18).
thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and despised them; and they were smitten before Israel. 11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car. 12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it "Eben-ezer," saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. 13 So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. 14 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

15 And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. 16 And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. 17 And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he build an altar unto the Lord.

VIII. 1 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his son

Here also was a proof from heaven that Samuel had a Divine commission to do what he did in offering sacrifice, although he was not a priest; and that his offering was acceptable to God. Therefore the acts of Samuel in discharging the functions of the priesthood are no precedent (as some allege) for irregular intrusions into holy ministries.

— Eben-ezer] Stone of the help received from the Lord in answer to prayer. Samuel ascribes all the honor to Him, and assumes none to himself. What a contrast between the event now recorded at Ebenezer, and that recorded as having occurred a few years before at the same place! See 1 Sam. iv. 1.

At that time Israel had the Ark with them, the visible sign of God's presence, but the Lord Himself had forsaken them on account of their sins; and Hopni and Phinaeus were with the Ark, and they were discomfited with a great slaughter, and the priests were slain with the sword, and the Ark of God was taken by the Philistines (iv. 10, 11).

Now they have not the Ark, but they have repented of their sins, and Samuel is with them, and the Lord hearkens to his prayers, and the Philistines are routed; so that they return no more into the coast of Israel during the days of Samuel, and Samuel sets up the great stone at Ebenezer.

Hence it appears that the outward ordinances of a visible Church are not of avail without holiness in the worshipers; and that in the most distressed conditions of the Visible Church God can raise up Saints, and endue them with extraordinary graces, and enable them to do great acts, and give comfort and victory to the Church of God by their means.

In a spiritual sense, the true Ebenezer of Israel is Jesus Christ. He is our Stone of Help. He was raised up, like Samuel, in evil days, when the priesthood was degenerate and corrupt, and when the glory of God was about to depart from the literal Israel; and by extraordinary call and mission He became the Priest and Prophet of all true Israelites, and rooted out our spiritual Philistines, so that in His days they can no longer stop and hurt us. He sets up the true Stone of Help, even Himself. See Isa. xxvii. 16, "I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation." Matt. xxi. 42; 1 Pet. ii. 4. Augustin de Civ. Del. xvi. 7.

13. The Philistines were subdued] The forty years' dominion of the Philistines over Israel, mentioned in Judg. xiii. 3, could not be overthrown by the supernatural strength of Samson, but it was terminated by the prayers of Samuel: so much more powerful are the weapons of prayer in the hands of righteous men (James v. 16), than any arm of flesh:—

— they came no more—all the days of Samuel] But when Samuel was dead, they again smote Israel, and overcame their king, Saul (1 Sam. xxxi. 1). 15. Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life] He was therefore continued in his judicial office after Saul's accession, and a portion of the rule of Samuel as Judge, coincides with a portion of the reign of Saul as King; and is to be counted in the forty years assigned to Saul in Acts xiii. 21: ep. A Lexippe here.

16. Gilgal] Where Joshua had first encamped in Canaan: see Josh. iv. 19, 20; x. 9. (In all sanctified places) The Sept. has ἐν πάσι ταῖς ἑρμηνευμέναι τοιάδυσιν, which is a legitimate paraphrase.

In the interregnum between the captivity of the Ark in the days of Eli, until the bringing up of the Ark to Jerusalem by David, and in the building of the Temple by Solomon, there was no one fixed place in which God put His name, and to which the offering of sacrifice was restricted. As is well said by Jps. Patrick (on ix. 12), "According to the Levitical law, all sacrifices were regularly to be offered before the Ark, in the place where the Lord should choose. But while this choice stood suspended, because Shiloh lay desolate, and no other place was appointed, they sacrificed in other places, where neither the Ark nor the Tabernacle was, the Tabernacle being void of the Ark, which was its principal furniture, and the Ark being without a house of God to dwell in. But when the Ark was again settled, it became unlawful to sacrifice in other places."

This must be carefully borne in mind, in order that we may not fall into the error of those who allege that Samuel set at question the Levitical law, and that compliance with its precepts was a matter of indifference in his eyes, and who even compare Samuel to Micah, who set up teraphim in his own house (see Judg. xvii. 4, 5).

Such allegations as these would make Samuel to be no better than a Korah, and under the pretext of his example would let in a flood of schismatic irregularities into the Church of God.

But it is a samual maxim, "Distingue temporum, et concordabis morae." Samuel's times were altogether exceptional, and he was specially authorized and commissioned by God, who "established him as a prophet of the Lord," and directed him to adopt measures suited to the peculiar exigencies of the times in which he lived; see above, p. 9; iv. 6; and Jps. Patrick on c. 17, and on ix. 12; and Hengst. Anth. ii. 40.

At the same time it is to be remembered, that the offering of sacrifice in different places by Samuel, who was not a priest, and the favourable acceptance of these sacrifices by God, were practical evidences that the Levitical ordinances and Aaronic priesthood were not the essential substances of religion, but were only transient shadows, and were preparatory to another dispensation, when the knowledge of God would be universally diffused, and when in every place incense would be offered to God, and a pure offering among the Gentiles" by those who were not of the line of Aaron (see Mal. 1. 11), and "that the hour was coming when, neither in this mountain (Girzim), nor yet at Jerusalem (only), should men worship the Father,"—but in all places. See John iv. 21.

Ct. VIII. 1. add.) Yet he lived some time after this, and continued to judge Israel even while Saul was king: see v. 15.
It has been supposed by many learned expositors that Samuel was about sixty years of age at this time; that he continued to act as judge for about sixteen years after Saul was created king (though the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beer-sheba. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

2. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now therefore make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

The Israelites ask for a King.

—make us a king to judge us like all the nations]

But notwithstanding these physical qualities, Saul, the king whom they received, showed by his character and acts how careless he was of the disastrous domination of Israel. And though he was however gifted with natural accomplishments, who does not depend on God's grace, and does not govern by His law, and does not aim at His glory.

The reign of Saul was fraught with bitter disappointment to the people who had asked for a king. In the beginning of his reign, while he was humble and "little in his own eyes," and obedient to God, guiding him by Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, he prospered; and God would have been with him, if he would have adhered to his first principles and decisions; or (see ix. 16), and if he had ruled as His Viceregent. But he soon became self-confident, arrogant, and vain-glorious; he disobeyed the commands of God, and the Nation was reduced to a low ebb of political absolution under his sway. The Philistines, who had been defeated by Samuel's prayers at Ebenezer, the 'Stone of the Help of God,' a name which stands in striking contrast to the subsequent policy of Saul, who looked to himself for help rather than to God, and who were kept in subjection during all Saul's rule, dissolved their league and turned against him. And Saul fell by his own hand, forsaken by God and man; a memorable warning of the evils of worldly-minded policy, and of godless government, the miserable victor of despair.

Almighty God, speaking by the prophet Hosea, has commented on this history in these words: "God raised up to save his people; but Saul was raised up by God, and who reigned as God's deputy or servant, and who, therefore, said, "Thou art my king, O God" (Ps. xlv. 5; xlv. 12; xviii. 14; cxlv. 1), and who ruled in obedience to God's sovereignty; and so was a signal type of Christ, the true king of Israel, who said, "I came to do Thy will, O God" (Ps. xi. 7. 10). St. Paul's words are—and they are very instructive to all princes and subjects—"They desired a king, and God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, who was the head of their house; and they brought him up to them David to be their king, whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, which shall fulfil all My will." Of this man's seed hath God, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus (Acts xiii. 21, 25).

Some modern critics (such as Ewald, Thurm, and Diesterweg) say that there are inconsistencies between several portions of this book, some portions (such as ch. viii. and x. 17—xxi. 15) being dictated, as they imagine, by a writer, who saw in the earthly kingdom an irreconcilable antagonist to the monarchy of Jehovah: and other portions (such as ch. ix., and xili. 11) being written by an author who looked on the earthly kingdom with a more favourable eye.
"Give us a King." 1 SAMUEL VIII. 6—22. IX. 1, 2. Samuel's remonstrance—Saul.

But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your best young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day.

Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord. And the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice: and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

IX. 1 Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zoror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a mighty man of power. And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice

The considerations, which have been now submitted to the reader, may serve to show the groundlessness of this hypothesis. Cp. Keil, pp. 60, 61. 9. the manner of the king] The right which the king would claim to exercise over them (A Lapide, Groton). Samuel told them what a king might do de jure; and also to what they must submit, if he did it de facto. Cp. 1 Samuel, ii. 38. Cp. Pfeiffer, Dubuis, p. 195. 11. He will take your sons] As Saul did (xiv. 22). He will take—your vineyards] As Abah did (1 Kings xxii. 7). 22. Hearken unto their voice] God gave them a king in His anger (1 Sam. xiii. 11). He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul (Ps. civ. 15). He punished them by their own inventions. God was angry with their request, and chose it by granting it. He gave them a king contrary to their own temper, and chastised them by his means. S. Cyprian ad Regiathanum, Ep. 38. S. Augustine in Ps. li., contra Julianum, v. 3. Go ye every man unto his city] He gave them time to reconsider their request, as well knowing that God's permission was a punishment. Cp. above, Ruth iv. 20, and Saul's pedigree, in Stanley's Lectures, Lect. xxxi. p. 3.

SAMUEL AND ST. PAUL COMPARED.
The history of Saul the king, the first king of Israel, will be read with greater profit if it be contrasted with that of the Apostle St. Paul.

Both were of the same tribe—that of Benjamin; both received the same name at circumcision. The question which his own people asked was, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" and the Hebrew nation asked with astonishment, "Is Saul also among the Apostles?" (See on x. 11.)

Saul the king began well; he was modest, humble, and obedient; and the grace of God was with him; and he gained victories over the enemies of God's people; but, in process of time, he became elated with pride; he disobeyed God, and persecuted David; and God's grace was withdrawn from him. He became the prey of an evil spirit, he was deserted by God, and defeated by his enemies, and fell by his own hand. Saul of Tarsus is first known to us as a persecutor of the Divine
Saul's appearance. 1 SAMUEL IX. 3—9. The Prophet's name and office.

David (Acts ix. 4). He gloried in his own strength, and trusted in his own righteousness; but Jesus revealed Himself to him, and he was "not disobedient to the heavenly vision" (Acts xxvi. 19); and he rejoiced in suffering persecution, and loss of all things for His sake; and though he "laboured more abundantly than all the brethren," yet he ascribed all the fruit of his labours to the grace of God that was with him (1 Cor. xiv. 10). He plants the word grace in the forefront and end of all his Epistles (see below on 1 Thess. v. 28, p. 23); Grace is his Alpha and Omega; and he died joyfully for Christ, and grace was ripened in him into everlasting glory.

Saul of Tarsus, like Saul of Gibeah, once breathed forth threatenings with furious phrenzy, and the Divine David said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" (Acts ix. 1—5) and the Divine David calmed and soothed him with the Holy Spirit from heaven.

Saul the King is our warning; Saul the Apostle is our example. The former shows how wretched man is if he labours for his own good; and the latter teaches us, how blessed he is, if he relies on God's grace, and lives and dies for His glory. For further remarks on Saul of Gibeah, as compared with Saul of Tarsus, see below, x. 11: 16; and cp. notes below, on Acts ix. 1—1 Cor. xiv. 9, 10.

—from his shoulders and upward See x. 23. In personal qualifications, Saul corresponded to the desires of the people, who, in their demands for an earthly king, showed that they had little regard for spiritual qualifications, and trusted in an arm of flesh, see on viii. 5, and Deuter. Qu. 24.

Almighty God suggests the true moral inference from this incident by the contrast which He draws in the case of David. When Samuel saw Eliab among the sons of Jesse, he said in his heart, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him?" but God corrected this inference from physical qualifications: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, for I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (xvi. 6, 7). The elder and taller son was refused, and David, the youngest, and probably the least, was chosen, and he was "the man after God's own heart" (Ps. xxii. 1). Almighty God suggests the true moral inference from this incident by the contrast which He draws in the case of David. When Samuel saw Eliab among the sons of Jesse, he said in his heart, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him?" but God corrected this inference from physical qualifications: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (xvi. 6, 7). The elder and taller son was refused, and David, the youngest, and probably the least, was chosen, and he was "the man after God's own heart" (Ps. xxii. 1). Almighty God suggests the true moral inference from this incident by the contrast which He draws in the case of David. When Samuel saw Eliab among the sons of Jesse, he said in his heart, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him?" but God corrected this inference from physical qualifications: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (xvi. 6, 7). The elder and taller son was refused, and David, the youngest, and probably the least, was chosen, and he was "the man after God's own heart" (Ps. xxii. 1). Almighty God suggests the true moral inference from this incident by the contrast which He draws in the case of David. When Samuel saw Eliab among the sons of Jesse, he said in his heart, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him?" but God corrected this inference from physical qualifications: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (xvi. 6, 7). The elder and taller son was refused, and David, the youngest, and probably the least, was chosen, and he was "the man after God's own heart" (Ps. xxii. 1). Almighty God suggests the true moral inference from this incident by the contrast which He draws in the case of David. When Samuel saw Eliab among the sons of Jesse, he said in his heart, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him?" but God corrected this inference from physical qualifications: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (xvi. 6, 7). The elder and taller son was refused, and David, the youngest, and probably the least, was chosen, and he was "the man after God's own heart" (Ps. xxii. 1). Almighty God suggests the true moral inference from this incident by the contrast which He draws in the case of David. When Samuel saw Eliab among the sons of Jesse, he said in his heart, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him?" but God corrected this inference from physical qualifications: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (xvi. 6, 7). The elder and taller son was refused, and David, the youngest, and probably the least, was chosen, and he was "the man after God's own heart" (Ps. xxii. 1).


—land of Shalim seven Roman miles w. of Lydda (Eunesh.).

5. land of Zuph] south-west of Benjamin, not far from the tomb of Rachel; see x. 2.

6. in this city] Samuel happened to be there at the time. It is not to be inferred that the city was Samuel's residence, Ramah.

The Name and Office of Prophet.

9. Beforetime in Israel . . . . for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer. This parenthesis is emphatic, and marks a new era in the history of Israel, consequent on the choice, now to be related, of a King.

The personage who, after the constitution of the Monarchy, was called a prophet, had aforetime been called a seer. Not that the word nabi, or prophet, was unknown in earlier times, for Abraham is called a prophet (see above, on Gen. xx. 7); nor was the word rosh, or seer, entirely supplanted by the word nabi, or prophet; for Samuel himself is called a rosh in 1 Chron. ix. 22: xxvii. 28: xxv. 20. But the name in use before Saul was made king and the books of Samuel were written, was rosh. The writer intimates that a change was introduced in the popular nomenclature in this particular respect by the institution of the earthly monarchy.

And no wonder. Before this period of time, Almighty God had given answers on special occasions to special questions by particular persons who were called seers.

But now a new era had arrived in the history of Israel. The earthly Kingdom was to be established, and a permanent office was to be instituted, co-ordinately with it, in order to represent God's Supremacy over the earthly monarch; and to advise, to exhort, and, if need were, to correct, rebuke, and even to denounce the earthly sovereignty for his sins; and even to declare his dethronement, in the name of God, the Supreme Ruler of Israel, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and thus to prepare the way for the time when the functions of King and Prophet would all coalesce in Christ.

This permanent office placed side by side with the Throne, was the office of Prophet.

The crisis is strongly marked, and the transition is clearly indicated in this verse. Samuel, who as a rosh, in answer to an inquiry, had informed Saul that his asses were found, afterwards comes forward as God's Nabi or Prophet, and declares in the name of God that Saul, on account of his disobedience to his heavenly Lord, has lost the kingdom (ch. xiii. 14).

If we may venture to compare sacred things with secular,
Saul comes to Samuel; 1 SAMUEL IX. 10—24. is honourably entertained by him.

10 Then said Saul to his servant, Well said; come, let us go. So they went unto the city where the man of God was.

11 And as they went up to the hill to the city, they found young maidens going out to draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here? 12 And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, he is before you: make haste now, for he came to day to the city; for there is a sacrifice of the people to day in the high place: 13 As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; and afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about this time ye shall find him.

14 And they went up into the city: and when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place.

15 Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, 16 To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me. 17 And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people.

18 Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer’s house is. 19 And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart.

20 And as for thine asses that were lost threescore and ten days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father’s house? 21 And Saul answered and said, Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then spakest thou so to me?

22 And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the parlour, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them which were about thirty persons. 23 And Samuel said unto the cook, Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said unto thee, Set it by thee. 24 And the cook took up the shoulder, and that which was upon it, and set it before Saul. x Lev. 7. 33, 53, 2 Chron. 24. 4.

the prophet in the Hebrew Monarchy occupied a position somewhat similar to that of the Chorus in the Greek Drama. The Chorus was the Personification of Divine justice and truth, and corrected the aberrations, and controlled the will, and restrained the passions of princes and people in the drama; as is happily expressed by Horace, in words which might be applied to the action of Hebrew prophecy under the Jewish Monarchy, "ille bonis faveatque et consilierit amicis, Et reget iratos, et anet pacare tumentes, Ille daspe lapedem mense brevis, ille salubrem Justitiam, legisse et apertis tinta portis, Ille legat commissam, desque precetar et cret Ut redact misieris, about fortunis superbis." (Horat., A. P. 196—201.)

The word nabi expressed the official title of God’s prophets, who were established by Him to be the declainers and exponents of His will; but rosh denoted those who had a special revelation from Him for a particular purpose. See also Dr. Lee on Inspiration, p. 493.

11. to draw water] at the foot of the hill.

12. in the high place] See above on vii. 10. 17.

13. he doth bless the sacrifice] the peace-offerings; on which see Lev. iii. 1.
And Samuel said, Behold that which is left! set it before thee, and eat: for unto this time hath it been kept for thee since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

And when they were come down from the high place into the city, Samuel communed with Saul upon the top of the house. And they arose early: and it came to pass about the spring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away. And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad.

And as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God. x. Then a Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance? When thou art departed from me to day, then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wastent to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son? Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and shalt come to the plain of Tabor, and there shall meet thee three men going up to God to Beth-EL, one carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine: And they will salute thee, and give thee two loaves of bread; which thou shalt receive of their hands. After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come


The correctness of the present Hebrew text is confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic Versions, and by the Chaldaic Targum.

According to the Sept. Version, the sense is, "From the high place he came down into the city, and they strewed a couch for Saul upon the house-top, and he slept; and it came to pass that when the day was breaking, Samuel called to Saul on the house-top, and said, Arise!" The Vulg. has, "They came down from the high place into the city, and he talked with Saul on the house-top; and he slept, and when they had arisen in the morning, and day was breaking, Samuel called to Saul on the house-top, saying, Arise!" Josephus also says (Ant. vi. 4. 2) that "the rest of the guests arose and dispersed, each one to his own home, but Saul lay down and slept by the side of the palace with his servants."

It would seem that the variations in the Septuagint are probably additional phrases from the hand of the translator or paraphrast, and that they have passed thence in part into the Vulgate. To alter the Hebrew text in order to suit these variations, as some have done (Ewald and Theobald), seems to be contrary to sound criticism. There are frequent instances throughout this book, where the framers of the Septuagint Version have evidently intended to do the work of paraphrasing rather than of translators: see, e.g., the next chapter, v.1. The Septuagint is, in many respects, rather a Targum than a Translation.

26. to the top of the house] or, down from the top of the house, where he slept (Keith). The original literally is, Saul called, to Saul (on) the top of the house, and so Sept. and Vulg.

The top of the house (says Dr. Thomson) is a common place for sleeping in summer in the East. According to our Authorized translation, Samuel called Saul to the top of the house; but the true sense rather is, He called him from it. Saul, young, vigorous, but weary with his long search, would desire no better place to sleep in, than on the roof (Thomson, Land and Book, p. 39). The incident is mentioned to show Saul's modesty and humility at this time. He was content to make his bed with others of the household, in the open air, on the roof of the house, whence Samuel called him down in the morning, and anointed him king: see v.1.

x. 1. Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head] And thus Saul became the Lord's anointed (2 Sam. 2.) On the union of kings, and on the consequent significance of the words Messiah and Christ (Anointed), denoting His royal office, see Bp. Pearson on the Creed, Art. ii., pp. 79, 82. And kissed him] in token of reverence and love: cp. Ps. ii. 7 ("Kiss the Lord's anointed").

Observe the aged Samuel's prompt obedience to God, and his disinterested humility in paying these marks of honour and affection to a young man who was to rule Israel in his own stead. 2. thou shalt find] Samuel gives to Saul three signs as tokens that what he had done was done by a Divine commission; and that therefore Saul might be assured that God would be with him if he would obey Him who had anointed him to be king by the hands of His Prophet, whom He enabled to foretell the future.

— to Beth-EL] Hallowed by the presence of God and by the worship paid to Him by Abraham and Jacob (Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 3; xxvii. 18; xxxv. 7).

4. give thee two] of the three leaves dedicated to God; an omen that God Himself would feed and sustain him, if he would obey Him.

5. hill of God] Rather, Gibeah of Elohim: he is speaking of Saul among the Philistines. Literally, "Saul's house." Gibeah of Saul (xi. 4; xv. 34. 2 Sam. xxi. 6). He thereby intimates that though this city might be called by Saul's name, yet it must not be forgotten that it belonged to God; just as he had said before, "the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over His inheritance" (v. 1).

Hence, also, we may account for the fact that the people of the place were acquainted with Saul (v. 10, 11).

— the garrison of the Philistines] A military post of the Philistines. Samuel assured him that the Spirit of the Lord
thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down
\[ \text{from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe,} \]
and a harp, before them; \( ^1 \) and they shall prophesy: \( ^6 \) And \( ^{\text{the Spirit of the Lord}} \)
shall come upon thee, and \( ^{\text{thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into}} \)
another man. \( ^7 \) And \( ^{\text{let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, \( ^{\text{that thou do as occasion serve thee; for \( ^{\text{God is with thee.}} \) }} \) }} \)
And thou shalt go down before me \( ^{\text{to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer}} \)
burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: \( ^{\text{seven days shall}} \)
thou tarry, till I come to thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do.
\( ^{\text{And it was so, that when he had turned his} \text{back to go from Samuel, God}} \)
gave him another heart: and all those signs passed to that day. \( ^{\text{And}} \)
when they came thither to the hill, behold, \( ^{\text{a company of prophets met him;}} \)
and \( ^{\text{the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them,}} \)
and it came to pass, when all that knew him before saw that, behold, he
prophesied among the prophets, the people said \( ^{\text{one to another,}} \)
What is this \( ^{\text{that is come unto the son of Kish?}} \) \( ^{\text{Is Saul also among the}} \)
prophets? \( ^{\text{And one of}} \) the same place answered and said, But \( ^{\text{who is}} \)
their father? Therefore it became a proverb, \( ^{\text{Is Saul also among the}} \)
prophets? \( ^{\text{And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the}} \)
high place.

The Spirit is not in the natural man; and when the Spirit is
given, a change is produced thereby (Tertullian de Anima, c. 11). But this gift may be quenched, as it was in Saul, \( ^{\text{who was a man of his own country; and that he would van-}} \)
quish them in their own strongholds: cp. xiii. 5. “Jonathan smote the
Garrisons of the Philistines in Gebah.”

1 a company of prophets Literally, a string, or a cord or band (of speech. Gen. 257, 283. The Sept. has ᾧπος: cp. below, xix. 20.

There is something significant in these words. The prophets
were all joined in one body, they were bound together by a holy bond of unity, and blended their voices as in a chorus of praise to God. Compare the language of the Apo-
tolic father, S. Ignatius, comparing the Christians joined together with their Bishop, to the “chords of a lyre string together,” and “joining as a chorus in a hymn of praise to God the Father.” (S. Ignat. ad Ephes. c. 4.)

—psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp] The first
of these in the Hebrew is nebél (whence rābānā: the second, cinnor—these were stringed instruments, the former like a
psaltery, the second like a guitar or harp. The third (yoph ) was like a tambourine, rendered cymbal in Exod. xx. 20; the fourth,
challit, was like a flute (see Kell, Arch. ii. § 137, pp. 187—189. Winer, R. W. B. ii. 123, where are full accounts of these instru-
ments). See also Mr. Wright’s articles in the Dict. of the Bible, under the words in the text, and li. p. 445.

—they shall prophesy Sing hymns of praise to God with
rapturous ecstasy (Exod. xv. 21. Num. xi. 25. I Chron. xxv. 3). The distinction is described by Augustine in Ps. xxxii., “edhara liquidum effusivit, sanctumque omnium, in infinitum, in inferiori parte labe: psaltherium in superiore.”

6. the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, \( ^{\text{and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another}} \)
man] The Spirit bloweth where it listeth (John iii. 8), and the
power of the Holy Ghost manifested itself by sudden outbursts
before the day of Pentecost; but on the day of Pentecost the Holy Ghost
was sent from heaven by Christ to His Church, to ‘abide with the whole world’ (John xiv. 16).

As of Saul it is written when the Spirit came upon him,
‘he was changed into another man;’ this holds true even of
the whole. For, when the breath (of the Holy Ghost) came upon it, it was cast into a new mould presently, and became a new creature; so said Andrewes’ Sermon on the Sending of the Holy Ghost, iii. 27.

Hence also we may see evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit
to change our bodies at the Resurrection into a likeness to the
glorified body of Christ (Rom. viii. 11. Phil. iii. 21. Tertullian de Resur. Corpis, c. 55).

would come on him there (c. 6). Here was a augury that, if
he obeyed God, he would be endued with supernatural strength
to overcome the Philistines, the enemies of Israel and of God, with whom Saul’s own country; and that he would van-
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to change our bodies at the Resurrection into a likeness to the
glorified body of Christ (Rom. viii. 11. Phil. iii. 21. Tertullian de Resur. Corpis, c. 55).
14 And Saul's uncle said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye? And he said, To seek the asses: and when we saw that they were no where, we came to Samuel. 15 And Saul's uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel spake, he told him not.

17 And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpeh; and said unto the children of Israel, b Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you: 19 c And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 And when Samuel had d caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. 21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found.

22 Therefore they e enquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hid himself among the stuff. 23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, [he was] higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, † God save the king. 25 Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

26 And Saul also went home k to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched. 27 But the [children] of Belial said,
How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.

1 Then a Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabesh-gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee. And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel.

And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, ¶ Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if there be no man to save us, we will come out to thee. Then came the messengers to Gibeath of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people: and all the people lifted up their voices, and wept. And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What aileth the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.

And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly. And he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the Lord fell on the people, and they came out ¶ with one consent. And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, To morrow, by that time the sun be hot, ye shall have help. And the messengers came and showed it to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad. Therefore the men of Jabesh said, To morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.

The word chayil is often rendered army and host in our version in the latter books: cp. Genesis 275: 23. he held his peace] Literally, was as deaf. Another sign of his modesty, patience, and prudence at this time. "Regnum, imò divinum est, injurias despiciere, et beneficis obtine" (A. Lapidis).

Ch. XI. 1. Nahash the Ammonite] renewed the pretensions which had been made by the Ammonites in the days of Jephthah: see Judges 11: 26–28.

Jabesh-gilead] The metropolis of Gilead (Josephus), called Jabesh from its dryness; according to Eusebius it was six miles from Pella, on the east of Jordan, on the road to Gerasa. It was perhaps at El-Deir, on the south side of Wady Jabes (Robinson): cp. Judges xi. 8.

On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes? In order to make them useless for ever. The left eye would be covered by the shield in battle; the right eye was needed for aiming the spear: they therefore would be no better than blind if they lost their right eye (Josephus, Theodoret).

Nahash the Ammonite demanded of these Israelites a surrender of their principal organ of sight as the condition of a covenant with him. In spiritual things this is precisely what is done by the Bishop of Rome. He is a "Nahash the Ammonite" in the Catholic Church of Christ. He requires of all Christians to make a surrender of their reason, conscience, and their will (which belong to their Master, Christ, see on 1 Cor. vii. 27, Gal. v. 1), as the price of communion with himself. If we are willing to allow him to "thrust out our right eyes," then he will allow us to communicate with himself—but not otherwise.

3. Give us seven days' respite] The demand of Nahash, and the answer of the men of Jabesh, show to what an abject condition the Gileadites had now been reduced, from which God delivered them by Saul.

4. to Gibeath of Saul] There appears to have been an ancient alliance between the men of Jabesh and the tribe of Benjamin. The men of Jabesh-gilead had absented themselves from the league against Benjamin (Judges xxi. 8), and its maidens were given as wives to the Benjamites (Judges xxi. 12–14); and the men of Jabesh-gilead showed their attachment to Saul after his defeat and death (1 Samuel xxii. 11, 12). The Spirit of God came upon Saul] A fulfilment of Samuel's words (v. 7).

7. he hewed them in pieces] and sent them] Saul the Benjamite seems to remember what had been done by the Levites in Judges xix. 29, to stir up the tribes against the Benjamites.

Bezek] Seven hours' x. of Sichem (Euseb.): cp. Judges i. 4. —Israel—Judah] An evidence of the distinction of Judah (the tribe of the future kingdom and of Shiloh himself) from the rest of the tribes even at that time.

11. into the midst of the host] of the Ammonites who had gone forth to meet the sally of the men of Jabesh, and found themselves between them and Saul's companies.
And the people said unto Samuel, "Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us?" "Bring the men, that we may put them to death." And Saul said, "There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to day the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel.

Then Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you. And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe || to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it to you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man’s hand. And he said unto them, The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.

And Samuel said unto the people, "It is the Lord that || advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which he did || to you and to your fathers. When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers || cried unto the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place. And when they forgot the Lord their God, he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of the || the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them. And they cried unto the Lord,
and said, 'We have sinned, because we have forsaken the Lord, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.' And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe. And when ye saw that Nahash, the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your king.

Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the Lord hath set a king over you. If ye will obey the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God: But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers.'

Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes.

Is it not wheat harvest to day? I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive, and see that the Lord's voice is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king.

So Samuel called unto the Lord; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king. And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart; And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they are vain. For the Lord will not forsake his people u for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased u that the Lord will have the voice of the Lord is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king. And Samuel said unto the people, Behold, I will call unto the Lord; and he shall send thunder and rain.
the Lord to make you his people. 23 Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord; 24 I am in ceaseless prayer for you; but 25 I will teach you the good and the right way: 24 Only fear the Lord, and serve him with truth in all your heart: for 26 consider how great things he hath done for you. 25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, 26 ye shall be consumed, 26 both ye and your king.

XIII. 1 Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, 2 Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel; whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan in a Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent. 3 And Jonathan smote 4 the garrison of the Philistines that was in 5 Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear. 4 And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also 6 was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal. 5 And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Beth-aven.

6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people 7 did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits. 7 And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people 8 followed him trembling. 8 And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. 9 And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering.

23. God forbid that I should sin—in ceaseless prayer for you] Moses and Samuel are specified by God as having extraordinary power with Him (Jer. xv. 1); and why? Because they prayed for their enemies (S. Gregory, Hom. 27 in Evang.).

Cir. XIII. 1. Saul reigned one year] Literally, Saul (was) son of a year in reigning: 5 filius unius ani crat Saul cum regnare corpussit 6 (Vulg.), and the Chaldees Targums explains it to mean that "he as the son of a year (a child only a year old), in whom is no guile, when he began to reign;" and so many Hebrew Rabbis, and Theodoret, Qo. 26; and Jerome, and Peter Damiani. Others suppose, that the letter signifies, 20 years has fallen out of the MSS. of the text, and of ancient versions here (Sealiger and Keil). But this is hardly probable. The true meaning seems to be, that Saul had been publicly made king by Samuel (see x. 1), and had reigned one year, when the events recorded in the former chapter had taken place; and, that after he had reigned two years, he chose 3000 men, and did what is related in this chapter (A Lapide, Pfeiffer, Bp. Patrick).

On the chronology of Saul's reign, see Acts xiii. 21, which specifies another period of forty years; and the most probable opinion is, that this includes the time in which Samuel was judge with him, and the time in which Samuel was judge before: and that Samuel was judge by himself twenty-two years, then sixteen with Saul a king; and that Saul survived Samuel two years (Sallust). 2. Saul chose him three thousand men.] He seems to have taken a body-guard to himself and his son, which was a new thing in Israel, and which was a symptom of distrust of God's defence, and of reliance on an arm of flesh. This was what Samuel had prophesied (viii. 11, 12).

— Michmahs.] About nine miles N. of Jerusalem, now Mikkmas, described by Robinson (ii. 117).

— mount Beth-el.] Now Betin (see Josh. vii. 20), about six miles W. of Michmash; and twelve N. of Jerusalem. 3. Gibeah of Benjamin.] The residence of Saul, now Tullil-el-Phil, about midway between Jerusalem and Michmash.

4. Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines] in his own tribe of Benjamin: ex. x. 5, 20.

9. he offered the burnt offering.] Did Saul offer it with his own hand, or no?
And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might *salute* him. 11 And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash: 12 Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. 13 And Samuel said to Saul, 'Thou hast done foolishly: *thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.* 14 But now thy kingdom shall not continue: *the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.*

And Saul arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people that were +present with him, *about six hundred men.* 16 And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people that were present with them, abode in +Gibeah of Benjamin: but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: *one company turned unto the way that leadeth to k Ophrah, unto the land of Shual:* 18 And another company turned the way to k Beth-horon:

It is said by some (e.g. by Abulensis, Scrarins, A Lapide, and Keil, p. 97) that we must suppose here the inauguration and consecration of a priest as the offering of another occasion, when the king is said to offer (2 Sam. xxiv. 25. 1 Kings iii. 4; viii. 63). It seems that Saul had the Ark, and Ahiah the priest with him: see xiv. 3. Josephus says (vi. 6. 2) that Saul offered sacrifice in an evil manner; and his annotator, Whiston, asserts that Saul usurped the priest's office.

Whether this was so or not, is not evident from the text. It seems to be suggested by the words of Saul: "*Bring hither seven bullocks*" (Josh. vii. 14. Steely mast. Sayl. iii. 29) that "he sacrificed; and that, as king, he had a right to sacrifice." Bishop Andrews says that he usurped the priest's office (iv. 38); and so Dr. Kitto, pp. 155, 158, "The kings of many other nations were also priests, but, although more than one Hebrew king evinced a disposition to assume priestly power, yet it was plainly unlawful, except the king were of the family of Aaron, as was the case with the Maccabaei or Asmonean sovereigns. Saul offered sacrifices with his own hand. This was a double offence. Priests only might offer sacrifices; the only exception being in the case of the prophets, who sometimes claimed that right for the honour of God, by whose Spirit they acted." In the absence of any clear statement to that effect in the text, and insannac, also, as Samuel does not animadvert on any such intrusion on Saul's part, it does not seem safe to affirm that Saul offered the sacrifice with his own hand.

His sin consisted in not obeying the word of the Lord, speaking by His Prophet, and commanding him to wait till Samuel came and told him what he must do (x. 8; see e. 13, 14, and Jeremiaae). "Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God." Saul's faith in God, and his obedience to Him, were tried by the number of the Philistines, and by the falling away of his own forces, and by the delay of Samuel. If he had believed in God, and if he had obeyed Him, he would have been sure that God could, and would, deliver him in his own time; but he did not trust in God's word and power: he feared man rather than God, and relied rather on the external charms of religion, than on the essence of it, which is obedience; and therefore Samuel told him that his king would perish. 12. I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering] As if burnt-offerings were more pleasing to God than obedience, and could be accepted by God, when offered without faith! Cp. xv. 22. 13. for ever] As long as his soul lasted. 14. *the king's* statue] Saul was not as yet personally rejected from being king. He is told, that if he had been obedient, his "kingdom should have been established" in *his family; but that now it should not continue.* And if he had taken warning now, and repeated, there is reason to believe that even this penalty would not have been inflicted on him. But he repeated his sin; and the next punishment was more heavy. "Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king" (iv.). In the former case the sentence was pronounced against the kingdom; in the latter, against the king. — the Lord hath sought] David did not seek honour for himself; but was sought by God for it. "I have found David my servant" (Ps. lxxxix. 20). a man after his own heart] Cp. Acts xiii. 22. Saul did not mention David by name, lest he should excite Saul's jealousy against him. David is called "a man after God's own heart," because, as to his general character, he confirmed his own will to God's will; he loved what God loved, and abhorred what God hated (S. Chrys.). 15. Samuel — gat him up — unto Gibeath] A proof that Samuel had not been actuated by feelings of personal anger against Saul and his family, and had not yet forsaken him, and would be willing to befriend him, if he would repent. Cp. below, xv. 31. — six hundred men] Very few, if compared with those who followed Saul while he was obedient to God; and who amounted to 300,000 men (xi. 6). Therefore his lawful act in offering sacrifice, lest the people should be scattered from him (v. 11), failed of its purpose. Worldly policy does not attain even its own temporal ends. See below, John xii. 48, "If we let this man thus alone, the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." They did not let Jesus alone; and therefore the Romans did come, and destroyed them. 16. the Philistines encamped] If Saul had obeyed God, they would have been routed, as the Ammonites were (xi. 11). 17. the spoilers] Literally, the spoiler. Genesis, pp. 615, 816. — the Philistines in three companies] Observe the contrast. Saul, while obedient, had gone out against the Ammonites in three companies (xi. 11). But now that he has disobeyed God, the Philistines render him three companies. — Ophrah] Five miles e. of Bethel (see Josh. xviii. 29), probably now Trotzibeh (described by Robinson, ii. 110. 119-125). — land of Shuah] [INDEX: perhaps Skeltin (lx. 4). 18. Beth-horon] Beth-or: see Josh. x. 11.
and another company—turned to the way of the border that looketh to the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

23 And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash.

XIV. Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines’ garrison, that is on the other side. But he told not his father. And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron: and the people that were with him were about six hundred men: and Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, I-chabod’s brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the Lord’s priest in Shiloh, wearing an ephod. And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone. And between the passages, by which Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines’ garrison, there was a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side: and the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh. The forehead of the Lord to save by many or by few,” and c. 10. “The Lord hath delivered them into our hand.”

2. pomegranate tree: Rather, the pomegranate-tree: a well-known one. On the pomegranate-tree and its fruit, see S. Ambrose, Hes. iii. 13; S. Jerome in Josu. lib. i.; and A Lapide here, and on Canticles iv. 3. 13.


— six hundred men. His forces had not increased since he came to Gibeah, as might have been expected: see xii. 15.

3. Ahiah: Supposed by some to be the same as Ahimelech, mentioned as the priest in xxii. 1, and son of Ahitub (the elder brother of Ichabod, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, “the Lord’s priest in Shiloh”), in xxii. 9. 11, which is possible: Ahiah (brother or friend of Jehovah) may be another name of Ahimelech (brother or friend of the king). But it is more probable that Ahiah died without offspring, and that Ahimelech (as his brother) succeeded in his place.

— wearing an ephod: Rather, wearing the ephod; i.e., the high priest’s ephod, with the Urim and Thummim: see on ii. 28. Saul had with him the external ordinances of religion, but they did not profit him, because he was unfaithful and disobedient to God.

There is a solemn sound in the words “the Lord’s priest in Shiloh” the history of the captivity of the Ark, which had been at Shiloh, and the death of Hophni and Phinehas, the priests who had the unclouded and uninterfered chief of the High Priest and Judge, and the destruction of Shiloh, were terrible warnings to Saul, that no religious or political privileges are of any benefit, without a sanctified heart, and an obedient will: see above on iv. 4, 5.

How full of encouragement, on the other hand, are the historical associations of Gilgal, with its records of God’s wonderful workings for Israel, by the hand of His faithful servant Joshua! Yet there, even at Gilgal, Saul disobeyed God.

— Bozez: shining (Genes. 108).

— Seneh: Perhaps a tooth, or it may be connected with sannah, to lift up, or to sharpen (Genes. 561).
of the one was situate northward over against Michmash, and the other southward over against Gibeah. And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few. And his armourbearer said unto him, Do all that is in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I am with thee according to thy heart. Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them. If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them. But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand: and this shall be a sign unto us. And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves. And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armourbearer, Come up after me: for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel. And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armourbearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armourbearer slew after him. And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armourbearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.

And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling.

And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another. Then said Saul unto the people that were with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armourbearer were not there. And Saul said unto Ahiah, Bring hither the ark of God. For the

On these two rocks, probably in Wady Sewanit, leading from Geba to Michmash, see Robinson, ii. 116: "In the valley are two hills of a conical or rather a spherical form, having steep rocky sides; one of these rocks is toward Geba (Geba), the other toward Michmash (Michmash)."

These seem to be the two rocks mentioned here.

5. [Michmash] Nine miles from Jerusalem (Enseb.), to the north of it; now Mukhamas: see Robinson, ii. 113—116.

6. [Come, and let us go over] Divine power of faith, which makes a man more than men! The question is not what Jonathan can do, but what God can do, whose power is not in the means, but in Himself. There is no restraint in the Lord to save by many or by few. O admirable faith in Jonathan, when neither the steepness of the rocks, nor multitude of enemies, can dissuade from such an assault! (By Hall).

11. [the Hebrews] They will not call them by their more sacred name—the men of Israel; cp. v. 21.

12. [we will show you a thing] Literally, we will make you know a word; we will tell you something— the Lord hath delivered them. Jonathan shows extraordinary faith in the choice of the sign, and in obedience to it, and relies wholly on the Lord—a striking contrast to Saul.

14. [acres] Rather, farrows (Gen. 496).—of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow] These words are a rendering of the Hebrew tsomein, which properly signifies a pair, or couple (from tsamiad, to bind), and thence is applied to express the quantity of land which a yoke of oxen could plough in a day: cp. jegun, jugeren (Gen. 712).

15. [trembling in the host] A panic sent by God. For other instances, see 2 Sam. v. 24. 2 Kings vii. 6; xix. 7.

18. [Bring hither the ark] This is the meaning of the text as it stands in the extant Hebrew MSS., and in the Vulg., Syriac, Arabic, and Chaldean Targum. But the Septuagint has, "Bring hither the ephod," which is supposed by some to be the preferable reading; so Stanley, Lectures, p. 19, who calls the reading of the Hebrew MSS. "an obvious mistake."

But it is not probable that, if the word ephod had been in the original text, it would have been changed by the copyists into ark; on the other hand, a transcriber might suppose it to be improbable that the ark should have been brought from Kirjath-jearim, and be now with Saul (vii. 2), and he might therefore be induced to substitute ephod here.

The presence of the Ark is very significant and instructive (see on v. 3). Although Saul had the High Priest, the Urim, and the Ark with him; yet they were of no avail, because he lacked the essential requisites for making them profitable. He lacked faith in Him whose ordinances the Ark and the Priesthood were: compare the case of the army of Israel, above, iv. 3—11.

On the other hand, Jonathan, Saul’s son, having faith in God, was achieving at this time, almost single-handed, a great victory over the enemies of Israel: see on v. 1.

Saul is a specimen of that class of persons who show a certain reverence and zeal for the outward forms of religion, and even a superstitious reliance on them, but are not careful to cherish the inner spirit of vital religion, without which all outward forms and ordinances, even though instituted by God Himself, are mere "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."

[cp. 1 Cor. xiii. 12; below, v. 24, and xv. 21.]
ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel. And it came to pass, while Saul talked unto the priest, that the noise that was in the host of the Philistines went on and increased: and Saul said unto the priest, Withdraw thine hand. And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture. Moreover the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp from the country round about, even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan. Likewise all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle. So the Lord saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto Beth-aven.

And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted any food.

And all they of the land came to a wood; and there was ‘honey upon the ground. And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: for the people feared the oath. But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in an honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened. Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food this day. And the people were faint. Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been

19. while Saul talked unto the priest] Either with a view of bringing forth the Ark to lead the people onward to the battle, or that he might inquire of God by Urim and Thummim before the Ark. — Withdraw thine hand] i.e., let alone. There is no more need of inquiry or of prayer: let us go at once to the battle. There seems to have been an indifference and contempt on Saul's part for prayer and for a knowledge of God's will (cp. v. 36). He thought first of himself, and God was in the second place. The 'neglect of prayer' (says Bp. Andrews, v. 323) was the beginning of Saul's fall, as all the Fathers interpreted that place, where it is said that Saul commanded the priest to withdraw his hand from the Ark.” See also Bp. Andrews, v. 345: “There are some, who with Saul will call for the Ark, and will presently cry, ‘Away with it!’ that is, will begin their prayers and will break them off in the midst of any occasion.” See also 1 Sam. xi. 11.

Saul will consult the Ark: hypocrites, when they have leisure, will perhaps be holy. But when the tumult was aroused, Saul's pity decreased. Withdraw thine hand,” he said. The Ark must give place to arms. Worldly minds regard holy duties no farther than they stand with their own carnal purposes. Saul, who would before willfully sacrifice ere he fought (vii. 9), will now, in the other extreme, fight in a willful indecision (v. 34).

The courage of Jonathan had already achieved the victory, while Saul was talking about what was to be done: so much more successful was the faith and obedience of the son, than the worldly policy and outward indifference of the father.

20. every man's sword was against his fellow] As was the case with the Midianites when attacked by Gideon (Judg. vii. 22). Thus God showed His Divine power and favour to Israel, and mercifully still strove with Saul in order to bring him back to obedience.

21. the Hebrews] As distinct from the men of Israel, with whom they are contrasted here: cp. v. 11, and vv. 22, 23.

22. the Lord saved Israel] As Jonathan had said the Lord would do (see v. 12).

Beth-aven] East of Michmash. The Israelites attacked the Philistines from the south, and scattered them toward Beth-aven on the east, and to Aijalon on the west (v. 31).

24. the men of Israel were distressed] A consequence of Saul's rashness. Even his prudence failed him, by which he had been before distinguished (v. 16; xii. 13), when he said piously, 'The Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel.' Blindness and iniquity are fruits of disobedience to God, Who takes His grace from those who forsake Him and rely on themselves.

Saul had adjured the people] Another specimen of Saul's hot, hasty, and headstrong willfulness and impetuousness, joined to a show of zeal for the outward forms of religion: see v. 15. Here was an instance of that will-worship which is characteristic of Saul. To eat no food all day was harder than to attend for a short time on the Ark. But Saul chose the one and neglected the other (see v. 19). Bp. Hall observes: “The voluntary, self-imposed services of hypocrites are many times harder and more painful than the religious duties enjoined by Almighty God. But these acts of will-worship are sweetened to them by self-love; and so they are ensnared and enslaved by the Evil One—as Saul was.”

— that I may be avenged on mine enemies] Observe his egotism. He does not call them the enemies of the Lord, but he says, "that I may be avenged on mine enemies; and he speaks in this self-confident tone even after that the Lord had just marvellously interfered to save Israel (see v. 29). Thus he abused God's goodness, and made it an occasion for sin. Here is a symptom of that self-love and vain-glory which was his ruin.


27. Jonathan heard not] And was not therefore bound by his father's oath: and consequently could not be said to have transgressed it.

— put forth the end of the rod] In the eagerness of the pursuit he would not stop to do more.
enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey. 30 How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?

31 And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmas to Aijalon: and the people were very faint. 32 And the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground: and the people did eat them with the blood. 33 Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people have sinned against the Lord, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, Ye have transgressed: roll a great stone unto me this day. 34 And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay them here, and eat; and sin not against the Lord in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox † with him that night, and slew them there. 35 And Saul built an altar unto the Lord: † the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord.

36 And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them. And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Then said the priest, Let us draw near hither unto God. 37 And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But he answered him not that day.

38 And Saul said, *Draw ye near hither, all the † chief of the people: and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day. 39 For, *as the Lord liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But there was not a man among all the people that answered him. 40 Then said he unto all Israel, Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, Do what seemeth good unto thee.

41 Therefore Saul said unto the Lord God of Israel, || † Give a perfect lot. 42 And Saul and Jonathan were taken: but the people † escaped. 43 And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken.

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and, lo, I must die. 44 And Saul answered, † God do so and † Ruth 1. 17. more also: † for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan. 45 And the people said unto g ver. 33.
Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid; as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not. Then Saul went up from following the Philistines: and the Philistines went to their own place.

So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them. And he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.

Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchishua: and the names of his two daughters were these; the name of the firstborn Merab, and the name of the younger Michal: And the name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz: and the name of the captain of his host was Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle. And Kish was the father of Saul; and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.

And there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul: and when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him.

Samuel also said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah. And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and laid wait in the valley. And Saul said unto the

by wilfulness, self-love, and formalism, than by pious and natural affection.

the people rescued Jonathan] Observe the humiliation to which Saul is reduced by his disobedience, and by the consequent withdrawal of divine grace, and by his rashness and infatuation. The son is raised above the father, and the people above the king.

Then Saul went up] and so the Philistines escaped: another result of Saul's sin.

Saul took the kingdom] took it into his own hands. There seems to be something of disapprobation in this expression, as if Saul took it as his own, rather than received it from God, working by the faith and courage of Jonathan his son.

Ner was the son of Abiel] as Kish also was (ix. 1).

sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul] Very different had been the state of things when Samuel ruled Israel. Then "the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel; and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel."

he took him] As Samuel had foretold (viii. 11, 16), "He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself. He will take your best young man, and put them to his work." Saul was himself distinguished by physical strength, and relied on outward means, and forsook God in the end, and perished miserably. And the people, who looked for protection to an arm of flesh rather than to God who was their King, were punished by that instrument—Saul—which they had chosen for themselves, in order that they might be saved by it.

XV. 1. hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord] This was Saul's second trial. Before he had been commanded by Samuel, the Prophet of the Lord, to do nothing, but
to tarry till Samuel came to Gilgal. He had failed in that trial; and had received one solemn warning of God's anger for his disobedience (see xx. 8; xiii. 8-14).

But now he receives an express order from God Himself, commanding him to perform a certain act: "Hearken thou unto the voice of the Lord."

I remember that which Amalek did to Israel] God does not forget sins; rather, "He writes them with a pen of iron and point of a diamond" (Jer. xvii. 1). It is not in the power of Time to raise out the arrears of God (Bp. Hall). Cp. 2 Sam. xxii. 1, which narrates the punishment inflicted after Saul's death, for Saul's sin.

God had already declared by Balaam that His wrath was hanging over Amalek; see Num. xxiv. 20.

Although God does not immediately punish sins, but spares the guilty for a time, in order that they may repent; yet if they do not repent, He then inflicts punishment. See above, on Gen. xv. 16, "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." God has "a book of remembrance written before Him;" and if men and nations do not repent, their former sins rise up in judgment against them: see Matt. xxi. 38, 34; xxii. 33, 34. Luke xi. 53; and Waterland, Ser. Viaducted, p. 142.

Now go and smite Amalek] It pleased God to set a brand of infamy on the Amalekites, on account of their inhumanity, treachery, and impurity, and to take the most exemplary vengeance of them, in order to create the utmost abhorrence of such practices in the eyes of all men (Waterland).


Perhaps the same as Telem in Josh. xv. 21, or the eastern vorge of the south country of Judah. Cf. Pfeiffer, 197.

a city of Amalek] The principal city of that people.
Saul's disobedience

1 SAMUEL XV. 7—15.

denounced by Samuel.

Kenites, "Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for I ye shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

7 And Saul smote the Amalekites from "Havilah until thou comest to 'Shur, that is over against Egypt. And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people "spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

10 Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it "grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night.

And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to "Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: "for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

6. Kenites] On the contrast between the Kenites and Amalekites, see on Num. xxiv. 21.

7. Havilah—\(\text{S}hur\)] See Gen. xvi. 7; xxv. 18. Exod. xv. 22.


9. And the people spared Agag] Thus disobeying the command of God (v. 3), and being swayed by his own private fancy, and by what he supposed to be his own personal interest (Josephus, vi. 7. 2). But thereby he lost his kingdom (v. 28).

10. the best of the sheep.] As spoil for himself.

11. It repenteth me] God does not feel the pain of remorse (says Augustine in Ps. cxxvi.); nor is He ever deceived, so as to desire to correct any thing in which He has erred. But, as a man desires to make a change when he repents, so when God is said in Scripture to repent, we may expect a change from Him. He changed Saul's kingdom, when it is said that He repented of making him king.

Theor. c. Mard. ii. 210. Theolog. Qu. 32. But God's repentance is not like ours: for He is not a man that He should repent, i.e. as man repents: see below, v. 29, where it is said, "The Strength of Israel will not be He nor repent." and Num. xvi. 19: "God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent?" and cp. above, Gen. vi. 6.

12. Carmel] Not Mount Carmel; but Carmel in the hill-country of Judah, s.e. of Hebron, now Karmel: see xxvii. 3, and Josh. xv. 55.

13. a place] Literally, a hand, a monument. Cp. 2 Sam. xviii. 18. So well satisfied was Saul with his own conduct, that he proceeded to commemorate his recent action by a memorial or trophy (Jeromist)

14. I have performed the commandment of the Lord. When a man boasts of holiness, it is a sure sign that he is unholy.

14. this bleating of the sheep] which God commanded thee to destroy.

15. the people] Saul lays the blame on the people, whom, as king, he ought to have restrained; as Adam laid the blame on Eve, and Eve on the serpent.

16. to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God.] He pleads a good intention; as if it might be done in order that good may come! See Rom. iii. 8, and the excellent remarks of Bp. Sanderson, in his Lectures on Conscience, Lect. ii. § 13, where he comments on this case of Saul, and exposes the futility of the pretense that good intention is a right rule of conscience, and a safe guide of conduct.

Probably Saul saved the cattle in order to part with himself; and this plea of religion was a mere mask for covetousness. "Saul" says Bp. Sanderson on I Pet. ii. 16, vol. iii. 291: "spared Agag and the fatter cattle, contrary to the Lord's express command, and the offering of sacrifice must be the cloak. Jezabel roasted Naboth, and the punishment of blasphemy must be the cloak." Men do not set themselves "civile riteles, sed colorare vitius" (S. Bernard).

Saul does not now pause to expose the hollowness of this plea; but proceeds to pronounce sentence on him for disobedience.
16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, "When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord? And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to hearken than the fat of rams.

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king.

24 And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord. And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: For thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, And the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

Here was a forerunner of the spiritual worship of the Gospel, when burnt-offerings would cease. "S. Ire. c. Hcr. iv. 32. "Docet eos Samuel, quoniam obdictionem vent Deus, quem servat eos [magis] quam sacrificia et holocausta; et Novum simul prophetas Testamentum." 

23. rebellion—witchcraft, And stubbornness is as—idolatry. Literally, according to the order of the words in the original,—"for as the sin of witchcraft is rebellion," the emphatic word rebellion is reserved for the last place in the sentence; and so in the next clause, and (as) teraphim (by) stubbornness. Concerning teraphim, images used for consultation, see Gen. xxx. 19; below, xiv. 13.

The principle of this solemn sentence of Samuel is, that the man who disobeys God, is virtually guilty of consulting familiar spirits, and of resorting to sorcery, instead of obeying God's will as revealed in His Word; and that he is guilty of setting up idols in his own heart in the place of God, and in opposition to Him. He who disobeys God, is chargeable with infidelity and idolatry. Saul had been chosen out of all the tribes of Israel by the Lord; he was the king and by disobeying the word of the Lord, he, the king of Israel, the chosen servant of Jehovah, had been guilty of apostasy from Him, and had consulted the familiar spirit of his own carnal wilfulness, and had bowed down before the idols which he had made for himself.

This saying of Samuel came literally true in Saul's case. Through disobedience he was forsaken of God, and became a prey to the Evil Spirit; and was led on in time to resort to witchcraft (xxviii. 7), and perhaps to consult teraphim: see below on xiv. 13. Here is a solemn warning for these latter days.

24. I have sinned! These were not the words of sincere repentance; see v. 30.

I feared the people! Then shalt not follow a multitude to do evil (Exod. xxiii. 2). And as king he ought to have restrained the people from doing it.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, 'he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. 28 And Samuel said unto him, 29 The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou. And also the Strength of Israel shall not lie nor repent:

For he is not a man, that should repent.

30 Then he said, I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God. 31 So Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshipped the Lord.

32 Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past. 33 And Samuel said,

As thy sword hath made women childless, So shall thy mother be childless among women.

And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal.

34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to Gibeah of Saul. 35 And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel "mourned for Saul: and the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

XVI. 1 And the Lord said unto Samuel, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? 2 fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. 2 And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it,

—Many men who pass so little (i.e. care so little) for their consciences, yet stand so much upon their credit; as Saul, who using no diligence to regain the favour of God, was yet very solicitous that his honour might be preserved in the opinion of the people “(Bp. Sanders, ii. 321).

31. Samuel turned again after Saul. Samuel had said nothing in anger, but had spoken the truth in love, and was willing to cherish the weakest tendencies of Saul toward repentance: see above, on xiii. 15; and below, God's speech concerning Abah, I Kings xxii. 39.

32. delicately] or joyfully; the Hebrew ma-adannoth is from adam, to live softly, voluptuously (Genes. 491. 500).

33. Samuel hewed Agag in pieces] He commanded it to be done by the public executioner of justice: cp. Josephus, vi. 7. 5. Cp. Matt. xxvii. 28. John xix. 1, and iv. 1. 2. He did it before the Lord, that is, in execution of the Divine justice for Agag's sins; so Phinehas slew Zimri and Cozbi (Num. xxv. 8-15), and Elijah slew the prophets of Baal (I Kings xviii. 40). Samuel was a Judge of Israel, as well as a Prophet (see above, vii. 15); and in Saul's default, the charge of executing God's will (v. 3) devolved on him in his public capacity. Samuel's act was not one of personal revenge, but of official obedience.


—Samuel mourned for Saul. As for one dead, while still alive: cp. xv. 11; and xvi. 1. Here is a proof that Samuel was free from all personal considerations for himself in his prophetic denunciations against Saul. He mourned for the king's ceaseless appointment to the throne was a disgracement of himself.

Samuel mourned for Saul, but we do not hear that Saul mourned for himself.

Ch. XVI. 1. I have rejected him] Saul, the persecutor of David, was rejected, and David, who was persecuted, was made king in his place; so the literal Israel (the Jew), who persecuted the spiritual Israel (the Christian), has been rejected by God, and the Christian has received the kingdom in his room. S. Ang. de Civ. Del xvii. 7.

—Beth-lehemite] of Bethlehem; the future birth-place of Christ, the King of Israel, of the seed of David.

—I have provided me a king among his sons] “Mediator Novi Testamenti Christus figuratur in christiano, quo unctus...”
he will kill me. And the Lord said, Take an heifer  with thee, and say,  I am come to sacrifice to the Lord. 3 And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and  I will shew thee what thou shalt do; and  thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.

4 And Samuel did that which the Lord spake, and came to Beth-lehem. And the elders of the town b trembled at his coming, and said,  Comest thou peaceably? 5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice. 6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. 7 But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on  his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him:  for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 8 Then Jesse called  Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this. 9 Then Jesse made  Eliab, to shew him to Samuel, and he said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this. 10 Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And he said to Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit  down till he come hither. 11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse,  Send and fetch him: for this is he. 12 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and  anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and  the right hand of God was established upon him from that day forward. Samuel therefore hallowed him before the Lord; and Saul's name was changed to  David; and he was anointed to be ruler over the house of Israel. 13 David was  thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. So in the days of David the land enjoyed peace, and he had no war in any part of it. 14 Now this is the account of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and those round about it: Judah the first, and the tribes of Caleb the son of Jephunneh; 15 the half tribe of Manasseh; the Levites; the scribes; and the porters; the Nethinims. And beside these there was a large number of people that could not be numbered or weighed for they were many.

16 The house of David was established in judgment and strength; the house also of his High Priesthood: for the Lord had said, I will set up Mine anointed in My hand; My right hand shall perform Mine inheritance. And I will make his throne as the days of old. 17 Wherefore they set David before the congregation, and before the princes, and before the captains, and before all the people. And they anointed him before the Lord, and took counsel by the Lord. 18 And all the ancients of the children of Israel, went up to the high place of Gibeon, and made there a burnt offering unto the Lord. 19 And there assembled unto David in Jerusalem, out of all the tribes of Israel, to give witness to David, that he was to be their king, even all Israel, and they anointed David to be king, and David became the king over all Israel. 20 And there was fighting on every side of David, because the Lord had confirmed the word of Samuel, saying,  I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, who will do all that I will that he doth. 21 And the Spirit of the Lord was upon David from that day forward. 22 Therefore they called him after that name, even David the king. 23  And  all his brethren hated him, and his mother said unto him, The son shall not be greater than his brethren; for he is the son of his mother. 24 But  the Lord was with David, and had multiplied him exceedingly in kindness and truths. 25 And David said unto his mother, The king's son shall not sit down until I come. 26 Then answered she David, Let him do what he pleaseth: for out of the Lord's abundance shall come Mine inheritance.
Saul was refreshed, and was well. David played with his hand, and Saul was refreshed. So Jesus Christ, the true David, came to the literal Israel, which Saul represents (see ch. vi. 20), and spoke sweet music to their ears, and did deliver him by his word (see Ps. xiv. 2) ; and they who listened to that Divine Voice were refreshed and were well (see John v. 25) ; and when the Jewish Nation turns to Him, and receives that Voice into its heart by faith, then it will be "refreshed and be well."


2. the valley of Elah: or of the terebinth. It is now called Wady-es-Suant. The largest specimen of a terebinth which we saw in Palestine still stands in the vicinity. It took its ancient name (Elah) from the terebinth, just as now it takes its name (es-Suant) from the acacias there (Robinson, ii. 350).

David and Goliath compared with Christ and Satan. 4. a champion. Literally, the middleman, the mediator (δ μεσιτής, cp. Genesis, p. 115). "one who comes between, δ ῥήσατον (Sept. in v. 22): such probably ought to be the reading for δ ῥήσατον), that is, the famous man who came between the two armies (see vv. 8-10), and challenged the host of Israel; and who, as champion of the Philistines, asked that a man should be given him, so that by single combat he might decide the war between Philistia and Israel. Cp. Trefzer, Dublin, p. 199.

This word, "the mediator," applied to Goliath, the Philistine champion, is remarkable in connexion with the spiritual interpretation of this history, in which David, the shepherd, vanquishing Goliath in single combat, is a sign type of our
His armour and challenge. 1 SAMUEL XVII. 5–18. David is sent by his father.

c 2 Sam. 21. 19. 
d Josh. 11. 22. 
1 Heb. elosed. 
2 Or, garget. 
e 2 Sam. 21. 19. 

the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. 5 And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was || armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. 6 And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a || target of brass between his shoulders. 7 And the || staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him. 8 And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. 9 If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and || serve us. 10 And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. 11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

12 Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem-judah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight sons: and the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul. 13 And the three eldest sons of Jesse went and followed Saul to the battle: and the || names of his three sons that went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. 14 And David was the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul. 15 But David went and returned from Saul || to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem. 16 And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

17 And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; and carry these ten || cheeses unto the || captain of their thousand, and || look

Great Mediator (ὁ μεσιτής, 1 Tim. ii. 5), overcoming the champion of the spiritual Philistines, the Enemy of the Israel of God: see S. Augustine's work in Ps. 32. "In figura Christi, David; sicut Gollas in figura Diaboli; quod David prostravit Gollas, Christus est, qui occidit Diabolum;" and in Ps. 1.13; and cp. Angeloumen here, and A. Lopide. Observe the contrast. Goliath the type, and Satan the antitype of Goliath, is a Mediator who comes forward as an enemy to shed the blood of his adversary; but Christ, the "One Mediator between God and man" (1 Tim. ii. 5), comes forward to make peace by shedding His own blood, even for His enemies (Eph. ii. 14, 15, Rom. v. 10; Col. i. 20).

six cubits and a span [about ten feet]. 6. a target [Rather, a dart: see Genes. 305. Keil, 128, and cp. Joseph. vi. 1.] 7. a shield [Literally, the shield. 8. a Philistine] Rather, Am not I the Philistine? Am not I their champion and representative, who have already performed great exploits against you? (See the Targ. here.) Such is our spiritual Enemy: the champion of the powers of darkness; the arch-enemy of the Israel of God; "the Philistine of their souls. ye servants to Saul? Time was, when Saul slew forty thousand Philistines in one day, and now one Philistine is suffered by him to brave him and all Israel for forty days. Whence this difference? The Spirit of God had departed from him, on account of his disobedience, and his people suffer with him. If it had not been so, "one of them would have chased a thousand" (Dent. xxxii. 30).

10. give me a man, that we may fight] The first challenge to a duel that we ever find, came out of the mouth of an uncircumcised Philistine (Rv. 11:17). 12. David] who had returned from the court of Saul (xvi. 24—23) to his shepherd's life: see v. 15; cp. v. 55. Probably some years had elapsed since he had attended upon Saul.

— and the man . . . Saul] Literally, and the man (ish) in the days of Saul was old, coming among the feeble (the elderly)—that is, declining to a place among the aged and feeble. The difference between ish and enosh is here strongly marked. Cp. above, on Gen. iv. 26; and Keil, p. 131.

15. forty days] The same time as the Redemption of Christ. The true David || was in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan" (Mark i. 13). "In David, Christus." In David is Christ, says S. Augustine, commenting on this history, and he shows how it is to be applied to Christ's conflict with Satan at the Temptation, and to the conflict of every Christian with his Glassy Enemy.

Jesus Christ, in His Temptation, was our pattern; and we are in Him our Head. "Do not, therefore," adds Augustine, "read this history of David, as if it did not concern you, who are members of Christ." "In David, Christus; Christus capet et corpus; non ergo sie audiatis, quasi ad vos non pertinent qui estis membra Christi. "Hoc tamen fundamento posito videte quod sequatur" (Augustine in Ps. 118) an excellent observation, applicable to the whole history of David, as written in this book, which can never be rightly understood without an eye to Christ. David, after that he had been anointed by Samuel, when the Spirit of God came upon him, went forth to meet the Philistine,—so our Divine David, after that He had been anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, at His Baptism, was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to encounter Satan there. Compare what is said on this analogy between David and Christ by S. Aalbreos de Offic. i. 35; on Ps. 118. Chrys., Hom. 40 in Genesim, et Homil. de Dav. et Salle; de Victoria Dav.; and in Ps. 50. S. Basil. Selene, Orat. 15. Bernard in Dom. 4 post Pentecost.

18. look how thy brethren fare] Literally, visit them in peace; namely, salute them. David is sent by his father, to his brethren, from Bethlehem. So the Divine David, Jesus Christ, who was born at Bethlehem, was sent to His brethren by His Heavenly Father.
Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. 19 And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle. 20 For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army. 21 And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren. 22 And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the host of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them. 23 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid. 24 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel. 25 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away 'the reproach from Israel?' for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of 'the living God?' 26 And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him. 27 And Eliah his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. 28 And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause? 29 And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner. 30 And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him.

31 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him: thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. 32 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. 33 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. 34 Thy servant slew both the
lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. 37 David said moreover, 'The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and 'the Lord be with thee. 38 And Saul gave David his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. 39 And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. 40 And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. 41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him. 42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and hasty, and of a fair countenance. 43 And the Philistine said unto David, 'Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. 45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: 'but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. 46 This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; 47 that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 48 And all this assembly shall know that the Lord hath saved not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands. 49 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. 49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone,
and slung it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. 50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and smote the Philistine and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. 51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled. 52 And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. 53 And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents. 54 And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent.

55 And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, "whose son is this youth? And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell. 56 And the king said, Enquire thou whose son the stripling is. 57 And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. 58 And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-lehemite. xviii. 5 ver. 12.

1 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto

49. smote the Philistine in his forehead] All pride comes forth with boldness of forehead; and therefore the wound was on the forehead, the seat of impious effrontery. But we conquer, because we have the cross on our foreheads; for we are held only by Christ's Cross, the sign of His humility, by which He attained to glory. S. Augustine, Serm. 32, "Evacuta est froms (Philistis) qua habuit impudensiam superbiae sua; si portas (he adds) in fronte suum humilitatis Christi, portas in corde insinuationem humilitatis Christi;" and S. Aug. in Ps. 33, "In figura Christi David, et Goliath in figuram Diaboli; et quod David prostravit Goliath, Christus est qui occidit Diabolam. Humilitas occidit superbiam."

51. David—took his sword—and cut off his head therewith] "Goliath ejus absumt, et inde caput illi abscedit; hoc fecit noster David, deject Diabolum de suis" (S. Augustine). Our divine David, Jesus Christ, cut off our Goliath's head with his own sword. "By death He destroyed him that had the power of it—the devil" (Heb. ii. 14). The devil excited the Jews to stir up the Romans to crucify Christ, but by the Crucifixion the devil himself was overthrown: he was beheaded with his own sword (Thedoreut, Qu. 41).

53. the men of Israel—arose] When David had conquered Goliath, then Israel arose and routed their enemies. So when Christ, our David, had overcome Satan, the Israel of God arose, and routed the armies of the Evil One (Thedoreut).

—Shaaraim] in the lowland of Judah; perhaps Kefr Zakurias; see Josh. xv. 36 (Keil).

54. took the head of the Philistine—Jerusalem] The city, where Israelites dwelt already (see Josh. xv. 63. Judg. i. 5), although the stronghold of Zion was still in the hands of the Jebusites; and thus David gave an omen of his future victory over them: ep. Thedoreut, Qu. 42.

2. he put his armory in his tent] in his abode at Bethlehem. The word odel, here rendered tent, often means any dwelling-place: see iv. 10; xiii. 2 (Keil). He afterwards dedicated the sword of Goliath to the Lord: see on xxii. 8, 9; xxii. 20.

So our David did His mighty acts for His Father's glory, and consecrated the spoils of His victories to Him, and teaches us to do the same (John vii. 18; viii. 50).

According to the Chaldee Paraphrast, the ninth Psalm was composed by David as a Thanksgiving for this victory,—"I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will show forth all Thy marvellous works." 56. whose son art thou? youth?] In the time which had elapsed between David's residence at Saul's court and his appearance at Shoshoch (Josephus says that it was an interval of a few years, vi. 9. 1), and in the multitude of persons daily passing before his eyes, and in Saul's disordered state of mind, it is not impracticable (as has been observed by Thedoreut, Augustine, and others), that he did not even recognize David himself, who now appeared, as not before in the costume of a courtier or warrior, but in the homely dress of a shepherd. Dr. Thomson observes (in his interesting work, "The Land and the Book," p. 560) that most alterations of place in the physical appearance of the young men of Palestine in a very short time. "I have often (he says) been accosted by such persons, formerly intimate acquaintance, who had suddenly grown entirely out of my knowledge; nor could I without difficulty recognize them." The growth of the beard especially would make a great change. But, it may be added, this question of Saul does not necessarily imply ignorance on his part as to who the youth himself was; but he asks who his father was? and David does not reply by giving his own name, but his father's name.

Saul asks Abner, "Whose son is this youth?" because he had promised, that whosoever killed the Philistine should have his own daughter in marriage (c. 25), and he naturally wished to know what the parentage was of his own future son-in-law.

May we not also add, that there is a spiritual meaning here, as in the rest of this history? Abner said, "As thy soul liveth, O King, I cannot tell." Saul, in his unbelief and disobedience, and in his disordered mind, may be figured, as we have seen, the literal Israel—the Jew—who disdained God and resisted the True David, Jesus Christ, the Bethlehemite. The Jew asks, "Whose son is this youth?" The Jew even to this hour does not know whose son Christ is, and his Abners cannot tell him (see Matt. xxiii. 41—44). Cp. Angoulême, p. 391, who says, "Cecedit Judaeorum Joan Christum Filium Dei esse non approbaret poterat; sed dicat ei, Ubi est pater tuis?" (John viii. 19.)
Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father’s house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul’s servants.

And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick. And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands.

And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul’s hand.

And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.

And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him.

Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

17 And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, 1 her will I give 2 thee to wife: only be thou † valiant for me, and fight ‡ the Lord’s battles.

For Saul said, * Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him. 18 And David said unto Saul, † Who am I? and what is is life, or my father’s family in Israel, that I should be in son in law to the king? 19 But it came to pass at the time when Merab Saul’s daughter should have been given to David, that she was given unto ‡ Adriel the “Melchathite to wife.

20 And Michal Saul’s daughter loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing † pleased him. 21 And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be c a snare to him, and that d the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt * this day be my son in law in the one of the twain. 22 And Saul commanded his servants, saying, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king’s son in law. 23 And Saul’s servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king’s son in law, seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed? 24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, † On this manner spake David. 25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any † dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be e avenged of the king’s enemies. But Saul f thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. 26 And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king’s son in law: and the days were not † expired. 27 Wherefore David arose and went, and he and g his men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred men; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king’s son in law. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife. 28 And Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Michal Saul’s daughter loved him. 29 And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David’s enemy continually. 30 Then the princes of the Philistines went forth: and it came n to pass, after they went forth, that David † “behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much † set by.

XIX. 1 And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David. 2 But Jonathan Saul’s son * delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now

18. what is my life? † Literally, who is my life? i.e., who are the class of persons in my state of life and in my family, that I should be exalted to this honour? Cp. David’s language in 2 Sam. vii. 18, “Who am I, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hither?”

21. the hand of the Philistines may be against him] Saul endeavoured to destroy David, the deliverer of Israel, by means of the Philistines, the enemies of Israel. So the Jewish nation (which is typified by Saul in his persecution of David as in other respects) contrived that the Divine Son of David should be destroyed by the hands of the Romans, their own heathen oppressors.


22. Marysburia, or “the Uncircumcision,” in the New Testament (Rom. xiv. 12); and Christ gained a peaceful and bloodless victory for the Gospel over the Gentile world before He espoused to Himself a Church from the Jews—typified by the daughter of Saul. Bala (Quest. 10) says, “Præx in antiqüitatis reseruavit Christus carnis pollutiones; et postea copulatus est Synagoga;” and he refers to Rom. xi. 25.

27. two hundred] David’s men, as well as David himself, were employed in this campaign against the Philistines; and therefore it was not possible to limit the slaughter of the enemy to the exact number. Some have seen a spiritual meaning in this act of David, who is a figure of Christ. The Gentile world is called the Ἴπισρεία, or “the Uncircumcision,” in the New Testament (Rom. xiv. 12); and Christ gained a peaceful and bloodless victory for the Gospel over the Gentile world before He espoused to Himself a Church from the Jews—typified by the daughter of Saul. Bala (Quest. 10) says, “Præx in antiqüitatis reseruavit Christus carnis pollutiones; et postea copulatus est Synagoga;” and he refers to Rom. xi. 25.

30. the princes of the Philistines went forth] to battle, in order to avenge the act which David had done before his marriage; and perhaps supposing (as the Rabbis suggest) that according to the Hebrew law he would claim exemption from warfare for a year after his marriage (Deut. xxiv. 5).
therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself: 3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee. 4 And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king's sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good: 5 For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: 6 wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause? 6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul swore, As the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain. 7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past. 8 And there was war again: and David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from him. 9 And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David played with his hand. 10 And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night. 11 Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to night, to morrow thou shalt be slain. 12 So Michal "let David down through a window: and he went, and fled, and escaped. 13 And Michal took an image, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth. 14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick. 15 And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him. 16 And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster. 17 And Saul

Is there not also something mysterious and prophetic in Samuel's speech to him (xxv. 29)? — Rebellio (as is) the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness (as is) iniquity and teraphim. The setting up of idols in thy own heart, by following thine own will, in opposition to God's will, is witchcraft and teraphim. Did it not lead Saul on to both? Michal might have had teraphim without David's knowledge, as Kitto observes (p. 248). The women's apartments in eastern houses were separate; and David, being a military commander, would be often from home.

Whatever Michal did in this respect, David, we have reason to believe, found his help in God: see Ps. lix. "Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God," probably written, as the title intimates, at this time, "when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him."

— a pillow of goats' hair or, the coronet of goats' hair; or, the hair mattress. The word is derived from cabar, to bind together, to plait, to braid (Gen. 283). S. Jerome (Epistol. ad Marcell.) thus comments on the passage,— "Venerunt summi et cecis sevovapla (Sept.) in lector. Pro scopatibus in Hebræo Theraphim, id est, osorophus xætuna Aquilæ interpretatione positæ sunt; et pulvis et capra præ summis, qui latissimæ capsis equitis hominis in lecto involuti mentiturum."

— for his bolster or, for its head, to cover the image.

— with a cloth with the cloth, or mantle; or his cloak, as if he were sick.

16. ch. xix. 13, "An image in the bed" and thus David escaped; and Saul said unto Michal, "Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy?" The falsehood of Michal, by which she deceived her father Saul, was a retribution on him; it was the fruit of his own evil example, teaching her to practise
said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; *why should I kill thee?*

18 So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.

19 And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah. 20 And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also *prophesied.*

21 And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. 22 Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that is in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, *they be at Naioth in Ramah.* 23 And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah. 24 And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and *lay down naked all that day and all that night.* Wherefore they say, *Is Saul also among the prophets?*

XX. 1 And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life? 2 And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will *show it me*: and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so. 3 And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as the LORD liveth, and deceit by his own acts: see ch. xviii. 17. 19. 21. 25. His falsehood and treachery recoiled on himself, as Laban’s falsehood and treachery against Jacob recoiled on Laban himself, by the conduct of his daughters to him (Gen. xxxi. 14—20. 35). Saul had cheated David of his wife, as Laban had cheated Jacob of his wife. The daughters of Laban and Saul practised against their fathers the lessons of deceit which they had learnt at their own houses.

May there not also be an instance of a similar *menesis* in these *teraphim,* or images? Perhaps Saul, forsaken by God, and possessed by the Evil Spirit, had resorted to *teraphim* (as he afterwards resorted to witchcraft); and God overruled evil for good, and made his very *teraphim* (by the hand of his own daughter) to be an instrument for David’s escape.

Thus, in the history of the true David—Jesus Christ—God has used Kings! Daughters and heathen Temples as means for promoting the Gospel, and for celebrating the worship of Himself.

18. came to Samuel] Samuel’s forbearance toward Saul appears from the fact that he never attempted to raise up any rival party against him, and in favour of David. Nor did David attempt to engage Samuel as his ally against Saul. The only instance, where Samuel and David are seen together, after Samuel had anointed David at Bethlehem, is in this chapter.

19. at Naioth.] Rather, in the abodes or dwellings of the prophets at Ramah. The word here rendered *Naioth* is derived from *nao,* to rest, to lodge (Gen. 44. 21). It is reckoned “the house of learning” (or college) by the Chaldee Targum. This college, or school of the Prophets, was near Ramah, Samuel’s birth-place.


20. they also prophesied] This portion of Scripture, from v. 18 to the end of the chapter, which relates the lapse of the Spirit on Saul’s messengers, and even on Saul himself, the persecutor of David, is appointed by the Church to be read on *Whitmas Tuesday,* in order to show the existence and working of the Holy Ghost before the times of the Gospel, and the freedom and power of His divine agency. Cp. above, Num. xi. 26—30, the history of Eldad and Medad, which is read on *Whitmas Monday.*


23. *prophesied* as Balaam and Caiaphas did: see above, on Num. xxiv. 2.

24. *stripped off his clothes* his upper garments; his royal robe (Luparum).

— *naked* without his upper garment: see Isa. xx. 2. Mica. i. 8. So the word *γυμνός* is used (Mark xiv. 51, 52. John xxi. 7?), and *“nudus*” in Latin, as Virg. Geor. i. 250, “*nudus ara, sere nudus.*”

—is Saul also among the prophets?] A saying which was afterwards verified in the best sense in St. Paul: cp. on v. 11, and on Acts iv. 21. If Saul the King had obeyed God, and had cherished the Holy Spirit within him, he might have been like Paul the Apostle; and Paul the Apostle would have been like Saul the King, if he had grieved the Holy Ghost.

Many are the gifts of God (says Augustine), which are possessed by evil men. Evil men have often great talents, great skill, great wealth. The gift of the Sacramento of Baptism is a great gift, but it was possessed by a Simon Magnus (Acts viii. 13). The gift of prophecy is a great gift, but it was possessed by Saul. Saul, an evil king, prophesied at the very time that he was persecuting holy David. Let not, therefore, men boast if they have God’s gifts: those gifts will profit them without anything else (1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2). But let them think of the fearful account they must one day give to God, if they use not holy things holily (S. *Aug.* in Ps. 105).
Jonathan renews his covenant with David. 

1 SAMUEL XX. 4—21.

as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death. 4 Then said Jonathan unto David, "Whatsoever thy soul + desireth, I will even do it for thee.

5 And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to morrow is the • new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even. 6 If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run • to Beth-lehem his city: for there is a yearly || sacrifice there for all the family. 7 If he say thus, "It is well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that + evil is determined by him. 8 Therefore thou shalt + deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the Lord with thee: notwithstanding, + if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldst thou bring me to thy father?

9 And Jonathan said, "Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee? 10 Then said David to Jonathan, "Who shall tell me? or what if thy father answer thee roughly? 11 And Jonathan said unto David, "Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field. 12 And Jonathan said unto David, "O Lord God of Israel, when I have + sounded my father about to morrow any time, or the third day, and, behold, if there be good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and + shew it thee; 13 The Lord do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the Lord be with thee, as he hath been with my father. 14 And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: 15 But also + thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. 16 So Jonathan + made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. 17 And Jonathan caused David to swear again, + because he loved him: + for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

18 Then Jonathan said to David, "To morrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be + empty. 19 And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down + quickly, and come to + the place where thou didst hide thyself + when the business was in hand, and shalt remain by the stone + Ezel. 20 And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark. 21 And, behold, I will send a lad, saying, "Go, find out the arrows. If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on

Ct. XX. 6. Beth-lehem. . . there is a yearly sacrifice there] a yearly sacrificial feast. According to the Levitical Law (Deut. xiv. 5, 6) sacrifices could only be killed at the door of the tabernacle. But in the present disordered and unsettled condition of religion in Israel, when the tabernacle was without the visible symbol of God's presence, the ark; and when God had not as yet chosen any one fixed place to put His name there, altars existed in various places, where sacrifices were offered. Cp. above, on ch. iv. 11.

19. or what if "Rather, or what—that is, who shall tell me what thy father is resolved to do to me, or what rough answer he may make to thee? He may prevent thee from having any intercourse with me. Who then shall give me intelligence?

20. O Lord God of Israel. Rather, the Lord God of Israel is witness, or knows that (Syriac, Arabic, Sept.).
So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat. 25 And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall: and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul’s side, and David’s place was empty. 26 Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, he is not clean; surely he is not clean. 27 And it came to pass on the morrow, which was the second day of the month, that David’s place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday, nor to day? 28 And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Beth-lehem: 29 And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king’s table. 30 Then Saul’s anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, \[ Or, Thou perverse rebel. \] Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother’s nakedness? 31 For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die. 32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, ‘Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?’ 33 And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: 34 whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David. 35 So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame. 36 And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him. 37 And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. 38 And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, ‘Is not the arrow beyond thee?’ 39 And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan’s lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. 40 But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. 41 And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city. 42 And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.

24. So David hid himself in the field] having gone first to Bethlehem (ver. 28). 27. the son of Jesse] Saul seems to hate the name of David, and in contempt he calls him “the son of Jesse.” 30. son of the perverse rebellious woman] Literally, son of a perverse woman of rebellion: see Gen. 6:11. Such was Saul’s madness: his curse recoils on his wife and on himself. 31. he shall surely die] Literally, he is a son of death. 33. Saul cast a javelin] Saul tries to kill his own son, for loving David; so the Jews killed their own relatives for believing in Christ: cp. on v. 42. 40. artillery] his weapons,—bow, quiver, and arrows.
And Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever—And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

XXI. Then came David to Nob to Ahimelech the priest: and Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why art thou alone, and no man with thee? And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed my servants to such and such a place.

Now therefore what is under thine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is present. And the priest answered David, and said, There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women. And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it

Jonathan's Covenant with David.

42. forasmuch Literally, that which.

— for ever] After these words we must supply the clause,--that which remain established. There is something very pathetic in this apostrophe, as if Jonathan's words were broken off by emotion, and by souls stilled by his utterance. But David exceeded. He said nothing: his sorrow was too deep for words.

How much more touching and true to nature is this simple narrative of Holy Scripture than the elaborate description of Josephus, who makes them spend their time in long speeches to one another! (Josephus, Antt. vi. 11. 10.)

The Christian reader, who contemplates the affecting and beautiful scene presented to his view in the foregoing chapter, can hardly fail to be reminded of higher things; the predecessor of David, who typified the unbelieving and disobedient Jew,—once endued with great spiritual gifts and privileges, but falling away from God by pride, vain-glory, self-will, and obstinacy, and at length rejecting Christ.

But Jonathan's son's soul was a figure of all those faithful Israelites, such as John the Baptist, Nathanael, and the loving Apostle St. Peter, and the penitent thief, and the beloved disciple St. John, and St. Paul, who were born under the Law, and who hailed the rising glory of the true David, and stripped themselves of the legal insignia in which they were invested (see above, xvii. 4), and whose hearts were kins to Christ, and who made a solemn covenant with Him, even at the time when He was rejected and persecuted by the Jewish Soul; and who looked forward with faith to the time when the kingdom of the true David would be established, and His foes made His footstool, and His enemies be cut off before His face, and who prayed to Him: to show mercy to themselves personally in their own lifetime and to their posterity after their death, for evermore (see vv. 14, 15), and who incurred danger, scorn, and death from their own parents and relatives, for the sake of Christ: see v. 33.

Jonathan loved David as he loved his own soul (v. 17), and made a covenant with him, "The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever," and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.

What tears could be compared with thoseshed by the true David? He looked down upon Jerusalem and wept over it! What tears could be compared with those tears of blood which He shed in His agony in the garden, when "in the days of His flesh, He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears," and was heard in that He feared; and though he were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered!" (Heb. v. 7, 8.)

Cxt. XXI. 1. Nob A priestly city (xxii. 19), a little to the north of Jerusalem, and between Beth-Submission (Isa. x. 30, 32). It is supposed by some to have been situated at the place now called Ixmijeh (i. E. East-w rn town, or Edom-town), about a mile

and a half w. of Jerusalem: by others it is placed near Shefat: see H受け't in B. D. ii. 576; and Keil, p. 159. Some place it on the n. summit of Olivet (Thrupp, Stanley, Palest. 187.)

— Ahimelech] the high priest, son of Ahitub, son of Phinehas, son of Eli: see below, xxii. 9, 11.

— Why art thou alone?] Thou, the king's son-in-law, why art thou without any retinue?

The king's son was called a business] The Sacred Historian does not conceal the failings of David: cp. v. 8. He here informs us that David in his distress resorted to an untruth. He also shows us in the sequel the consequences of this untruth in the slaughter of the priests at Nob: see xxii. 9, 10.

With regard to this and other similar cases, see the treaties of S. Augustin de Mendacio and contra Mendacium, ad Consentium, vol. vi. pp. 711—719; and Bp. Sanderson, li. 63; and on Conscience, Lect. iii. 6—9, § 9; and notes above, on Exod. i. 21, and on Joel, ii. 5.

The record of these failings of David is an evidence of the truth of the sacred narrative, and reminds us that human examples are no safe rule of conduct; that there is but one example that of Christ the Saviour, who, He having the will and Word are the right only standard of practice. David afterwards confessed his failings in this respect, and prayed to God for pardon and grace: "My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen Thou me according unto Thy Word. Remove from me the way of lying, and grant me Thy Law graciously" (Ps. cxxii. 3, 20).

Here also we have an evidence of the Inspiration of Holy Scripture. David, as a man, was not exempt from human infirmities, but he "the sweet Psalmist of Israel," whose divine songs are in the mouth of the Universal Church, he was guided and inspired by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth. David, the Prophet and Psalmist, bumants the errors of David the King. And at this very time, when he faltered and faltered through human weakness, he was made an instrument in the hands of the Holy Ghost for inditing Divine Psalms, such as the 9th, the 31st, the 56th, the 59th, and the 124th, in one of which he says:—

"What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good pleasure?—And remember me, O Lord, because of thy kindness, and of thy loving-kindness: according to thine example, grant me Thy Law" (Ps. xxxii. 12, 13).

4. hallowed bread] shewbread; which might only be eaten by the priest and his sons in the holy place: see Lev. xxvi. 5, 8, 9.

— the vessels of the young men] i. e. their bodies: see below, on 1 Thess. iv. 4; 1 Pet. iii. 7; and see also the next note.

— and the bread is in a manner common—in the vessel]
David receives the shewbread. 1 SAMUEL XXI. 6—15. XXII. 1.

These were sanctified this day in the vessel. 6 So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, 7 that was taken from before the Lord, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away. 8 Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the Lord; and his name was Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herdmen that belonged to Saul. 9 And David said unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste. 10 And the priest said, The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take it: for there is no other save that here. And David said, There is none like that; give it me.

11 And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. 12 And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of Gath? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? 13 And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath. 14 Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man 15 Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?

XXII. 1 David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam.

The words the bread are not in the original; and the sense rather is, the way (on which I am going), and in which I ask for bread of you, who are priests, is a sacred one. Let it be granted that it is so: true it is, I am not engaged in any priestly or sacred ministry, as ye are. I do not walk in the courts of the sanctuary, as ye do; still it (the way) will be sanctified this day (though not a Sabbath) by the vessel or instrument employed in it. The vessel is David himself, who was the Lord's anointed (cp. Theodoret, Q. 53, and in part, Jeronimister), and the word vessel may be extended also to David's associates, who were ceremonially clean: see the foregoing note, and Lyraeus here, and A Lapide. (The Hebrew word (כז) and the synonymous word (ככ) to receive, receive a vessel, are often applied to men in the Old and New Testament. David compares himself to a vessel (Ps. xxxi. 12); and wicked men are likened to broken vessels (Ps. ii. 9). Cp. Isa. xiii. 5. Jer. xxii. 28; xviii. 38; I. 55. Hos. vii. 8. Acts ix. 15. Rom. iv. 21—23. 2 Cor. iv. 7. 2 Tim. ii. 21.

Our Lord seems to sanction this interpretation, when He justifies the act of David eating the shewbread, in consideration of the condition of the vessel (his body, then suffering hunger) into which the bread was received; and this interpretation is confirmed by S. Irenæus (iv. 20, p. 305, ed. Grabe), who refers to the words of our Lord justifying David on this occasion, and adds, "Sacerdos autem sanctus (qu. sanctus) fuerat David apud Deum, quamvis Saul persecutionem faceret ei; nisi Basileus S. Augustini de Cœlestibus (ibid.)."

S. Augustine remarks on this and other acts of David, that they were prophetic of Christ, who would unite himself in the priestly with the royal functions: "Nonne communia sacramento relatione inveniendum est mens sacerdotii, nuncuaeque regnum reprobatus, quod certum erat umbra futuri in Domino nostro Jesu Christo venturus? Nonne ipse David, cum panes propositionis manebat, quos non loco habuisse nisi solis sacerdotibus, in unum persona triumque futurum, in unum personam et trinitatem in unum sanctum sacramentum, sacramentum crucis figuravit?"

In his note on the passage of Irenæus, Dr. Grobe applies this passage to the consideration of the question whether, in cases of necessity, where a lawful minister may not be had, the Sacrament of Baptism may not be administered by lay hands? Cp. Hooker, V. iii.

6. the day when it was taken away: "The Sabbath (Lev. xxiv. 8)."

7. detained before the Lord: Perhaps as a proselyte for instruction, or for some religious purification. Doeg was engaged in the performance of an act of religion, before the Lord, at His sanctuary, and yet he harboured malignant thoughts, and was ready to perform an impious and bloody deed: see below, xxiii. 18. The sins of blasphemy and cruelty seem to have spread from Saul to his servants.

Doeg the Edomite, the betrayer of David, is compared by the fathers to Judas, the betrayer of Christ: cp. Bede, Qn. 13. Judas the traitor, and the chief priests and people who joined with him, were engaged in a work "before the Lord," viz., in keeping the passover, when they crucified Christ.

10. Achish] Called Abimelech (the official title of the kings of Gath) in the superscription to Ps. xxiv.

11. Gath] Gath was near David's native mountains, and probably had more friendly relations with the Israelites than the more distant cities of the Philistines (Dr. Thomson, p. 569).

11. David the king of the land] The Gentile Philistines acknowledge him as such, even when Saul is persecuting him. So Pilate, the heathen governor, wrote on the Cross, "Jesus, the King of the Jews," when they rejected him.


14. ye see the man is mad] So speaks Achish concerning David. David feigned madness. In Christ, the true David, there are none of the infirmities of David. David said that he came on the king's business. This was not true of him, but it is true of Christ, who said, "Wilt ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke ii. 49.) "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." (John v. 30; vii. 58). David feigned to be mad, and was despised as such. Christ is the wisdom of God, but even His own friends said of Him, "He is beside Himself." (Mark iii. 21); and His Gospel was rejected as foolishness by the princes of this world (1 Cor. i. 22. 26); ii. 6—8; and to Christ's Apostle it was said, "Much learning doth make thee mad." (Acts xxvi. 24). Cp. S. Augustine in Ps. xxiii.

Ct. XXI. 1. Adullam] in the lowlands of Judah; probably near Shichoh and Azekah, about eight miles from Bethlehem, from which place David's brethren came to him.
Samuel sends for

1 SAMUEL XXII. 2—15.

Ahimelech the Priest.

and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. 2 And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men. 3 And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me. 4 And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold. 5 And the prophet Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth. 6 When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that were with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him;) 7 Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds; 8 That all of you have conspired against me, and there is none that sheweth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you that is sorry for me, or sheweth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day? 9 Then answered Doeg the Edomite, which was set over the servants of Saul, and said, I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. 10 And he enquired of the Lord for him, and gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine. 11 Then the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that were in Nob: and they came all of them to the king. 12 And Saul said, Hear now, thou son of Ahitub. And he answered, Here I am, my lord. 13 And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast enquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day? 14 Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said, And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son in law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house? 15 Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king countenance this interpretation. God came to David there, and directed him to return to Judah. 5. Gad] who was probably brought up in Samuel's school of the Prophets, and was informed that David had been anointed by him, and afterwards is called his son's seer (2 Sam. xxiv. 11. 1 Chron. xxi. 9. 2 Chron. xxix. 25), and the chronicler of his acts (1 Chron. xxiv. 20). 6. under a tree in Ramah] Rather, under the terebinth on the hill, or high place, of Gibeah, Saul's own city. On the word ezel, here rendered tree, see Gen. xxi. 93 ; below, xxi. 13. 1 Chron. x. 12. Gen. 56; and as to the word Ramah (here with the article), high place, see Ezek. xvi. 24 ; and Gen. 760; and Keil, 64. 14. goeth at thy bidding] Rather, who is admitted to thy private audience. The Hebrew word here rendered goeth is from sar, to retire, to draw near (Genes. 592); and the words seem to mean, who retires to thy audience, i.e., is admitted to thy secret counsels: see 2 Sam. xxiii. 23. 1 Chron. xi. 25. and Genes. 518. 15. for him] No, it was not for him, but for thee, whose son-in-law and loyal subject he is.
impute any thing unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father: for thy servant knew nothing of all this, 16 less or more. And the king said, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father’s house. 17 And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the Lord; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me. But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the Lord. 18 And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod. 19 o And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.

20 p And one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Abitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David. 21 And Abiathar shewed David that Saul had slain the Lord’s priests. 22 And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father’s house. 23 Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.

XXIII. 1 Then they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshingfloors. 2 Therefore David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the Lord said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah. 3 And David’s men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines? 4 Then David enquired of the Lord yet again. And the Lord answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand. 5 So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. 6 And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand.
7 And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars. 8 And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men. 9 And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him; and 4he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod. 10 Then said David, O Lord God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, 5to destroy the city for my sake. 11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down. 12 Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up.

13 Then David and his men, 7which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth. 14 And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in 8a mountain in the wilderness of 9Ziph. And Saul 1sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand. 15 And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.

16 And Jonathan Saul’s son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God. 17 And he said unto him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and 8that also Saul my father knoweth. 18 And they two 1made a covenant before the Lord: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.

19 Then 6came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strong holds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which is 7on the south of 8Jeshimon? 20 Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and 9our part shall be to deliver him into the king’s hand. 21 And Saul said, Blessed be ye of the Lord; for ye have compassion on me. 22 Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and see his place where his 7haunt is, and who hath seen him there: for it is told me that he dealeth very subtilly. 23 See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hideth himself, and come ye again to me with the certainty, and I will go with you: and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that I will search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah.

24 And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men were in the wilderness 9of Maon, in the plain on the south of Jeshimon.
25. Saul also and his men went to seek him. And they told David: wherefore he came down || into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon. 26 And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: 7 and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them. 27 But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have 7 invaded the land. 28 Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place | Sela-hammahlekoth.

29 And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at 7 En-gedi. 30 And it came to pass, 7 when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi. 31 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the top of the wild goats. 32 And he came to the sheepepeotes, where was a cave; and 7 Saul went in to 7 cover his feet: and 7 David and his men remained in the sides of the cave. 33 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemies into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of 7 Saul’s robe privily. 34 And it came to pass afterward, that 7 David’s heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul’s skirt. 35 And he said unto his

which David withdrew for fear of Saul. According to Josephus (Antt. ix. 1. 2) it lay upon the lake Asphaltites, and was celebrated for beautiful palm-trees, whence its name Hazzezon Tamar; and its vineyards are likewise mentioned in the Old Testament (Cant. i. 14). Robinson, ii. 201, 214. Dr. Thomson’s description, Land and Book, pp. 602, 603; and the description and view in the Rev. H. B. Tristram’s Land of Israel, pp. 251, 282.

Ch. xxiv. 3. a cave] Supposed by some to be a large cave called Elmasmaad in Wady Chaerien (S.E. of Tekoa), described by Pococke (p. 41), and by Tandevelde (p. 74), but this seems to be too far from Engedi.

4. cut off the skirt of Saul’s robe] The skirt (literally, the wing) of his long outer mantle (manit). Saul had probably laid aside his loose mantle, when he retired for the purpose mentioned in v. 3, and had left his mantle on the ground, which David espied (perhaps it was of a bright colour, such as was worn by kings), and he advanced from his retreat, and cut off the skirt of it.

Probably David would have felt too much reverence for Saul, to injure his robe, if it had been actually on his royal person at the time; as it was, “his heart smote him because he had cut off Saul’s skirt.”

5—8. For lessons of Christian loyalty to kings, derivable from this history, see the sermon of Bp. Andrews on this text, iv. 151—152.

Many divines of the Roman Church, especially among the Jesuits, have not hesitated to affirm that David would have been justified in killing Saul, as an act of self-defence: see Lessius de Justitia ii. 9, 12, 8, and Cuvæus, Cordeba, Nauvariis, and others quoted by A. Lapide here; an opinion which contraduces David’s own declaration, v. 10, 11; xxxi. 9, 11; and 2 Sam. i. 14—16. Cp. S. Chrys., tom. iv. p. 797. S. Augustin e. litt. Petilian., “David Saulen, propter sacro-sanctum unctunem, et honoravit vivum, et indicavit occisum;” and below, on iv. 13.

5. David’s heart] Here heart is used for conscience, as often in Hebrew: see Prov. iv. 23. Eccl. vii. 22; note below, on 1 John iii. 21; and Bp. Sanderson on Conscience, Prel. l. § 3.
David's speech to Saul.

1 Samuel XXIV. 7—22.

Saul weeps.

men, 

† Heb. cut off.

1 Ps. 7, 4.

Matt. 5, 44.

Rom. 12, 17, 19.

David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself. 

And David said to Saul, Wherefore hast thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seethk thy hurt?

Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it. 

The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea. 

The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, "Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as thou hast delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go away? wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day. And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. 

Swear now therefore unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house. And David swore unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

6. The Lord forbid! Ltt. a curse be to me from the Lord (Genes. 280). Cp. Josh. xxii. 29; below, xxvi. 11. 1 Kings xxii. 3. "There is not in any tongue so earnest, passionate an abomination, abjuration, abronunciation as this" (Bp. Andrews, loc. cit.).

David showed more heroism in conquering his own anger, ambition, and revenge, and in sparing Saul, than in conquering Goliath the champion of the Philistines. & Chrys., in the homilies quoted at the end of this chapter, p. 761.

7. suffered them not] Ltt. tore them away. Cp. Genes. 841. Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked! It comes from the wicked; but does not proceed from me.

David, though he could not but desire the accomplishment of God's gracious promise to advance him to the kingdom, which was not his yet, otherwise than by God's designation, but another's (i.e. Saul's); yet when he was urged by his followers to lay hold of a fair opportunity, which, they thought, God had put into his hand for the effect thereof, his soul did so much abhor the very mention of such a fact, that at two several times (cp. xxvi. 11) he would not so much as take the advice into the least deliberation, but rejected it, with an Abash! too. "Shall I lay these hands upon the Lord's anointed? God forbid! No; I will not do it for a kingdom; such wicked facts I leave for wicked men to act. God can, and will, in His own due time make good His own promise without my sin. I shall be content to wait His leisure, and to remain in the sad condition I now am in, till it shall please Him to bring me out of it." Bp. Sanderson, loc. cit.

Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked—a prophetic speech. Thy death will not be from me, who have no such evil thoughts—but from the wicked. And so it was: Saul perished by his own wicked hands (xxxi. 4).

14. a flea] Ltt. one flea: a single one; and so Sept., Vulg. cp. xxvi. 20; the only other place where it is mentioned in the Bible (Thomson).

16. Is this thy voice, my son David?] David, by his tender-ness and forbearance, heaped coals of fire—of burning shame, remorse, and love, on Saul's head. Cp. below, xxvi. 17; and note Rom. xii. 20; and S. Chrys. Hom., quoted below, p. 778.

22. David gat unto the hold] David swear to Saul, and was true to him; but David could not trust Saul.
Death of Samuel.  1 SAMUEL XXV. 1—11.

David and Nabal.

XXV. 1. And a Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

2. And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. 3. Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb. 4. And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep. 5. And David sent out ten young men, who said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name: 6. And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast. 7. And now I have heard that thou hast shearsers: now they shepherds which were with us, we had hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel. 8. Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: for we come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David. 9. And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased. 10. And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a day, and they break away every man from his master. 11. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearsers, and give it? 12. (Heb. slaughter.)

Certainly Psalms of David appear to be connected with the incidents related in this chapter; especially Psalm liii., see the title to that Psalm, "when he fled from Saul in the cave" ("Be merciful unto me, O God"); and ep. Ps. liii., and Ps. liii., which will be read with interest in reference to these incidents.

There are three eloquent homilies of S. Chrysostom, on Saul and David, which relate to this portion of the history: see S. Chrysost. in ep. xx. p. 753; ed. Montfaucon. Meditate, he says, on this example of David; and do thou imitate it. Imitate it, in his self-control and in his love of his enemy. The cave in which he was, became like a Christian Church; and he was like a Christian Bishop, who first preaches a sermon, and then offers the sacrifice of the altar. (On the sense in which S. Chrysostom used the words, "offers the sacrifice of the altar," see below, notes on Heb. ix. 12, p. 411.) So David preached a sermon by his example; and offered a true sacrifice, the spiritual sacrifice of himself, of his own anger: he became as it were a priest, a sacrifice, and an altar; and having offered this victim, he gained a glorious victory (S. Chrys., tom. iv. p. 761).

Crt. XXV. 1. Samuel died] According to Josephus (vi. 13. 5) he had judged Israel twelve years after Eli's death, and eighteen years together with Saul the king; see above, on xx. 33. After the death of Samuel the Prophet his protector and friend, David, small and friendless, seemed to be more desolate, and retired to a greater distance from the persecution of Saul. — Ramah] where Samuel was born and lived; see on i. 1. — wilderness of Paran] the northern tract of the desert of Arabia: see Num. x. 12. — Woe is me (he says, Ps. xxiii. 5) that I sojourn in Moab, and dwell in the tents of Kedar. My flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where water is " (Ps. liii. 11; exii. 6). — Maon] in the hill-country of Judah, where he had been before: see xxii. 21. — Carmel] not the Carmel on the sea-coast, celebrated in the history of Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 19), but in the hill-country of Judah, about a mile N.W. of Maon. It is now called Kurmul; "where are more extensive ruins than we yet had seen any where unless, perhaps, at Bethel. The ruins of the town lie around the head, and along the two sides, of a valley, the head of which forms a semicircular amphitheatre shut in by rocks; the bottom of which is formed by a beautiful grass-plot with an artificial fountain in the middle. Here Saul set up the trophy of his victory over Amalek, and here Nabal was shearing his sheep, when the affair took place in which Abigail bore so conspicuous a part (Robinson, ii. 196, 199). 3. Nabal] On the meaning of which name see v. 25. — Abigail] which means whose father is joy (Genen. 5). 4. David heard in the wilderness] of Paran; see v. 1. He was drawn from his retreat by these tidings. 5. go to Nabal, and greet him] In all these particulars (says Dr. Robinson) when we were at Kurmul, and were in the midst of scenes memorable for the adventures of David, we were deeply struck with the truth and strength of the biblical description of manners and customs, almost identically the same as those that exist at the present day. On such a festiva occasion as a sheep-shearing, near a town or village, an Arab Sheikh of the neighbouring desert would hardly fail to put in the word, either in person or by messenger; and his message would be a transcript of that of David to Nabal (Robinson, ii. 200, 201). 6. that liveth] or, literally, to life. It seems to be a salutation like vives vel laesum! See Ps. Pearson on the Creed, Art. xii., note, p. 305. 9. and ceased] See Genen. 539. Some interpret it "they sat down," waiting for a reply. They added nothing of their own, but delivered the message of their master, precisely as David had uttered it. 11. my bread] Nabal says,—my bread, my water, my flesh, my shearsers; as if any thing were really his own, and not lent to him by God! Our Lord, describing the Nabal (or fool) of the Gospel; who had said, "I have no room where to bestow my fruits; I will pull down my barns, and will build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits, and my goods; and I will say to my soul, Thou hast much good things laid up for many years; take thin me ease; eat, drink, and be merry," adds, that God said unto him, "Thou fool (θοὺς) (thou second Nabal,) this night shall thy soul be required of thee; and then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" See below, on Luke xii. 17—20. 55
unto men, whom I know not whence they be? 12 So David’s young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings. 13 And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the stuff.

14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal’s wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them. 15 But the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields: 16 They were a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. 17 Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him. 18 Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an hundred || clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses. 19 And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal. 20 And it was so, as she rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them. 21 Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained unto him: and he hath required me evil for good. 22 So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave all of that pertain to him by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.

23 And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, 24 And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine heart, and hear the words of thine handmaid. 25 Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; || Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send. 26 Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withheld thee from coming to shed

13. the stuff ] See Gen. xxxi. 37; xlv. 20 above, x. 22; below, xxx. 24.

17. son of Belial] See on Deut. xiii. 13, and Judg. xiv. 22.

22. So and more also do God unto — David] David swears that he will destroy every male of Nabal’s household. Yet he did not keep this oath; and he afterwards blessed God that he was prevented from keeping it (see v. 33), for he was under a previous obligation to obey God, and not to commit murder. He sinned in swearing such an oath; but he would have sinned more, if he had added the sin of murder to the sin of swearing a rash oath. Here is instruction with regard to rash oaths and unlawful vows: see Bp. Sanderson de Juram. lii. 16; and note below, on Matt. xlv. b. Acts xxiii. 12. Observe the contrast between the cases of David and Herod. David is deterred by the expostulations of Abigail, a prudent and fair woman, from keeping his oath, and from putting to death an evil man, Nabal; and he blesses God for it. Herod is urged by Herodias and her mother, two women fair in countenance, but foul in heart, to keep his rash oath, and to put to death a holy man, John the Baptist; and he suffered remorse for doing so (Matt. xiv. 1, 2), and afterwards fell into greater sin, and mocked the Divine David (Luke xxiii. 11), and came to a miserable end.


23. lighted off the ass] as Achish did, before her father (JOSH. xv. 18).

25. man of Belial] man of naught, a weak creature: see on Deut. xiii. 13: above, x. 17; below, xxx. 22.

— Nabal is his name, and folly is with him] Rather, silliness is with him. He is by nature a weak creature. Do not therefore heed what he says. Abigail apologizes for her husband, and represents him as offending out of stolidity and silliness, rather than of malice prepense. Nabal, i. e. â€œa fool, the word used by our Lord in St. Luke’s Gospel: see above, on v. 11 (from the word nabal, to fade away, Genesis 528), and the Sept. here has φρονοντα μετ’ αθροι, and Josephus (vi. 13. 7) says that Nabals κατ’ εννυγιαν γλασταν αφρονιταν βαφλα, not so strong a word as μωραι. Job applies the word Nabul to his wife (Job ii. 10), as Abigail does to her husband.
blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal. 27 And now this blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord. 28 I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fought the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days. 29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling. 30 And it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel; 31 That this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offense of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.

32 And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: 33 And blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, that hast kept me this day from shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand. 34 For in very deed, as the Lord God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall. 35 So David received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said unto her, Go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person.

36 And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light. 37 But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. 38 And it came to pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal, that he died. 39 And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the Lord, that hath pleaded the cause of my person.

31. That this shall be no grief unto thee] Like a wise woman, she reserves the strongest argument for the last. 

26. as Nabal weak, and insignificant, unable to hurt thee; Abigail refers to the etymology of the name, which means to win, to flee away, like a flower or grass. 27. this blessing the blessing of God, which is put almost hypothetically. "Si enim surrexit," (Targ.) — in the bundle of life: in the bundle of the living ones with the Lord; i.e., of those who live with Jehovah, the Ever-living One, both in time and eternity. Cp. Pfeiffer, p. 200.

15. this shall be no grief unto thee. The remembrance that thou hast heard my prayer, and spared Nabal, shall be no grief, literally, no offence, no stumbling-block, to thee, nor offence of heart, no stone of stumbling to thy conscience: see xxiv. 5.

16. that thou hast shed blood causelessly. Rather, both for shedding blood without a cause, and for avenging thyself, instead of committing thy cause to God. This clause hangs upon the foregoing word, stumbling-block. The sparing of Nabal will be no such stumbling-block as thou wouldest have for killing him, and for taking vengeance into thine own hands, instead of reserving it to God. Cp. Rom. xii. 19, and the words of Solomon (Prov. xx. 22). "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and He shall save thee.

32. Blessed be the Lord] David knew the corruption of his own heart. "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins," was his prayer to God (Ps. xix. 13); and if he was kept back from sinning, he praised God for it. Here is a double lesson to us, not to rely on ourselves, but on God's grace. See Bp. Sanderson, i. 109, on Ps. xix. 13.

reproof from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head.

And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife.

And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.

And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsel's of hers that went after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel; and they were also both of them his wives.

But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Phalti the son of Laish, which was of Gallim.

And the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon? Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness. David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the midst of the people pitched round about him.

Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee. So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.

And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who


2. The wilderness of Ziph] That entire region is now almost deserted, except by Bedouin robbers, who render it as dangerous to honest shepherds as it was in David's time: see Dr. Thomson, p. 651.

— Three thousand chosen men] His body-guard: see xii. 2. Abishai [brother to Joab, son of David's sister Zeruiah (1 Chron. ii. 16). His spear stuck in the ground] See on v. 11.

7. God hath delivered thine enemy] him whom thou hast saved, and who on several occasions has sought to kill thee (xviii. 25; xix. 10). Cp. Ps. Andrews (iv. 27).

— let me smite him] At the cave of Engedi, David's men had permitted David himself to smite Saul, whom they said the Lord had delivered into his hand; and David then said, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed" (xxiv. 4—6).

Abishai does not ask David to smite Saul, but asks his leave that he himself may do it—"Let me smite him." David might have pleaded that it was not his own act; but he will not do this. He forbids Abishai to smite Saul: "Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?" For the lessons of Christian loyalty to be derived from these words, the reader may refer to the Sermon of By. Andrews on this text, vol. iv. pp. 21—42.

These inferences with regard to the duty of reverence to kings may be extended further, to all rulers, spiritual and temporal.
can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? 10 David said furthermore, “As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.” 11 The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord’s anointed.

but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go. 12 So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither was it known: for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them.

Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of an hill afar off; a great space being between them: 14 And David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner? Then Abner answered and said, Who art thou that criest to the king? 15 And David said to Abner, Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord. 16 This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the Lord liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept thy master, the Lord's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster. 17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, 'Is this thy voice, my son David?' And David said, 'It is my voice, my lord, O king.' 18 And he said, 'Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand?' 19 Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the Lord hath stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord.'
for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods. 20 Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.

21 Then said Saul, 'I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.' 22 And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it. 23 'The Lord render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the Lord delivered thee into my hand to day, but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed. 24 And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation. 25 Then Saul said to David, Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

XXVII. 1 And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand. 2 And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that were with him unto Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath. 3 And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, even David 'with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife.

— saying, Go, serve other gods.] He does not so much quote their words as represent the tendency of their acts (Keil).

20. let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord] for He will surely avenge it. The word here rendered before is more with in prefixed, and is rendered by some far from, as in Ps. xxxviii. 11 (so Keil). Drive me not to a foreign land that my blood may be split there. But the former interpretation seems preferable, and this sense of mi-neged is illustrated by Gen. xxi. 16, and other passages: see Green. 531.

—a partridge] Heb. Lord. The word is only found here, and in Jer. xvii. 11. Its name is derived from the Hebrew karas, to cry. The Sept. renders it by ψυροδιξα: Vulg. and other ancient versions by perdix, partridge; and this seems to be the right rendering.

The sense is, Thou, the King of Israel, hasten me, who am not worthy thy pains; and thou dost it in strange places; and when thou mightest employ thy time in other pursuits, as in conquests over the enemies of Israel. As if a hunter, who might find coveys of partridges in the fields, should leave the lowlands, and come and range the mountains in quest of some one solitary bird. The species of partridge here described is probably that which when chased will not rise into the air, but runs rapidly along the ground, and which is pursued by the Arabs, and when weary and can run no further, is knocked down by them with their staves. Shaw, Travels, p. 236. Cp. Winer, R. W. B. ii. 307.

David's language in Ps. xi. is very appropriate here, and seems to have been suggested by the incidents in the text,—'In the Lord put I my trust; how say ye, then to my soul that she should flee, as a bird unto the hill?' 25. thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail] Saul is here also among the prophets,' and foretells David's exaltation and victory. 'Vieicti, Nazaren!]' was the exclamation of Julian.

Ct. xxvii. 1. I shall now perish.] These words, excerpted from David, prove Saul's faithlessness and impenitence—like that of Pharaoh—after protestations of remorse: see ch. xxvi. 21. This narrative prepares us for Saul's desperate resolve, described in the next chapter; and it accounts for God's refusal to hear him. There was some infirmity in this act of David, saying that he should perish by the hand of Saul. It may be compared with the temporary weakness of Abraham, leading him to dissemble, first with Pharaoh, and afterwards with Abimelech (Gen. xx. 12).

Although David had a promise of the kingdom from God, yet he feared that he should perish one day by the hand of Saul; and in a kind of distrust of God's truth and protection, he ventured so far upon his own head, never so much as asking counsel at the hand of God, as to expose himself to great inconveniences, hazards, and temptations, in the midst of a hostile and idolatrous people; and he was sensible of the imperfection, and acknowledged it as an incurability, and strived against it (Ps. lxviii. 10—12). Bp. Sanderson (i. 414).

—there is nothing better for me than] Literally, there is not anything good for me here: but I will escape into the land of the Philistines. That which he had most deprecated (xvi. 19). "They have driven me out from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord," is now forced upon him by Saul.

Here was another sign of distrust of David, of which he afterwards repented. He says, there is nothing good for him in the land of Israel. But he afterward said, "It is good for me to hold me fast by God; to put my trust in the Lord God" (Ps. lxii. 7); and he censured those who said, "Who will show us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us" (Ps. iv. 6), and he encouraged himself in the Lord his God: see below, xxx. 6.

2. Achish.] See xxvi. 11. 1 Kings ii. 39. Whether this Achish is the same person as there mentioned, or whether Achish may not have been an official title of the princes of Gath, cannot be determined.

3. Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess.] Ahinoam means my brother is delight; and Jezreel signifies son of God. Abigail means my father is exaltation; and Carmel means fruitful field.

Some of the ancient Fathers regard the wives of David as types of Christian Churches (see Ambrose, Epist. 31); and these names might be applied in a spiritual sense to Churches of Christ.

David was a type of Christ; but what in the human type was sinful, was, as it were, purified from its sinfulness in the Divine Antitype. David sinned in taking many wives; but Christ's love is seen in His spiritual union with all Churches and with faithful souls in them: see below, 2 Sam. v. 15.
And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him.

And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee? Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore David pertained unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was ἣ a full year and four months.

And David and his men went up, and invaded * the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the * Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, *as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt. And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.

And Achish said, || Whither have ye made a road to day? And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of * the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of * the Kenites. And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring * tidings to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.

And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.

XXVIII. 1 And * it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men. 2 And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

Now * Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away * those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land. 4 And the Philistines

6. Ziklag] on the west side of the south country of Judah: see Josh. xxv. 31. Here, or in its neighbourhood, David sojourned for a year and four months; cp. xxv. 14. 26. 1 Chron. xii. 1—7, 20, where is a list of the mighty men who came to him there; and there he received the tidings of Saul’s death (2 Sam. i. 1; iv. 10): its exact site has not been determined: see Grove, B. D. ii. 1551. It has been conjectured to be at Aroch, three hours E. of Scobate (Rowlands, Robinson, Wilton). 7. a full year] Literally, days. Cp. Lev. xxv. 22; above, l. 3. 29; b. 19.

8. went up] to the mountainous region, south of Judah, and north of Paran.

Geshurites] on the south of Philistia: see Josh. xiii. 2. They and the Gezrites were Canaanites, whom God had commanded Israel to dispossess (Grotius). David was not a private person, but had been anointed king of Israel, and acted as such (A Lesley).

* Amalekites] who were under the Divine maldirection for their cruelty and treachery toward Israel: see above, iv. 1, 2.

10. Whither] So the ancient versions render the Hebrew w歸: cp. Gesen. 46. Some modern expositors interpret it as equivalent to an interrogative not: "Ye have not made any excursion to-day, have ye?" Compare the margin here, and Gesen., p. 44. Keil, p. 188.

Against the south of Judah] Here David is betrayed into an equivocation by his distrust in God, and by his recourse to Achish; see on xxv. 1.

It was true that the country on which he had made an invasion was to the south of Judah, and of the regions here mentioned; but it was not true that it was the land of Israel, or of their allies, as Achish was led to believe (v. 12). Cp. on xxv. 1. — Jerahmeelites] the descendants of Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, the grandson of Judah (1 Chron. ii. 25).

* Kenites] who were under the protection of Judah (Judg. i. 10).

11. So did David, and so will be his manner] Rather, so did David. Here should be a full stop; and here the historian makes an addition of his own: and so was his manner all the while he dwelt in the country of the Philistines. So Sept., Vulg., Syriac, Arabic, Targum. The sacred historian does not disguise from the reader, that David resorted to unworthy shifts and prevarications, and to acts, it may be, of cruelty. Such were the results of his want of trust in the Divine Providence and protection (see v. 1), and of his looking for aid and defence to the arm of flesh, particularly to the enemies of God and His Church—the Philistines—instead of relying upon God. Here is a proof of ingenuousness and veracity in the historian; and these incidents in David’s life are recorded as a warning to men and churches, that they should not resort to doubtful expedients, but cleave stedfastly to God in all dangers and adversities. Cp. xxii. 1.

Ch. XXVIII. 2. thou shalt know what thy servant can do] David does not promise his own co-operation against Israel. His answer is ambiguous; and here is another evidence of the effects of his distrust in God: cp. xxvii. 10, 11. But God mercifully interfered to deliver him from the dilemma in which he had placed himself: see xxvii. 4.

3. Samuel was dead] See xxv. 1.

4. Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards] The command of the Levitical law was, “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” (Exod. xxi. 18. Lev. xx. 27). Saul had put away, not destroyed, those that had familiar spirits.
12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the

God does not answer Saul. 1 SAMUEL XXVIII. 5—12. Saul resorts to witchcraft.

gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa. And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

6 And when Saul enquired of the Lord, "the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. 7 Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.

8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee. 9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? 10 And Saul sware to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, to thee there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing. 11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

9 (both; see Lev. xix. 31), and the wizards; see Lev. xix. 31; xx. 6. Deut. xviii. 11.

Shunem (as Cp. Josh. xix. 15), now Saul, or Salem, on the eastern side of the plain of Josh, or Esdraul, about eight miles s.w. of Mount Tabor, about a mile to the south of Saul, and about four to the south of Nazareth (Robinson, iii. 160. "Vandeveldt, p. 349.

It was the native place of Abishag, "the Shunammite" (1 Kings i. 3), and was afterwards the scene of Elisha's miracle, related in 2 Kings iv. 18; and the neighbourhood had been rendered illustrious by the victories of Deborah and Gideon over the enemies of Israel (Judg. iv. 7; vii. 1—22), but now it was to be made memorable by a very different event.

Salem affords an admirable camp-ground for a large army, Jebel-el-Duhy rising abruptly behind it, and the top of it commanding a perfect view of the great plain in every direction, so that there could be no surprise, nor their march be impeded, or retreat cut off (Thomson, p. 451).

— in Gilboa; now Jellon (Robinson, iii. 157, 158. "Vandeveldt, 316. The mountain range of Gilboa, now called Jebel Ekvah, rises on the eastern side of the plain of Esdraelon, and extends its white, bleak, barren cliffs ten miles, from west to east (Porter, Thomson). The Philistines had now penetrated into the very heart of the country, and the king of Israel and his army lay to the south of them, at Gilboa.

6. Saul enquired of the Lord; in 1 Chron. x. 14 it is said that Saul did "not inquire of the Lord," and that therefore "He slew Him." But the word there used in the original is different. The word here used is Shaft, to ask; there, it is darath, to seek diligently. Saul did, indeed, ask of God, but he did not seek diligently to Him; and the difference is strongly marked in that passage (1 Chron. x. 13), where it is said that he did ask of the familiar spirit: he did seek diligently to it; cp. Aaron Pick, Prof. to Hebr. Concordance. — the Lord answered him not: for Saul was persisting obstinately in his iniquity. He had killed the Lord's priests, and had not repented of his sin in persecuting David, whom he did not allow to return to his own land; and his unhappy temper is shown by his resort to witchcraft, which God commanded to be exterminated, and which he himself, in a better mood, had put away (v. 4). Therefore God hid His face from him.

— by Urim] on the High Priest's Ephod; see Exod. xxviii. 30. It seems that Abiathar himself, the High Priest who had the ephod, had been compelled to flee to David to Ziklag (see xxx. 7; and cp. xxvii. 6); and it is supposed by some (as Kirchen) that Saul sent to Abiathar to ask counsel by him. In v. 15, Saul does not mention the Urim: see note there.
woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.

And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what savest thou? And

(8) Early Christian writers agreed with the Hebrew Church. Thus Justin Martyr (c. Trypho. § 105) says, “That the soul lives after death, I have shown from the fact that the soul of Samuel was brought up to the woman with a familiar spirit, as Saul had desired.” The point is also described by Origen, in his second homily on this book (Hom. ii. pp. 490—495), where he examines and rectifies the opinion of those who alleged that it was only a phantom like Samuel which appeared to the sorceress, and which spoke to Saul. Especially by Jerome, and in later times, e.g. in the third century, wrote a treatise on the Witch of Endor, but it is not now extant.

S. Ambrose (in Luc. cap. i.) expresses the same opinion, “Sorceros sedecim, secundum Scripturam testimonium, futura non facit.”

S. Augustin, after a discussion of the question in his former treatises, De divers. Quaed. ad Simplicianum, ii. Qu. 3, and De Octo Dulcitiis Questionibus, Qu. 6, appears to have made up his mind in a later work. De Cor. pro Morbius agendi, cap. 15, and compares the appearance of Samuel to that of Moses and Elias at the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 3. Luke ix. 30), S. Basil, Epist. 80: S. Gregory Nazian. Orat. iii.; S. Jerome in Esaiae, c. viii.; Theodoret, Qu. 68.; Sulp. Severus, Hist. iii., i.; I accusations, which is adopted by many expositors, Abulfus, Cujiaetas, Lyra, Hugo, Cornelius a Lapide, Tostrates, Sanctius; and, hesitatingly, by Natalis Alexander, Hist. Eccles. iii. 124; Wonnevort, and others; and this is the reading of the Vulgate. A similar point is made in the sermon on this subject (vol. i. p. 411); see also Dr. Kitto (p. 294—298), and among later German writers, Gertlach, Delitzsch, Stroebel, and Keil. In the heading of the chapter in our Authorized Version we read, “The witch raiseth Samuel.”

On the other side Tertullian de Animis, c. 47: S. Cyril. Alex. de Adorat. 187—191, may be cited, and a sentence of S. Jerome in Matt. vii. 54, where he says, “In Samuleis phanumata Pythiaensae loquitur ad Saulum, Cras eris messor,” Euth. of Angioli, S. Alphonsius de Saulo et Samuel, Spei.

1. It is not likely that God would have allowed a witch to bring up the holy prophet by her magical art. But here we may reply,—It is not said that she brought up Samuel: indeed it appears, that before she had time to resort to her magical arts, or, at least, before she had got her own instruments against them. As he says by Ezekiel (xiv. 4, 7), “The Lord will answer him that cometh” (as an idiom) “according to the multitude of his idols.” I will answer him by Myself, and will set my face against him, and send forth my Spirit of Samuel as the Prophet, to confound the witch in her witchcrafts, and to do his work of a prophet even after death, and to pronounce sentence on the king for his sins, and to foretell to him his coming days.

Saul says to Saul, “Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?” Hence it is alleged, that God would not have allowed the soul of his faithful servant to be disquieted in his repose by Saul or by a sorceress.

But Samuel might well complain of Saul’s sin, as the cause of his mission, without in any way imputing any thing to God Who sent him. He might also well complain that Saul had resorted to magical arts in order to bring him up, and he might well be disturbed by godly sorrow and indignation on this account. He could not but grieve for Saul; and this declaration of his own disquietude is a beautiful trait in his character: it is a sympathetic expression of sorrow for Saul’s lamentable fall, which was the occasion to Samuel of being the messenger of evil tidings to Saul—tidings that might bring tears into the eyes of the holy angels. Even the Holy One of God, Who dwells in heavenly bliss, said to Saul of Tarsus, on his way to Damascus, “Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?” (Acts ix. 4, 5);

It is not to be inferred from this story, that Sorcerers and Necromancers have power to disturb the repose of the departed spirits of the righteous; but Holy Scripture teaches in this narrative, that, for adequate reasons, God may employ the spirits of his Prophets and Confessors to practice such evil arts, and to punish those who resort to them.

(3) It is objected, that the words of the Spirit to Saul, “To-morrow shalt thou be with me” (c. 19), could not have proceeded from God himself, inasmuch as Saul did not die on the following day; and the soul of Saul after death cannot be supposed to have been with that of Samuel;

But to this it may be replied, with S. Jerome (on Matt. vii. 54), that, according to Hebrew usage, the Hebrew word adhakar (to-morrow) does not here mean the next day, but some near future time. Cep. Exod. xiii. 14. Deut. viii. 20. Josh. iv. 6; xii. 24. Isa. xxii. 13. Genes. 466. Cep. 1 Cor. xvi. 22, And, in saying, “Thou shalt be with me,” Samuel does not pronounce Saul’s final condemnation; for he had no mission to do so, but rather draws him by tenderness to a better mind. He uses a mild and charitable expression (as St. Paul does in 1 Cor. xi. 30) applicable to all, whether good or bad, “Thou shalt be as I am, no longer among the living: In the vision of the world of spirits, he was believed to be in another world. Blessed was the man, whom God had preserved and Lazarus may be said to be together in the abode of departed spirits, for Dives saw Lazarus and conversed with Abra-

While there was life, there was hope: the door was still open, and by speaking of to-morrow he urged him not to delay his repentance; and if Saul had listened to the warning of Samuel, even then, who can say that he might not have been raised again into the favour of God, and have been numbered hereafter with the penitent to whom the Lord said, “To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise?” (Luke xxi. 28), though there was a gulf fixed between them.

If Samuel had said to Saul, “Thou shalt be among the damned,” he would have crushed him with a weight of despair, and have hardened him in his iniquity; but by using this gentler expression he mildly exhorted him to repentance. While there was life, there was hope: the door was still open, and by speaking of to-morrow he urged him not to delay his repentance; and if Saul had listened to the warning of Samuel, even then, who can say that he might not have been raised again into the favour of God, and have been numbered hereafter with the penitent to whom the Lord said, “To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise?” (Luke xxi. 28), though there was a gulf fixed between them.

This history is fraught with spiritual instruction.

(1) It contains a clear, divine testimony to the existence of the human soul after death. Samuel had been dead several years (xxv. 1), but his soul was alive; his soul appears here and speaks to Saul.

(2) It shows the bitter consequences of being forsaken of God, and supplies a solemn warning against disobedience and impiety, and against the sin of stilling God’s voice speaking by Holy Scripture; and of resorting to familiar spirits, or to any other unlawful means, for counsel and guidance.

Saul, at the beginning of his reign, had been endowed with many gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, but he had disobeyed God. He was not waiting upon God to help him in his hard cases, or in his mission against Amalek (xx. 10—22); and Samuel, when alive, had pronounced God’s judgments against him for his disobedience; but Saul had not profited by the warning; and God took away His Spirit from him, and Saul was visited by an evil spirit, and slew God’s priests, and persecuted David; and this made God grieve with him, still, and endeavoured to bring him to repentance, especially by means of David, who twice spared his life: yet though Saul was touched for a time with remorse, he hardened his heart more and more, and resolved to do his business and business as it was not by dreams, nor by Urin, nor by prophets; and in an hour of deep distress and despondency Saul resorted to witchcraft for counsel, and was caught in his own device; and God met David He met David, which he sought for enchantments, and spoke to him with the strong voice of prophecy, and a message upon him his own doom. Therefore we may well pray, “From hardness of heart, and contempt of Thy Word and Commandment, Good Lord, deliver us.”

12. (how art Saul?) Solomon had revealed this to her Josephus, vi. 14. 2). Samuel saw through Saul’s disguise (v. 8), which had deceived her whom Saul came to consult, and he

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the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. 14 And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself. 15 And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answered me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. 16 Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? 17 And the Lord hath done || to him, as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David: 18 Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. 19 Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

20 Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night. 21 And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me. 22 Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way. 23 But he refused, and said, I will not eat. But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed. 24 And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she hasted, and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof: 25 And she

spoke to Saul, as Saul (v. 16). So Ahijah the prophet, though blind by age, saw through the disguise of the wife of Jerobeam (1 Kings xiv. 2, 6).

13. I saw gods. Elohim, which may signify princes or judges. Exod. xxi. 6; xxii. 7. Ps. lxxxix. 1. 6. A Lapide here, and Green, 49, suppose it to signify a god-like form—something awefully majestic and august; and Saul seems to have understood the woman as speaking of some single apparition, for he says, What form is he of?—out of the earth.] See on v. 8. The abode of departed spirits is Sheol: they cannot hence be inferred to be below the earth; at any rate, the departed spirits of the righteous, which are “in Abraham’s bosom” (see Luke xvi. 22, 23), or “Paradise” (see Luke xxiii. 43), are not yet in heaven; nor will they be in heaven, till their bodies are raised at the general Resurrection, and are joined again to the souls, and they receive their reward of heavenly bliss at the Day of Judgment from the lips of Jesus Christ, the Judge of quick and dead.

14. a mantle. Hebrew meli: such as Samuel wore in his lifetime (xv. 57).

It is objected, How could a spirit be clothed? The answer is—God designed that the spirit of Samuel should be recognized by human eyes, and how could this have been done but by means of such objects as are visible to human sense? Our Lord speaks of the tongue of the disembodied spirit of Dives, in order to give us an idea of his sufferings; and at the Transfiguration He presented the form of Moses in such a garb to the three disciples as might enable them to recognize him as Moses.

15. Why hast thou disquieted me?] The Hebrew verb here

used is the highlit form of regas, to be stirred with any emotion, whether of anger, or sorrow, or fear: see Dent. li. 25. Ps. iv. 4. Prov. xxix. 9. Isa. xxx. 11. Cp. Genesis 756.

—answered me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams.] Why does not Saul mention the Urim, which is specified by the sacred historian (v. 6), and which was the principal means of learning the Divine Will?

—Probably Saul’s conscience smote him for having murdered Ahimelech the priest, who had the Urim, and for having killed eighty-four other priests at Nob (xxii. 18), and he did not dare to speak to Samuel of the Urim which had been worn by the priest whom he had slain. How natural this is!

17. hath done to him] Rather, hath wrought for Himself, for His own glory and truth: though thou hast resisted Him, God has worked out his own purposes by thee, as He did by Pharaoh of old (Exod. ix. 6).

—For whereby Saul’s conscience smote him for having murdered Ahimelech the priest, who had the Urim, and for having killed eighty-four other priests at Nob (xxii. 18), and he did not dare to speak to Samuel of the Urim which had been worn by the priest whom he had slain. How natural this is!

18. because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

—Be this additional argument for David’s succession, or be this additional guarantee for David’s succession to the throne. It was a proclamation of David’s royalty.

An evil spirit personating Samuel would not have spoken thus: he would not have wished to help David, the man of God’s choice, the man after God’s own heart, to the throne of Israel; nor would an evil spirit have spoken in such solemn terms of the punishment due to rebellion against God: see vs. 18, 19. Here is another evidence that the Appearance was Samuel himself.

21. I have put my life in my hand.] See xix. 5.
brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

XXIX. 1 Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel. 2 And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the rearward with Achish. 3 Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day? 4 And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, 'Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?' 5 Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, 'Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?'

6 Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the Lord liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host is good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless †the lords favour thee not. 7 Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou †displease not the lords of the Philistines. 8 And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king? 9 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou †art good in my sight, 'as an angel of God: notwithstanding †the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle. 10 Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

11 So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. 11 And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

XXX. 1 And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire; 2 And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way. 3 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives. 4 Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep. 5 And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail.

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4. the princes] Probably, the princes of the other cities of Philistia (Josh. xiii. 3; above, vi. 19).
5. Is not this David?] See xvii. 7. Thus God, in His mercy, made use of the song of the women, which had occasioned Saul's envy, to be the means for delivering David from the dilemma, in which he had been placed by resorting to Achish for shelter: see above, xxvii. 1. 10, 11.
11. into the land of the Philistines] Probably to Ziklag (1 Chron. ii. 19. 20. 22).

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Cur. XXX. 1. the Amalekites] As a reprisal for what David had done to them (xxvii. 8). In this disaster we see another evidence of the consequences of his distrust: cp. xxvii. 1.
the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. 6 And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.  
7 And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod and David. 8 And David enquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all. 9 So David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed. 10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men, for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor. 11 And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water; 12 And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights. 13 And David said unto him, To whom belongest thou? and whence art thou? And he said, I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick. 14 We made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites, and upon the coast which belongeth to Judah, and upon the south of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire. 15 And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company. 16 And when he had brought him down, behold, they were spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah. 17 And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled. 18 And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives. 19 And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters.
daughters, neither spoil, nor any thing that they had taken to them: "David recovered all. 20 And David took all the flocks and the herds, which they drove before those other cattle, and said, This is David's spoil.

21 And David came to the "two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that were with him: and when David came near to the people, he || saluted them. 22 Then answered all the wicked men and men of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them ought of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may have them, and depart. 23 Then said David, Ye shall not so do, my brethren, with that which the Lord hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. 24 For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarryth by the stuff: they shall part alike. 25 And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

26 And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, even to his friends, saying, Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the Lord; 27 To them which were in Beth-el, and to them which were in south Ramoth, and to them which were in Jattir, 28 And to them which were in Aroer, and to them which were in Siphmoth, and to them which were in Eshtemoa, 29 And to them which were in Rachal, and to them which were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to them which were in the cities of the Kenites, 30 And to them which were in Hormah, and to them which were in Chor-ashan,

20. the flocks and the herds of the Amalekites. — those other cattle which had belonged to David, and were recovered by him: cp. v. 26. — This is David's spoil? Perhaps this was sung in triumph. 22. men of Belial worthless men. See i. 6; ii. 12; x. 27; xxv. 17. — they went not with us! Here is a specimen of the envy and pride of those who imagine that no work is done in the Church of God, except it be done in their way.

24. as his part is—stiff! This decree of David seems to be founded on the law of Moses, though not exactly with what is recorded in Num. xxxi. 27.

25. he made it a statute—unto this day! And it continued to the time of the Maccabees: 2 Macc. viii. 23, 30.

The narrative of this expedition, which is introduced in the middle of a critical part of the history, and is set down with minute circumstantial detail, seems to be designed by the Holy Spirit to be exemplary and prophetical; as follows:

(1) Some moral warnings which it suggests have been already noticed: see v. 13.

(2) The reference to God for counsel and direction, before entering upon war, ought also to be observed.

(3) The moderation of David in the hour of victory is also instructive (v. 29).

(4) The decree, that they who for good reasons (see v. 21) tarry with the stuff, shall share alike with those who go down to the battle, which became a received ordinance in Israel, is not without its meaning;

In the heavenly Church of God,

—David's state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speak, And post o'er land and ocean without rest: They also serve who only stand and wait." (Milton, Sonnet xix.)

Moses, praying on the hill, contributed to the victory over Amalek, even more than Joshua fighting on the plains (Exod. xvii. 11). And in the Christian Church, provision ought to be made for prayer, and meditation, and for patient study of God's Word (see 1 Tim. iv. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 13); and for the encouragement of sacred learning, as well as for the more active exercise of pastoral duties.
and to them which were in Athach, 31 And to them which were in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.

XXXI. 1 Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. 2 And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchishua, Saul’s sons. 3 And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. 4 Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through, and ||abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; 5 for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. 6 And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. 7 So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together.

7 And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa. 9 And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among

— Athach] Its site is unknown.
31. Hebron] He had begun with Bethel (v. 27), and ended with Hebron, both of which were renowned in the history of the Patriarchs (Gen. xxiii. 17. Cp. Josh. x. 3); and thus he showed his gratitude to God.
— were went to haunt] From the liberality which dictated these presents of David, and from the testimony of the Car melodies (xxv. 13), it may be inferred, that David’s sojourn in that country was characterized by equity and mildness.

Cm. XXXI. 1. mount Gilboa] See xxviii. 4. Probably the battle took place on the plain of Jezreel, to the west of mount Gilboa; and the Israelites, being routed, took refuge in the mountain, and fell there.
2. Jonathan] Jonathan, “felix opportunitate notitia,” was spared the sorrow of hearing that his father had died by his own hand. Jonathan had not gone with his father to Endor; and we hear nothing of his being with his father when he was persecuting David; but he now comes to him when he is in distress, and assists him against the Philistines. And now he falls in battle, fighting for his father and for his country, against the enemies of Israel; and he is received to a better kingdom than that he leaves to David; and his death is an entrance into a temporal kingdom to his friend David, and into an eternal one to himself.
A blessed end.
4. test these uncircumcised come] Even in Saul’s dying speech there is something of that religious formalism which marked his character after his fall from God, and which is a striking sign of spiritual blindness: “Let those uncircumcised come.” He compares the Philistines as uncircumcised: he professes zeal for the letter of the law, just as if circumcision could profit without obedience, and as if he himself was not uncircumcised, both in heart and lips!
he fell upon it] by his own hand. Cp. 1 Chron. x. 4, 5. All the care of Saul at his death—like the care of Ahimelech (Judg. ix. 54)—was to keep his perishable body from being ill-treated by the hands of his enemies, instead of preparing his immortal soul to meet God. He thought more of temporal shame to his body than of eternal misery to his soul. He acted as a coward toward man, and as foolhardy toward God.

Such is the blindness, in which Sisian plunges those who disobey God. It must not be forgotten, that Saul was regarded by the ancient Christian Church as a figure of the Jewish Nation in its unbelief and disobedience; and Saul’s death and David’s succession were considered as typical of the abolition of Judaism, and the succession of the Gospel of Christ. “Saul (like the Beggars of Solomon) in occisione Sauli, veterem Legem abolitum monstr. Porrò in David, Novi Imperii sacramenta testatur” (S. Jerome ad Paulin., Ep. 50, p. 572).
5. he fell likewise upon his sword] Evil examples of kings provoke imitation. The armour-bearer of Saul dares do that to himself which he durst not do to his master: he would not kill Saul because he was the Lord’s anointed, but he forgot that his life was not his own, but God’s; that he himself was made in the image of God—the King of kings.

This nobler Saul (dying himself in order to avoid insult from the Philistines) has been defended, and even praised by some, e. g., Josephus, and some of the Rabbis; and even by some Christian writers, as Lyraeus, adopting the arguments of the Stoics (as Senece de Divina Provvidentialis) in favour of suicide, and who was much admired by many famous among them, as Cicero and Brutus. But these arguments have been well refuted by St. Augustin de Civ. Dei i. 17—28. Lactancius, iii. 18; vi. 11; and by A. Lapide here.

6. all his men] Explained in 1 Chron. x. 6 by “all his house.”
— that is, all the members of his house that were with him in the battle. His son Ishboseth was not there.
7. on the other side of the valley] That is, on the western side of the plain of Jezreel.
— on the other side Jordan] On the west side of Jordan. The word rendered other side here, is eber, and does not mean other side, but over again.
Cp. Josh. i. 14, 15; ix. i. 1. 1 Sam. xiv. 40. 1 Kings iv. 24; v. 4; see above, Deut. i. 1. 5; iii. 16 and the Syriac Version here.
— the Philistines came and dwelt in them] Thus at Saul’s death, almost the whole land of Israel was in the possession of the Philistines, who had been driven from that land by Samuel (vii. 13, 14). A remarkable contrast. And such was the issue of the choice of a king by the people of Israel, on motives of mere worldly policy, that they might be like other nations, and that their king might go out before them, and fight their battles! See 1 Sam. viii. 5; ix. 19, 20. A solemn warning to Christian Nations.
8. they cut off his head] Another contrast to David, who had cut off the head of Goliath. Saul’s head was fastened by the Philistines in the temple of Dagon (1 Chron. x. 10). David brought the head of the Philistine champion Goliath to Jerusalem (1 Sam. xvii. 51. 54).
— in the house of their idols] whom they praised for what was done by the God of Israel, punishing Saul for his sins.

68
the people. 10 k And they put his armour in the house of 'Ashtaroth: and m
they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.

11 o And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard of that which the
Philistines had done to Saul; p All the valiant men arose, and went all night,
and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-
shan, and came to Jabesh, and q burnt them there. 13 And they took their
bones, and r buried them under a tree at Jabesh, s and fasted seven days.

— Beth-shan] now Beisan; see Josh. xvii. 11.
11. inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead] to whom Saul had showed kindness in the begin-
ing of his reign (1 Sam. xi. 1—11).
12. burnt them] not to ashes; for the bones were left and were buried (v. 13). It was not usual among the Hebrews to
burn the bodies of the dead, but to bury them. The mortal
remains of Saul were partly burnt, because they had been "aeris
injuriis exposita, et putrefacta; et ne exponerunt urvi s udi-
bris." Pfeiffer, p. 203, who examines the question, whether
there are instances of burning the dead among the Hebrews:
those sometimes cited (2 Chron. xvi. 14; xxi. 19. Jer. xxxiv,
4, 5. Amos vi. 10) refer rather to burning of spices on the
bodies, than of the bodies themselves.
13. under a tree] under the tamarisk (Gesen. 86). Cp.
1 Chron. x. 11, 12, where the word is a more general one.
The bones were afterwards removed by David to the
burying-place of Saul's father at Zelah (2 Sam. xxi. 12—14).
I. 1 NOW it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag; 2 it came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. 3 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. 4 And David said unto him, *How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me.* And he answered, *That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.* 5 And David said unto the young man that told him, *How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?* 6 And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon a mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. 7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, *Here am I.* 8 And he said unto me, *Who art thou?* And I answered him, *I am an Amalekite.* 9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. 10 So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

11 Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise

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The Second Book of Samuel.

otherwise called,

The Second Book of the Kings.

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Ch. I. 1. *it came to pass—Amalekites.*] By these words the Author connects this Book with the preceding, in the same way as the Author of the Book of Joshua begins with recapitulating what is said at the close of the Pentateuch (Josh. i. 1). Cp. Deut. xxxiv. 5.

2. *Ziklag.*] See 1 Sam. xxvii. 6.

3. *I happened by chance.*] The Sept. has περίτεχνα περίπτωμα—"the original word is in the niphah of the Hebrew kara, to meet, to occur." Geen. 761 (see xx. 1). The Amalekite thought, "that he brought good tidings," and that David would have rewarded him for them: see ch. iv. 10.

— *horsemen.*] Lit., the masters of the cavalry: ἵππος, Sept. 9. *anguish.*] Heb. sabaha; vertigo, giddiness, diziness (Geen. 808); darkness (Sept., Syrian), cramp (Kinsch).

10. *after that he was fallen.*] On his spear (1 Sam. xxxii. 3). Others, less probably, render it "after his misfortune."

It seems that Saul, having been wounded by the archers, retired from the battle to some recess in Mount Gilboa, and his body was not found by the Philistines till the morrow: see 1 Chron. x. 8. Some suppose that this story of the Amalekite is a pure fiction invented by him to ingratiate himself with David (Theodoret, Serarius, A Lapide). But it is observable that Josephus (vi. 14. 7; vii. 1. 1) adopts the story of the Amalekite as true; and it seems that the two accounts of Saul's death are supplementary, the one to the other. Saul was the author of his own death, because he did what he could to destroy himself; but after he had fallen on his sword he may have been despatched by the Amalekite; and if the story of the Amalekite had not been founded on fact, why did not the Amalekite retract it, and so escape from punishment? And the presentation of the crown and bracelet of Saul seems to afford some warrant for its truth. If the story is true, it is worthy of remark that Saul owed his death to one of that nation of Amaleck which he had been commanded by God to destroy: 1 Sam. xv. 3. Our sins are our Amalekites, which we ought to destroy, in obedience to God; and which, if we do not destroy them, will destroy us.
all the men that were with him: 12 And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

13 And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. 14 And David said unto him, b How wast thou not afraid to k stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord’s anointed? 15 And ‘David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. 16 And David said unto him, m Thy blood be upon thy head; for a thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord’s anointed.

17 And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: 18 (‘Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written k in the book || of Jasher.)

The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places:

9 How are the mighty fallen!

20 Tell it not in Gath, Publish it not in the streets of Askelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

21 Ye “mountains of Gilboa,

20 Let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, Nor fields of offerings:

For there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, The shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.

22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,

21 The bow of Jonathan turned not back, And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

23 Saul and Jonathan were lovely and | pleasant in their lives, And in their death they were not divided:

They were swifter than eagles, stanzas, each ending with the pathetic exclamation, “How are the mighty fallen!”

21 Nor fields of offerings fields which afford firstfruits; and therefore fertile and blessed by God. David appeals to the elements and natural objects, that they may sympathize in his sorrow. Let not the blessing of God descend in dew and in rain on the mountains of Gilboa! and let no fertile regions be there, which may bring forth early fruits to be offered to Him. But let them be smitten with barrenness, for there the blood of Saul and Jonathan was spilt, and there his shield was cast away. The sense is given in Kennicott’s translation (Dissert. p. 123) and in Bishop Lowth’s metrical version of this dirge,—

“Trieste solum, Gilboa! Tuis ne in montibus unquam Vel ros, vel pluvia decidunt habere aquae: Nulla feras primos aris tua mensis homines, De grege locuta tuo victima nullus cadet!”

— cast away | as if it were despised and loathed; for the sense of the verb gaal here used, see Lev. xxvi. 11, 30, 43. Jer. xiv. 19. Gesen. 176.

— as though he had not been anointed with oil | The words, as though he had, are not in the original, and the sense seems rather to be, in that it (the shield) was not anointed with oil, but, rather, was stained with blood (cp. v. 22). It did not partake of theunction of the king, and was not profited by it. And so Sept, ὑπὲρ τοῦ σαλιὸν ὑπὲρ ἵππων ἑκάστῳ. Cp. Gesen. 122.

As to the anointing of shields, see on Isa. xx. 5. Cp. Isa. x. 27.

13. a stranger] not bound by ties of allegiance to Saul.
14. the Lord’s anointed | If the life of the Lord’s anointed was to be revered by strangers and enemies (such the Amalekites were to Saul), how much more is the life of sovereigns to be regarded by their own subjects!
15. the use of the bow | that is, David not only mourned for Saul and Jonathan in his own person, and in that of his family (see v. 11), but he composed an elegy upon their death; and he taught his own tribe, the tribe of Judah (who might be supposed to be jealous of Saul, and of the tribe of Benjamin), to sing this Dirge, called “the Bow,” from the mention of the achievements of the archery of Jonathan (v. 22); and of the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of Saul, famous for its skill in the use of the bow. 1 Chron. viii. 40; xii. 2. 2 Chron. xiv. 8; xviii. 17 (Servarius, Tironius, A Lapide, Keil). So the Lamentations of Jeremiah and others for Josiah appear to have been learned by the people, who composed for him (2 Chron. xxxv. 25).
16. The portion of Scripture, in which the vision of Moses at the bush is described, is called “the Bush” (Mark xii. 26. Lukexxv. 37); Hymns of the Christian Church are called the Te Deum, Magnificat, &c, from words at their beginning. Cp. Rom. xi. 2, where a portion of Scripture is called “Elas.” David, in his tears of pity over his enemy Saul, is a signal type of our compassionate Saviour, weeping over Jerusalem. — it is written in the book of Jasher | This Dirge is inserted in the national collection of songs and records of heroic acts: see on Josh. x. 13.
19. The beauty of Israel | This dirge is divided into three
2 SAMUEL I. 24—27. II. 1—8. King of Judah at Hebron.

David is anointed. 24. 25. 26. 27. I. They were stronger than lions. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. II. 1. And it came to pass after this, that David an enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the Lord said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron. 2. So David went up thither, and his 2 wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail Nabal's wife the Carmelite. 3. And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwell in the cities of Hebron. 4. And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

And they told David, saying, That the men of Jabesh-gilead were they that buried Saul. And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of the Lord, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. And now the Lord shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will require you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.

But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul. 26. O Jonathan! David mourns bitterly for Saul; but the climax of his sorrow is for Jonathan, dear to him as a brother, and loving him with the love of a wife. Jonathan was more than forty years old at the time of his death (see ii. 10), more than ten years older than David (v. 4); and Saul was about seventy.

CH. II. 1. enquired of the Lord. By the Urim and Thummim in the breastplate on the ephod of Abiathar, the High Priest. Cp. i Sam. xxiiii. 9.

— Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? David's own tribe; but he might well doubt, whether he might return thither: first, on account of the Philistines who had got possession of the country; and next, on account of the enmity of Abner and of the house of Saul. He therefore inquired of the Lord.

— Hebron. Because it was hallowed by its associations with the history of the Patriarchs who were buried there (Theodore; see Gen. xxii. 19; xxxv. 27; xlix. 20; i. 19; and of Caleb, Josh. xiv. 13; Judg. i. 29); and of Samuel, xvi. 5.

4. there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. As Saul, after having been privately anointed by Samuel, was publicly inaugurated as king (see 1 Sam. xii. 13); so David.

This anointing of David was figurative of the anointing of Christ. Hebron was the patriarchal city; and David, being anointed king of Judah at Hebron, was a figure of Christ, king of the Jews. In the words of our learned Expositor, 'David, the most unholy type of the Messiah, was anointed at Bethlehem; for there Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward' (1 Sam. xvi. 13). Of which anointment those words of God must necessarily be understood, 'I have found David My servant; with My holy oil have I anointed him' (Ps. lxxiii. 20). And yet he was again anointed at Hebron; first, over the house of Judah (2 Sam. ii. 4); then over all the tribes of Israel, at Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 3).

"As therefore David at his first anointment received the Spirit of God, and a full right unto the throne of Israel, which yet he was not to exercise till the death of Saul and acceptance of the Tribes; and therefore when the time was come that he should actually enter upon his regal office, he was again anointed: so our Lord, the Son of David, was first sanctified and anointed with the Holy Ghost at His conception, and thereby received a right unto, and was prepared for all those offices which belonged to the Redeemer of the world; but when He was to enter upon the actual and full performance of all those functions which belonged to Him, then both the same Spirit, which had sanctified Him at His conception, visibly sanctified upon Him at His inauguration, and that most properly upon His Baptism; because, according to the customs of those ancient nations, washing was wont to precede their anunctions. Wherefore 'Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove' (Matt. iii. 16)" (Bp. Pearson on the Creed, Art. ii.). Cp. A Lapide on v. 3. Cp. below, on v. 3.

There is an analogy between royal coronations and ordinations of priests. Not only a divine call, but a public commission is necessary for them; see above, on Deut. xxxi. 7; xxiv. 9; and below, on Acts xiii. 1—5. Heb. v. 4.

The xxvith Psalm ("The Lord is my Light") is entitled in the Sept. "before the anointing," and may probably be referred to this time.

8. Abner. Saul's first cousin (1 Chron. ix. 36); and captain of Saul's host (1 Sam. xiv. 51; xvii. 57).

— Ish-bosheth] which means, man of shame. He is called Esh-baal (fire of Baal, i.e. destruction of Baal, Kevil, 215) in 1 Chron. viii. 31; ix. 20. So Jerib-bosheth (Gideon) is called also Jeruh-bosheth (2 Sam. xi. 21); and Merib-baal (contender against Baal, 1 Sam. 4009) is called Mephibosheth (see below, iv. 8. 1 Chron. viii. 34; ix. 40). Cp. Hos. ix. 10. Jer. iii. 24.

These modifications of the name seem to have arisen from
son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim; and made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel. 10 Ish-bosheth Saul’s son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. 11 And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.

And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met together by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool. 14 And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise. 15 Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. 16 And they a religious abhorrence of the name of Baal, and an unwillingness to pronounce it; but this reluctance was overcome in course of time, and (marvellous to say) Baal was admitted to divine honour under Abishai, and even the superseded Jehovah in the hearts of Israel. Such is the progress of Idolatry. Here is a solemn warning for our own days, in which we have to deplore the melancholy fact that men and women in the Christian Church, who have been brought up ingodly hatred and righteous abomination of creature-worship, are at length so fascinated and bewitched by it, that they sink into the lowest depths of Misanthropy, and into abject degradation of the Bishop of Rome, as if he were a God upon earth!

Ishbosheth, on the eastern side of Jordan, in order to be secure from the attacks of the Philistines, and of David; and that he might strengthen the power of Ishbosheth there, before he declared him King of Israel.

Mahanaim also, as well as Hebron (v. 1), was hallowed by patriarchal associations, and was perhaps chosen by Abner on that account: see Gen. xxxii. 1, 2.

9. made him king] Ishbosheth was not made king of Israel immediately after the death of Saul, but after an interval of some years, probably five; during which time Abner was endeavours to raise Israel from the state in which they lay in servitude to the Philistines. Cp. Bp. Cotton in B. D., i. p. 9; and ibid., i. p. 891; and Keil, p. 216.

Ishbosheth, as son of Saul, seemed to have a right to the kingdom as long as the function of David was merely private, and not published to the world; and Ishbosheth is not regarded in Scripture as an usurper: see iv. 11 (Abulensis, Serarius, A Lapide). He may be compared spiritually to those who, before Christ’s public inauguration, and before the open preaching of the Gospel, still clave to Judaism. He represents, as it were, the state of transition between the birth of Christ and the publication of the Gospel.

Gilead] The region east of Jordan (Num. xxxix. 29. Josh. xxii. 9).

— Ashurites] The Syriac, Arabic, and Vulg. identify them with the Geshurites (Deut. iii. 14. Josh. xii. 13. 2 Sam. xv. 1. 8. 1 Chron. ii. 29), on the s.w. of Damascus; and so Ewald and Thienes. The Targum of Jonathan interprets the word by “house of Asher,” i.e. the country west of Jordan, above Jezreel; and so Grose, B. D. i. 124.

— Jezreel] The rich well plain of Edomelon, n.w. of Gilead: see Judg. iii. 8; iii. 9; iii. 33. Josh. xvi. 16. Robin- son, ii. 315; iii. 113. Stanley, Palestine, p. 335. Vanderve- lde, p. 326. Porter, B. D. i. p. 575. It was celebrated in the history of the conflicts of Deborah and Barak (see Judg. iv.); of Gideon (see Judg. vii.); and of Saul and Jonathan (1 Sam. xvii).

— the pool of Gibeon] Gibeon, El-Jibh, about four or five miles N.N.W. of Jerusalem, famous in the history of Joshua (Josh. i. 3; x. 2. 4. 12). The pool of Gibeon is described by Robinson, Palest. ii. 136; and by Dr. Thomson, Land and Book, p. 660. It is mentioned by Jeremiah, xli. 12.

— Abner said] Abner is the aggressor; and eventually, after the slaughter of his men, falls a victim to his own cruel proposal: see iii. 27.

Ish-bosheth . . . was forty years old when he began to reign . . . and reigned two years] After which David became King of Israel: see v. 1—3. The end of these two years of Ishbosheth coincides with the end of the seven and a half years during which David reigned over Judah; which period of seven and a half years began with the death of Saul: see i. 1, and on v. 9.

11. the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months] Before he became king over all Israel: see above, v. 1—3. This gradual exten-
caught every one his fellow by the head, and \textit{thrust} his sword in his fellow’s side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called \textit{Harkath-hazzurim}, which is in Gibeon. 17 And there was a very sore battle that day; and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.

18 And there were three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel \textit{was as light} \textit{of foot} \textit{as a wild roe}. 19 And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left \textit{from following Abner}. 20 Then Abner looked behind him, and said, \textit{Art thou Asahel}? And he answered, \textit{I am}. 21 And Abner said to him, Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his \textit{armour}. But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him. 22 And Abner said again to Asahel, Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother? 23 Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Asahel with the hinder end of the spear smote him \textit{under the fifth rib}, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, \textit{that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still}. 24 Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that \textit{lieth} before Giah by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.

25 And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of an hill. 26 Then Abner called to Joab, and said, \textit{Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?} 27 And Joab said, \textit{As God liveth}, unless \textit{thou hast spoken}, surely then \textit{in the morning the people had} \textit{gone up} every one from following his brother. 28 So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

29 And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim. 30 And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David’s servants nineteen men and Asahel. 31 But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner’s men, \textit{so that} three hundred and threescore men died. 32 And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which \textit{was} in Beth-lehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.
David's sons born at Hebron.

2 SAMUEL III. 1—16. Abner turns against Ishbosheth.

III. 1. Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker. 2 And * unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his firstborn was Amnon, b of Ahinoam the Jezreelite; 3 And his second, || Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Na-bal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king c of Geshur; 4 And the fourth, d Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; 5 And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

6 And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul. 7 And Saul had a concubine, whose name was e Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: f ch. 21. 8. 10. and Ish-bosheth said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou f gone in unto my father's g concubine? 8 Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman? 9 h So do God to Abner, and more also, except, i as the Lord hath sworn to David, even so I do to him; 10 To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, k from Dan even to Beer-sheba. 11 And he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him.

12 And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose is the land? saying also, Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee. 13 And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, j that is, Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring m Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face. 14 And Abner sent messengers to Ish-bosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver me my wife Michal, which I espoused to me n for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines. 15 And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from her husband, even o from Phaltiel the son of Laish. 16 And his husband went with her o along weeping behind her to o Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.

David's sons born at Hebron.

CH. III. 2. unto David were sons born in Hebron] of the six wives here mentioned; and he had many concubines (v. 13).

This polygamy of David, forbidden by God, seems to have been the cause of his weakness (see on li. 13), as it was of innumerable jealousies and enmities in his family. None of the sons here mentioned were eminent for virtue, and some of them (Ammi, Absalom, and Adonijah) were notorious for their sins.

But David was a figure of Christ: and that which was a sin in him, does, in a spiritual sense distinguish, as a mark of tenderness and affection, the character of Him in whom there is no spot or blemish of human unholineness, but who is infinitely pure, and who vouchsafes to join to Himself particular Churches of all nations, and even individual souls, by the nearest and dearest intimacy of mystical wedlock, as St. Paul of the Corinthians, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 2).

This is well expressed by an ancient writer: "Perhaps some one may ask, If David was a type of Christ, how is it that he is related to have had many wives and concubines: a thing which Christ abhors and condemns? But this too was figurative. The wives of David foreshadowed the many nations who would be united to Christ in spiritual wedlock." (Bede, Qu. in 2 Sam. e li.: see below, on v. 13.)

Unto David were sons born in Hebron, when he had become King of Judah. It is remarkable, that no sons seem to have been born to him before that time, when he was thirty years of age; and after it he had a numerous issue.

Christ had no spiritual issue, before He was proclaimed King, by the voice from heaven, at His baptism, when He was thirty years of age (Luke iii. 22, 23).

3. Chileab] i.e. like his father; called Daniel in 1 Chron. iii. 1. The Hebrew Rabbis say that he was called Chileab also, from his likeness to David, and to silence the insinuations of some that he was the son of Na-bal.


— Eglah David's wife. Supposed by some of the Rabbis to be Michal (Jerominsler).

6. Abner made himself strong] But God strengthened David, whom Abner knew to have been designed for the kingdom by God; see ev. 9, 10.

7. Saul had a concubine] by whom he had two sons (xxi. 8).

— Wherefore hast thou gone in—concubine? which was tantamount to a claim to his throne: see xvi. 21, and 1 Kings lii. 22.

8. a dog's head] See 1 Sam. xvi. 43. 2 Kings vili. 13. Abner appears to deny the charge, which was one of immodesty and uncleanliness (A Lapide).

14. David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth] He proceeds lawfully, and not by violence, to recover her who belonged to him by right.

— my wife Michal, which I espoused to me] See 1 Sam. xviii. 25, 27.

16. her husband went with her along weeping behind her]
Abner resorts to David, 2 Samuel III. 17—29.

is slain by Joab.

17 And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought for David * in times past to be king over you: * Now then do it: * for the Lord hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies. 

18 And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin. 

19 So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made Abner and the men that were with him a feast. 

20 And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and * will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest * reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.

21 And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace. 

22 When Joab and all the host that was with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace. 

23 Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? 

24 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know * thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.

25 And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew it not.

26 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab * took him aside in the gate to speak with him || quietly, and smote him there * under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of * Asahel his brother.

27 And afterward when David heard it, he said,

I and my kingdom are guiltless before the Lord for ever.

From the * blood of Abner the son of Ner:

28 Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father’s house;

And let there not * fall from the house of Joab

One * that hath an issue,

Or that is a leper,

But his sorrow was not caused by his own sin in taking to himself another man’s wife. His tears ought to have been tears of repentance, for his sin against God and against David. It is not said that Michal wept.

Here is spiritual instruction. David sent to recall Michal to himself; and she was received back by him. So Christ mercifully recalls and receives a church, or a soul, which has been guilty of unfaithfulness to Him (Hos. iii. 1—5), although they who have beguiled it to break its troth pursue it and endeavour to retain it. So God will recover His own Michal, Saul’s daughter, the Jewish nation, as the prophet says, and unite her again to Himself. In this respect God’s love exceeds any tenderness and compassion which was prescribed to men by His own law; see Jer. iii. 1, and cp. Theodoret here.

I will save: This is the correct rendering; there is a typographical error in most of the editions of the Hebrew here, which have the past tense and the third person; and are to be corrected from many MSS. in De Rossi, and from the ancient versions, which have “I will save.”

Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin: His own tribe.

23. he is gone in peace] David has let Abner escape, although he had killed Asahel, his own nephew.

26. well of Sirah] twenty furlongs from Hebron (Josephus, vii. 1. 6).

27. for the blood of Asahel his brother] And because Joab thought that Abner would supplant him in his high station as chief captain of David’s forces (Josephus, Theodoret). Abner had slain Asahel, but it was in open war, and Abner had wished to spare him (ii. 21), but Joab treacherously “shed the blood of war in peace” (1 Kings ii. 5).

29. on all his father’s house] The family of the husband of David’s own sister. David’s indiglration at the murder seems to have transported him beyond the bounds of reason, and to have betrayed him into forgetfulness of God’s law, which declared that children should not suffer for their father’s sin (Deut. xxi. 16). But his passionate emotion was an evidence that Abner’s death was not desired but detested by David, whose name Joab had abused in order to effect the murder (see n. 26, and Jps. Patrick’s note), and who might therefore be thought by all people to be the author of it.

If David’s curse took effect, it is to be remembered that outwardly and temporarily children may fare the worse for their
Or that leaneth on a staff,  
Or that falleth on the sword,  
Or that lacketh bread.

30 And Joab and Abishai slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.
31 And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David himself followed the bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron: for he was a son of Zeruiah.

And the king lifted up his voice, and wept, and all the people wept. And the king lamented over Abner; and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth? Thy hands were not bound, Nor thy feet put into fetters:
As a man falleth before wicked men, So fallest thou.

And all the people wept again over him. And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying:

So do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or ought else, till the sun be down. And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people.

37 For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner. And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?
38 And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: the Lord shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

IV. And when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled. And Saul's son had two men that were captains of bands: the name of the one was Baana, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: (for c Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin: And the Beerothites fled to d Gittaim, and were sojourners there until this day.)

father's sins, but spiritually and eternally they cannot" (Bp. Sanderson, iii. 68), and that a father's sin and punishment are salvation, evenings to children, and that their own temporal sufferings may be made the means of everlasting felicity and glory.

— a staff — or crutch; Heb. pekez; see Gesen., p. 676.
33. the king lamented over Abner a: As at the full of Saul and Jonathan, David not only wept for them, but composed a lamentation a dirge for them, in order that the mourning for them might be more public and permanent (see i. 12. 17), so he did also for Abner.

In the depth and tenderness of his affection and compassion even for his enemies (Saul, Abner, Absalom), David is a signal type of Him who wept (Gnviuvv) over Jerusalem, and composed its funeral dirge in the words of sorrow which He pronounced over it even when it was about to reject and crucify Him (Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke xix. 11).


34. Thy hands were not bound! No; thou wert not a malefactor, treated by me as such, and given up to the Law as a felon after sentence, with hands pinioned and feet fettered, in order to be executed. I did not so deal with thee; but thou wert taken away by treachery and iniquity.

This short poem is not only a dirge; it is also an apology for David, and for Abner himself.
35. it was not of the king to slay Abner a: Though Joab had made use of his name for the purpose of slaying him. David showed kindness to Abner after his death by promoting his son (1 Chron. xxvii. 21).

39. these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: The sons of his own sister; for Abishai as well as Joab had been guilty of Abner's death (c. 30).

— the Lord shall reward the doer of evil: Therefore David's charge to Solomon concerning Joab (1 Kings ii. 5, 6) was no act of private revenge against Joab, but it was the execution of God's justice upon him for his sins.

At the same time, if David had done what his conscience had told him was right, and what he did to the murderers of Ishboseth (iv. 11); if he had fully trusted God, and done justice with courage, according to God's law (Gen. ix. 6): if, relying on God, and not looking to the carnal advantages which he derived from the military skill of Joab and Abishai, he had executed judgment on Joab, he would have probably prevented other murders, such as that of Ishboseth, and of Amasa; and he would have been spared the sorrow of giving on his deathbed the warrant of execution against Joab, to be put in effect by Solomon. "Impunitas ad deteriora invitat;" "Saevit in innocentibus, qui parcit nostitibus."

CH. IV. 2. a Beerothite a: Of Beeroth, now Birzah, on the western frontier of the tribe of Benjamin; see Josh. ix. 17; xvii. 25.

3. Gittaim: One of the places where the Benjamites dwelt after the captivity (Neh. xi. 33).
4 And  Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan's death; and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth.

5 And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanaah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ish-bosheth, who lay on a bed at noon.  And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him under the fifth rib: and Rechab and Baanaah his brother escaped.  For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night.  And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul thy enemy, which sought thy life; and the Lord hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.

9 And David answered Rechab and Baanaah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, As the Lord liveth, ¹ who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, ¹⁰ When ¹ one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, ¹¹ how much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth? ¹² And David ² commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.

V. ¹ Then ³ came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, ⁴ we are thy bone and thy flesh. ² Also in time past, when David was made King over all Israel.

But David justly punished these two murderers: and the day is coming when, however some churches may canonize such methods of serving Christ, and of promoting what they call the cause of the Catholic Church, God will declare that Christianity was not intended to be a cloak for crime, and that "their damnation is just," who do evil in order that good may come (Rom. iii. 5).

12. Their hands and their feet. Their feet with which they had made haste to shed blood; and their hands with which they had shed it.

DAVID IS MADE KING OVER ALL ISRAEL.

Ch. V. ¹ Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron. ² And thus God overruled evil for good, and brought good out of evil. He made the crimes of Abner, Joab, and of the two Beerothites to be subservient to the exaltation of David, and the establishment of his kingdom over all Israel. Thus God will make all the sins of evil men to be one day ministerial to the extension and final settlement of the universal dominion of Christ.

After the death of Saul, David had been anointed king of Judah. Saul represents the Jewish Dispensation, which makes way for Christ and the Gospel (Jerome). A fuller explanation now takes place.

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Saul was king over us, 

And the Lord said to thee, "Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel." So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord; and they anointed David king over Israel.

David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither; 

3. they anointed David king over Israel] According to the word of the Lord by Samuel (1 Chron. xi. 3). David was a type of Christ; and here also was a prefiguration of the universal dominion of Christ.

With regard to the successive anointings of David, which were typical of the successive anointings of Christ, by, Pearson, following other expositors (see A Lapidie here), thus writes: — "David was not only first designed, but also anointed, king over Israel (1 Sam. xvi. 13), and yet had no possession of the crown. Seven years he continued anointed by Samuel, and had no share in the dominion; seven years after, he continued anointed in Hebron, only king over the tribe of Judah (2 Sam. ii. 4). At last he was received by all the tribes, and so obtained full and absolute possession over all Israel, and seated himself in the royal city Jerusalem.

"So Christ was born King of the Jews, and the conjunction of His human nature with His Divine, in the union of His person, was a sufficient anunction to His regal office, yet as the Son of Man, He succeeded in such dominion, professedly that His kingdom was not of this world (John xviii. 36); but after He rose from the dead, then, as it were in Hebron with His own tribe, He tells the Apostles (Matt. xxviii. 18), all power is given unto Him; and by virtue thereof gives them injunctions; and at His Ascension He enters into the Jerusalem aboves, and there sits down at the right hand of the throne of God, and so makes a solemn entrance upon the full and entire dominion over all things; then could St. Peter say (Acts ii. 36), 'Let all the house of Israel know of a certainty that God hath set forth unto this people a King,' by the image of a man, who by His grace, all men, be called Lord and Christ." (Bp. Pearson on the Creed, Art. vi.) Cp. above, on i. 4.

4. thirty years old As Joseph was, when he was exalted by Pharaoh (Gen. xii. 40), and as Jesus was, when He was anointed public teacher by the apostles, and was then determined to be the Son of God from heaven (Luke iii. 23. Angelous). he reigned forty years As Saul did (Acts xiii. 21), and as Solomon did (2 Chron. ix. 30). "Quadrangularius numerus, qui ex quater demum constat, plenitudem temporum et rerum perfectionem significat" (Angelous).

6. the king and his men Called, "all Israel" (1 Chron. xi. 4). David's victorious entry into Jerusalem is the triumph of "all Israel." So the Ascension of our David into the heavenly Jerusalem is the ascension of us all (Eph. ii. 6). Where the Head is, there the members are already in hope, and will be hereafter in fruition. They are His bone and His flesh. 

— to Jerusalem unto the Jebusite Who occupied the fortress, "the strongholds of Zion," the southern and highest hill of the city; the northern and lower parts being in the hands of the Benjamites: see Judg. i. 8. 21.

THE BLIND AND THE LAME.—DAVID ENTERS JERUSALEM.

Except thou take away the blind and the lame This translation has been corrected by some as follows: "Thou canst not come in hither; but the blind and the lame will keep thee off." (Kell, who compares Isa. xiv. 32 for the use of the singular verb haeârit; from sur to keep off; instead of the plural; and see Zaddik, § 310.) But the translation seems preferable which is given in the Authorized Version, according to which the verb is the hikpit infinitive, and this translation is confirmed by Farg, Arabic, Syriac, Targum, Josephus.

Who the lame and the blind were, has been doubted. Some have supposed (as Josephus, vii. 3. 1) that the Jebusites relied on the strength of their fortress, and set the blind and lame on the walls in derision of David, as if they would suffice to keep him off. A similar exposition is offered by Angelous, A Lapidie, Kennicott, Dissertations, i. 32—42, and others.

Others suppose that the "blind and the lame" here mean images sculptured with inscriptions, placed on the walls by the Jebusites. So Aben Ezra, &c. Len ben Goross, and other Jewish expositors: e.g. Lyranus, Carthavissus, and Luther, Wellther, and others, who suppose that they were idols of the Jebusites, who had placed them on their battlements, and relied on them as a protection to their city. (Cy. p. 342, for illustrations of this practice), and that David called these images "blind and lame," according to his own language in Ps. cxv. 2—11, "Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? Their idols are silver and gold, even the work of men's hands. They have mouths, and speak not; eyes have they, and see not; they have hands, and handle not; feet have they, and walk not. They that make them are like unto them, and so are all they that put their trust in them. But thou, Lord, art a God merciful and full of compassion: the Lord is our defence and our succour and defence. Ye that fear the Lord, put your trust in the Lord, He is their helper and defender."

This interpretation is confirmed by what follows. If "the lame and blind" had been mere feeble and maimed men, they would have been pitied "by David's soul," but not have been hated, as they are declared to be; but if they were idols they would be objects of his detestation, and he would desire to abolish them, and to establish the worship of the true God, the God of Israel. Hence, by casting off the idolatry of Abraham, and called Jehovah-jireh by him: see Gen. xxii. 21. Further, this is corroborated by what is related of David subsequent in this chapter, v. 21, that he burned the images of the Philistines: see there the translation.

Yet more: the victory of David over the Jebusites, and his triumphal entrance into Zion and Jerusalem, were critical events in his life. Henceforth he became king over all the tribes of Israel, and made Jerusalem the capital of his kingdom, and reigned there, and brought up the Ark of the Lord with joy and thanksgiving into it. Doubtless (as is observed by ancient writers: see Tertullian c. Marcion, iv. 36, and Angelous here) these things were prophetic and typical of Christ, and of His victory over the heathen world, and of His triumphal entry at His Ascension into the heavenly Jerusalem, and of the establishment of His royal sway over all the tribes of true Israelites throughout the world, and of His reception of the Ark of His Church into the heavenly city, to be ensanctified for evermore.

But before this glorious consummation could be accomplished, a previous work was to be done in the heathen world. The heathen world trusted in false gods; it relied on "the blind and the lame," on gods that could neither see nor walk: witnesses, the colossal images of Minerva Promachus, the Temple of the Parthenon on the Acropolis at Athens, the most learned of heathen cities; and the Temple and the Statue of Jupiter adored on the Capitol of Rome, the mistress of the world, and of His triumphal entry at His Ascension into the heavenly Jerusalem, and of the establishment of His royal sway over all the tribes of true Israelites throughout the world, and of His reception of the Ark of His Church into the heavenly city, to be ensanctified for evermore. 

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David takes Zion. 2 SAMUEL V. 7-18. David's house and offspring.

Here is a moral lesson to Christian Churches, and to every individual soul: for David put away their idols, their worship of creatures, of saints and angels, and of every object except of the Lord God of Israel, if they desire to ascend with Christ into the heavenly Jerusalem, and to dwell with Him for ever there. 

4. For what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? 
5. And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, 
6. He shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house. 
7. So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo inward. And David 
8. *Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and *masons: and they built David an house. 
9. And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake. 
10. And *David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron; and there were yet sons and daughters born to David. 
11. And these be the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; 
12. Shammua, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, Ibhar also, and 
13. Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia, Elia and Eliada, and 
15. — sent messengers to David—and they built David as house] The heathen king and people of Tyre, the great merchant city of antiquity, contributed to the glory of David after his exaltation in Jerusalem. So of the true David it is said after His Ascension, that "the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; the rich among the people shall make supplication unto Thee" (Ps. xlv. 12) and this was to be the presage of the time when "all kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall do Him service" (Ps. lxxii. 11). Psalm xxx. is said in its title to have been composed for the dedication of David's house.
16. David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem] Cp. 1 Chron. xiv. 3. A sin in David, as forbidden by God's law (Deut. xvii. 17). But the stain and blemish of the type vanish in the Divine Antitype, Jesus Christ (Bede and Angelomast: see above, on ii. 2).
17. The Divine David, after His ascension into the heavenly Jerusalem, espoused to Himself Churches in spiritual wedlock from all nations, as the Apostle speaks (2 Cor. xi. 2), and He is ever raising up to Himself a holy seed of sons and daughters from Churches throughout the world: Christ Himself, by spiritual generation and propagation, is ever being born, according to David's language (Ps. lxxxi. 4) and that of St. Paul (Gal. iv. 19) in the hearts of believers in all lands.
18. be the names] Mentioned by anticipation. 
19. Shammua—Solomon] Sons of Bathsheba, 1 Chron. iii. 5. On the name of Solomon, see xii. 24.
20. Ibhar—Eliphelet] Here are seven names; in 1 Chron. iii. 8 are nine; probably two of them, one of the two Eliphelets and Nogah, died in childhood (Keil).
21. the head] He came down from Mount Zion to another strong place below, where his army might be more conveniently
David burns the images: 2 SAMUEL V. 19—25. VI. 1. brings up the Ark to Zion, in the valley of Rephaim. And David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the Lord said unto David, Go up: for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand. So David went up as the Lord had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou came to Gazer.

VI. Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty encompased; he also thus showed that he was not daunted by the approach of the Philistines, but trusted that with God's help he could overcome them. The Philistines were three hundred round about Jerusalem (1 Sam. ii. 11). But what were the forces of David? It was the Holy Spirit which came upon him, and the power of God with him. It is true the Ark was in the city, but David did not claim the Ark as his own: he sent objectors to the Ark into the plain of Rephaim (v. 6). The Ark was simply a symbol of the presence of God, and David knew it better than all the other religious notions of that day.

18. valley of Rephaim or giants: see Gen. xiv. 5; xv. 20. Deut. ii. 11. Josh. xvi. 4. On the west of Jerusalem (Josh. xv. 8).


21. they left their images, and David and his men burned them: The Philistines had probably brought the images of their gods (see 1 Chron. xiv. 12) into the field to be their champions; as the Israelites carried the Ark to their wars (1 Sam. iv. 4, 5). Thus David and his men burned them, in the name of God, with the cause of the plagues and shame to them and their idol Dagob (1 Sam. v. 3—9). But the Philistines left their idols, which had "feet, but walked not," and they fell into David's hand, and he burned them with fire, according to God's command (Deut. vii. 5). So the two David, Jesus Christ, and His servants, after He had ascended into the heavenly Jerusalem, went forth to the battle against the armies and idols of heathendom, and has cast them into the fire. Aha! then for those who venture to rest in the case of the Ark to set up creature worship in the Church of God, and in their own hearts.

23. Thou shalt not go up: Why does God now say "Thou shalt not go up," when He had said before "Thou shalt go up?" To teach David not to follow his own devices, or to lean on his own strength, but in all things to obey the Divine will, and depend on the Divine help (Theodoret). The same may be observed with regard to the soldiers of the Cross, particularly St. Paul: see below, on Acts xvi. 6.

— the mulberry trees: So the Rabbis: others render it pear-trees (Sept.). The original word baca is derived from baca or baca, to weep, and signifies some tree which either weeps with gum like the balsam, or hangs down its leaves in trees like the weeping willow, and is easily moved by the wind (see Gesen., p. 119, and B. D. ii. 440).

24. when thou hear'st the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: Literally, when thou hear'st the voice of a going, &c., then thou shalt move. But the sound of the voice of His going, in the tops of the mulberry-trees, is a very expressive, the sound of the voice of God going forth to smite their gods, even as He smote the gods of Egypt (Jeremiah). The voice of the Lord to (as David himself says, Josephus, vii. 4.) the trees of the grove should be in motion without any blowing of the wind, but as soon as the trees moved he should go forth without delay to claim victory. This signal was very expressive. The sound of the voice of God going forth to smite their gods, even as He smote the gods of Egypt (Josephus). The voice of the Lord to (as David himself says, Ps. xxix. 4.) is powerful and full of majesty: the voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. But even the whispers of that voice are full of trouble to them that wait for the Lord, and joy to the heart of the voice of His going, even in the tops of the mulberry-trees,—that is, even though it rustles in the quivering leaves of the grove, must, if He wills, strike a panic in the hearts of the Philistines: as He Himself says of those who disbelieve Him, "I will send a faintness into their hearts, and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them, and they shall flee as from a whirlwind, and they shall fall by the sword, even by the Philistines, and by the host of the Philistines. And David did so, as the Lord had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou came to Gazer.

Ch. VI.—On the Bringing up of the Ark to Mount Zion. This chapter, from v. 1 to v. 19, was appointed by the Hebrew Church to be read in the synagogue with Lev. ix. 1 to xi. 47, which describes the offerings of Aaron, the High Priest, in the Tabernacle, after his consecration, and the coming down of the fire from heaven; and the Divine judgment on Nadab and Abihu for offering strange fire. The connexion of these portions of Scripture is obvious. The act of David, bringing up the Ark to its abode in Mount Zion, was an accomplishment, in part, of the work begun in the wilderness by the setting up of the Tabernacle and the consecration of the Aaronic Priesthood.

But this act of David reaches far forward to a much more glorious consummation. On the occasion of the bringing up of the Ark to Zion, he composed (as is commonly believed) the xxivth Psalm, "The earth is the Lord's," &c. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" and the xlvth Psalm, another Psalm for Ascension; cp. Ps. lxxviii. "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered," &c. "Thou art gone up on high, and hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men;" which the Church has most aptly connected with the Ascension of Jesus Christ into the heavenly Zion, and with the Coming of the Holy Ghost in fire from heaven on the Church of Christ at the Day of Pentecost. The appointment of these Proper Lessons and Proper Psalms by the Hebrew and Christian Churches, is like a practical exposition of the meaning of these Scriptures, which are thus brought together, and reflect spiritual light on each other. Therefore, in reading the history of the going up of David and the Ark, let us think of Christ going up into heaven, and carrying up His Church thither; and let us meditate on the spiritual gifts which He procured for her by that glorious exaltation to the heavenly Jerusalem.

List of hereunto used in this chapter: The preliminary remark must be made. David himself had already gone up to Jerusalem; and there was enthroned in his capital as King of Israel. But the Ark—the Visible Church of God—was not yet established there.

And, as we shall see in this chapter, the progress of the Ark G
The Ark set on a cart. 2 Samuel vi. 2—7. Uzzah touches it.

a 1 Chron. 13. 5. 6. — Or, Baalah, that is, Kirjath-jearim.
6. — Or, at which is to be read the name of the Lord's ark,
was called upon. b 1 Sam. 4. 4. — Ps. 69. 26. — Heb. made to ride.
c 7. — See Num. 7. 9. 1 Sam. 6. 1. — Or, kilm. d 1 Sam. 7. 1. — Heb. with.
e 1 Chron. 13. 9. — he is called, Chidon.
f 1 Sam. 4. 13. — Or, stambled.

2. And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him [from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God]; whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts, that dwelleth between the cherubim. 3. And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart. 4. And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark. 5. And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord upon all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cymbals, and on trumpets.

But the progress of the Ark of His Church to that glorious altitude is a weary pilgrimage, by a steep and rugged way (see on v. 3), attended by many sorrows, trials, and imperfections. It is not without much tribulation that the Church militant can arise to the glory of the Church triumphant.

1. David gathered together: See 1 Chron. xiii. 1—5, where David associates the Priests and Levites and people throughout all Israel with himself in this work of religious joy and exaltation. The universal Church of Christ partakes with the Divine David in the glory of His Ascension into the heavenly Sion (Eph. ii. 6).

The old Canaanish name of Kirjath-jearim, where the Ark had been, with only occasional removals, since its recovery out of the hands of the Philistines: see 1 Sam. vi. 21; vii. 2.

Certainly there is a reference to Kirjath-jearim, i.e. city of waters, in Ps. cxxxii. 6, in which we read,—“We found it (the Ark) in the fields of the wood.” “Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting-place, Thou and the Ark of Thy strength.”

The Tabernacle at this time was at Gibeon, where it remained till the building of Solomon’s Temple, 1 Chron. xvi. 39, 2 Chron. i. 3.

Its progress was commenced with the mistake of placing the Ark in the new cart (v. 3) instead of on the shoulders of the Kohathites, the religious princes of the most oppressed of the posterity of Levi (v. 6—8); it sojourned for a time at the house of Obed-edom (v. 10—12). David’s act of rejoicing before it was derided by his own wife; and it was not till the days of Solomon his son that it was solemnly inaugurated in the Temple at Jerusalem.

And when they came to Nachon’s threshing-floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen || shook it. 7. And the anger of thousand.

Lord, merciful and majestic, overwrought their weakness by a misdeed—a more evident manifestation of man’s depravity than the sin of Eve. David afterwards recollected the error of which he had been guilty in this respect, and corrected it, in the remainder of the progress of the Ark to Jerusalem: see 1 Chron. xv. 2—15. The Ark was brought to Jerusalem; the sacred vessels were dedicated; the Temple was completed; the Ark was set up in the sanctuary; and the glory of God manifested itself upon the Ark, so that the nations around Israel might see the hand of God in the work.

Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab. Perhaps the word sons here may mean grandsons, says Keil, who calculates (pp. 217, 240) that the time since the first arrival of the Ark at Abinadab’s house (1 Sam. vii. 1), when Eleazar his son was appointed to guard it, was about seventy years.

accompanying the ark Literally, with the Ark; objections have been made to the statement here, as it were a mere repetition of what had been said in the previous verse, and as if it were tautology to say, they brought the ark with the ark (Cappellus, Houbigant, Keil).

But the sacred historian is explaining how what he is about to relate happened. The two sons brought the Ark; at first they were with the Ark; but Ahio went before the Ark, and Uzzah followed with it, and touched it (v. 6). Others suppose that they brought it; in this verse, means, they brought the cart or carriage from the house of Abinadab, and this opinion deserves consideration.

of fir wood || or, cypress (Genesis 1. 10). — on harps || See 1 Chron. xiii. 5; and as to the instruments here named, cp. 1 Sam. x. 5.

— coraces || Rather, astra (Vulg.), which were shaken in order to produce sound. Cp. Genesis 4. 5—10. 6. Nachon’s threshing-floor. In 1 Chron. xiii. 9 it is called Chidon’s threshing-floor: see the margin.

Uzzah laying hold of the Ark. — Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it, which it was not lawful for him to do, not being a priest (Num. iv. 15, Josephus, vi. 2). It is not certain that he was a Kohathite; but it is clear that God was about to teach him new knowledge than others, and knew he might not touch it, but help to bear it on staves; and death was threatened in the Law, as the penalty for the violation of this law (Num. iv. 15, 19, 20; vii. 9).

Uzzah did what he did with a good intention; and his punish.
The Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God. And David was dis displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perez-uzzah to this day. And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, How shall the ark of the Lord come to me? So David would not remove the ark of the Lord unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obad-edom the Gittite. And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obad-edom the Gittite three months: and the Lord blessed Obad-edom, and all his household.

And it was told king David, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of Obad-edom, and all that pertain unto him, because of the ark of God.

So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obad-edom.
13. They that bare the ark] Observe, David has learnt wisdom from the judgment upon Aznah. The Ark is no longer carried in the new cart, but is borne on the shoulders of the Kohathites, who were appointed by God to bear it. Cp. 1 Chron. xv. 15. — had gone six paces] without any mark of God's displeasure. David did not delay his thank-offering for God's goodness in allowing him to begin the march afresh, and he impressed God's favour upon it with this sacrifice.


14. danced] His transport was greater even on account of his former fear and sorrow (v. 5). Here was an example of spiritual humility and moral courage. David stripped himself of his royal raiment, and exposed himself to the disapprobation of the bystanders by his holy love and zeal for God and His service. "Non vilessemete mori eum Eccle. Ego plus saltamin stippe quam pugnam Armen. Pugnament quippe substis subsidii; saltando, psipsum (S. Gregory, Moral. xxvii. 27). Cp. S. Ambrose, Apol. David i. 6; de Perit. ii. 6; in Inc. c. vii. "Est honesta saltatio qui trigantur Animis. Hic saltat. Rides socii, gratias omnes;" by fighting he conquered his foes, by dancing he conquered himself. Thus he was a type of Christ, Who humbled Himself, and was content to be despised and to be accounted mad (Mark iii. 21) for God's sake; and so St. Paul (Acts xxvi. 24). — a linen ephod] this ephod — the priestly priestly ephod, was the sign of his office, and rejoiced to appear as a minister of the Tabernacle: see 1 Sam. ii. 18.

A Lapide compares the history of Sir Thomas More, when Lord Chancellor of England sometimes took his place and sung in the choir with him. He says of him, when the Duke of Norfolk expropriated with him, as Michal did with David, for degrading himself and his service, he said, "Nay, your Grace may not think that the King my master will be offended with me for serving of his Master" (Rec. Dial. ii. 68).

15. with the sound of the trumpet] So David with the Ark ascends to Mount Zion; and of the Lord Jesus, the Divine Head, ascending to the heavenly Zion, and bearing His Church in triumph with Him. It is said by David, in one of the Psalms appointed for the Festival of the Ascension, "God is gone up with a shout, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet" (Ps. xlvi. 5. Cp. Ps. lxxxvi. 21, 25; another Psalm for Ascension Day).

16. Michal] Called also "Saul's daughter," rather than "David's wife," because she was elated with pride for her princely origin, and what she did was rather according to the temper of her father Saul (who had cared little for the Ark. 1 Chron. xiii. 3), and was at variance with her duty to her husband David. In 1 Sam. xviii. 20, we are told that "Michal loved David." Perhaps her affections had been estranged by his subsequent marriage with Abigail, as Professor Blunt suggests, who thinks that there is a reference to Abigail and Abihai in the words "handmaids." — she despised him in her heart] And she was smitten with barrenness (v. 29). Saul's daughter Michal looking out of the window at Jerusalem, and despising David when going up with joy and exultation before the Ark to Zion, and being smitten for her sin with barrenness, is rightly regarded as figurative of the proud and censorious temper of the Jewish Church, despising the true Davids, and mocking at the glory of His Church, and therefore stricken with sterility. "Michal, in typa symmogen, sterilis permansit" (cp. Ambrose, Apol. Dav. i. 6, and Angelomnus).

17. the tabernacle] Not the Levitical Tabernacle, which was at Gibeon (cp. 1 Chron. xvi. 39), but a temporary one which David had pitched for it, till he had built, as he designed to do, a temple to receive it: see vii. 1-3.

18. he blessed the people] As Israel blessed Jacob (Gen. xxviii). Aristotle and Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. xlvii.); and Moses blessed the tribes (Deut. xxxiii.); and Solomon blessed the people (1 Kings viii. 14), and the people blessed Solomon (v. 66).

They did not use the peculiar form of Benediction prescribed for the Jews (Num. vi. 22-27), as is alleged by some (Bp. Colenso on the Pentateuch, Pt. v. p. 157). King David, having gone up to Zion, blessed the people in the Name of the Lord of Hosts; so our David, who is the King of Glory, and the Lord of Hosts Himself (as David describes Him in one of the Psalms, written by him on this occasion, and used by the Church on Ascension Day: "The Lord of Hosts: He is the King of Glory," Ps. xxiv. 10), mounted to the heavenly Zion in the act of blessing His Apostles, the heads of all the Tribes of the spiritual Israel; (Luke xxiv. 50-52), and in Heaven itself, He is ever blessing His people.

19. he dealt among the people—a good piece] David, when he had ascended into Mount Zion, gave gifts (see Genesis 27. Keil, 245, 246, 247; parables of the sacrifice of peace-offering (Josephus, Λ. de Dies). — a flagon] Rather, a cake, of raisins, or other dried fruits. Cp. Cant. ii. 5. Hos. iii. 1 (Genesis 75, and so Josephus, vii. 2). 21. And David said unto Michal] This reply of David to Michal, Saul's daughter, may be said to have a prophetic and typical reference to the true David, Jesus Christ, who laid aside the Ark to Zion. 2 Samuel VI. 13-21. Michal.
His royal robe of heavenly glory, and consented to abuse Him-
self, and to be despised and set at nought by the Jewish Syna-
gogue, prefaced here by Michal, and to be vile in their eyes
before the Lord, that is, for the sake of God's glory, and the
elevation of His Church to the heavenly Jerusalem (see Ange-
lemus, A Lopide).
23. will be base in mine own sight] Observe these words.
Here is true humility. Many abuse themselves in other
people's sight who are great in their own sight. Their very
humility is pride; but David will not only humble himself
in the eyes of others, but in his own (S. Gregory, Mor. xxvii.).
23. Michal—had no child] She is here again called the
daughter of Saul; but it is only "a daughter of Saul," who
fell from God by faithlessness and disobedience.
—had no child] See on v. 16. Some suppose that she had
children before this time, but none after. Cp. below, on xxii. S.
Many in the present chapter, the one immediately preceding the
present, David endeavours to bring the Ark of God to Mount
Zion, and after some hindrances, he brought it; but he did
not settle it in the Tabernacle: the work is yet incomplete.
The present chapter carries us forward to the consumma-
tion of the work. David desires to build a house for God at
Jerusalem, but God forbids him; at the same time He gives to
David a glorious revelation of the future. He promises to build
a house for David himself, and that David's seed shall be set up
after him, and that he shall build a house for God's name, and
that David's kingdom and throne shall be established for ever
(vv. 12—16).
The Apostle St. Peter, when filled with the Holy Ghost
on the day of Pentecost, not only affirms that these promises
were fulfilled in Christ, who is the Seed of David, and in whom
the throne and kingdom of David is established for ever (Ies. xi. 10.
Luke i. 32, 33), but St. Peter asserts also that David himself
understood them to refer to Christ. "The Patriarch David"
he says (v. 22), "being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn
with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins He would raise
up Christ to sit upon his throne" (Acts ii. 29, 30; and cp. here
vv. 12, 13). And (as Theodoret has remarked) the author of the Epistle to the Ephesians quotes the words of God to David
(v. 14), "I will be his father, and he shall be MY son" (Heb. i.
5), and applies them to Christ. And the same writer says (Heb.
n. 6), "Christ was faithful, as a son over his house; whose
house we are."

This chapter exhibits, therefore, a new era in Scripture
prophecy. A new step in advance is here gained.

In the prophecy of Jacob (see above, on Gen. xlix. 8—10)
the particular tribe—that of Judah—had been specified, from
which the Messiah should come, and have an everlasting
dominion; and so the mind of David and all faithful men had
been opened to receive clearer light on that glorious subject.
And now the particular tribe, in that tribe is pre-announced
the family of David himself.

Standing on the vantage ground of this prophecy, David
himself, and other writers of the Psalms, and other prophets of
the Old Testament, henceforth describe the kingdom of Christ
as the kingdom of Zion, and speak of Christ as enthroned on
the Seat of David.

At the same time, in a subordinate sense, the promise and
prophecy have a reference to Solomon (see v. 14), who as the
first-fruits of the kingdom of David, he that gave his father
his throne, and in building the Temple at Jerusalem,
was a signal Type of the Prince of Peace, the Divine Son
of David, who has built up the true temple of God, His Church,
which will shine for ever in glory in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Thus both views, in David's prophecy, and in the other
sections, the two views of prophecy, (v. vii.) reveal the history of Christ and His Church for evermore.

David himself was anointed King of all Israel, and estab-
lished his throne in Zion.

So Christ is anointed King to the Heavenly Jerusalem, and is
crowned there King of the Church Universal.

But the progress of the Ark—the figure of the Church
Militant, overshadowed by the Divine Presence—toward Mount
Zion was slow and difficult, and impeded by many hindrances.
David hoped to be able to settle it in a fixed temple (v. 16,
and the 101st), but he was not permitted to do so. The ascent of the Ark
was rather an ascent in hope than in accomplishment. It
was not enshrined in the Tabernacle. It had made a long pilgrim-
age from Sinai; it had moved from place to place; it had fallen
into the hands of the Philistines; Shibloth, its residence, had been
destroyed; it remained in long banishment in Kirjath-jeim. Even after its ascent to Zion under David, it must have
wandered two more years; and only a semblance of staying in the
Temple of Solomon; and for the sins of that king (see v. 14),
and of other kings of Judah, that Temple would be laid in ruins.
And though that Temple would be restored after many years,
yet it would be finally demolished.

But still the promise in this chapter is to David, "that
God would not take His mercy from him, as He took it from
Saul, but David's house and kingdom and throne should be
established for ever" (vvs. 13—16).

This prophecy has partly fulfilled already in the
Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ the Son of
David according to the flesh, and in His Session at God's right
hand; but waits for complete fulfilment till His Second Coming,
when He will put all His enemies under His feet, and the
throne and kingdom of David will be established in Him for ever,
and the Ark of His Church Militant, after its weary journey through
this world, a journey beset with many hindrances and many
human infirmities, will rise at last to glory the Church of
His Kingdom. And then, according to the Divine Vision, "the Temple
of God will be opened in heaven, and there will be seen, in His
Temple, the Ark of His Covenant" (Rev. xi. 19).

In confirmation of this interpretation of these chapters, the
reader may refer to S. Augustine de Civ. Del. xvii. 8, 9, and
Laurent., Hist. iv. 13; and these three chapters, and others,
would, according to the translation of Ainsworth, "The Temple
of God will be opened in heaven, and there will be seen, in His
Temple, the Ark of His Covenant", Rev. xi. 19

In confirmation of this interpretation of these chapters, the
reader may refer to S. Augustine de Civ. Del. xvii. 8, 9, and
the excellent remarks of Theodoret, Qu. 21; see also here Angelorum, Menochius, Gerhard, Hoeftes, Calovius, Glaubius, Waltherus, and others in Pfeiffer, Dub.
207, Wunser, Dilucid, in cap. vii. Hengstenberg, Christol. i.
133—139, or p. 41 of Acquav's translation; and Keil, p. 258,
who has sufficiently refuted the sceptical objections to the
authenticity of this prophecy, p. 247.
1. the king] Observe this phrase, "the King." The Sacred
Historical style for the Messiah is "the Son of David," or "the King," because he is about to speak of the perpetuity of his kingdom, in Christ.
—sat in his house] In quiet meditation, for God had given
him rest. Probably the 132nd Psalm is the expression of his
feelings at this time.
had given him rest round about from all his enemies; 2 That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. 3 And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee.

4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, 5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? 6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.

7 In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? 8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, 1 I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel; 9 And I will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; 10 neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, 11 And as I commanded judges to my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; 12 and shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

13 

14 b I will be his father, and he shall be my son. c If he commit

for all true Israelites; and I will build an eternal house for thee, in thy seed, prefigured by thy son (Solomon), even in Christ: see Preliminary Note to this chapter; and rev. 13. 16.

15 God built for David a house—even a temple—by the Incarnation of Christ, Who came from his seed. For Christ calls his own body, which he took from the blessed virgin Mary, the seed of David, a temple: " destroys this temple, and in three days i will build it up again. he speake of the temple of his body," John ii. 21 (Theodore). 16. 12. when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, i will set up thy seed after thee. hence it is clear that this prophecy was not exhausted in solomon, who began to reign before david slept with his fathers (St. Augustine of c. deixi. 8. Lactant. inst. iv. 13).

17 Augustine remarks, that we see some gleams and glimpses in solomon of what was to be fulfilled in christ. in some things solomon's acts corresponded to this prophecy: in other things they did not. his name solomon (peaceable), his building of the temple, these were tendencies to the fulfillment of the prophecy, which is accomplished in the eternal son of david, the builder of the church universal (Matt. xxv. 18. Heb. iii. 6). JESUS CHRIST our lord.

18 i will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever! in Jesus Christ, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh (Rom. i. 3; 1 Tim. ii. 8). and of his kingdom was declared by the angel gabriel, that the lord god shall give unto him the throne of his father david, and he shall reign over the house of jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end (Luke i. 32, 33).

19 this exposition of the prophecy is elaborately confirmed by tertullian c. marcion. iii. 20, who refutes the notion of those who restrain this prophecy to solomon, and shows that it can only be said to have had its full accomplishment in christ. see also justin martyr c. tryphon. § 88, and bp. pearson, art. ii. p. 153, and art. vi. p. 280.

20 i will be his father! this is applied to christ by st.
Paul, adopting the words of the Sept., Heb. i. 5, and so Justin Martyr c. Tryph. § 117, "De fide ergo est, hanc locum intelligi de Christo." A Lapide. Op. S. Aug. de Civ. Dei xvii. 8, 9.—If he commit iniquity That is, if thy seed commit iniquity, which was the case with Solomon, and with other kings who descended from David.

The promise to them was conditional, as is acknowledged by Liddon in his Cases of Ps. ixx. 30—32; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 18, and in the words of Bishop Pearson (Art. vi. p. 280). "The kingdom of David was intercepted, nor was his family continued in the throne; part of the kingdom was first rent from his family, and next the regality itself, and when it was restored was translated to another family. But yet, in a larger and better sense, after these intercessions the throne of David was continued in Him who never sinned, and consequently could never lose it, and He being the Seed of David, in Him the throne of David was without interruption or succession continued. Of Him did the angel Gabriel speak at His conception, "The Lord shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i. 33, 35). Compare the note above, on Jacob's prophecy concerning Shiloh, Gen. xlix. 10.

The promise of perpetuity was made to the house of David, who is eminently the father of Christ; and the distinction is carefully to be drawn between the conditionality of the promise to his immediate son and to his successors, which their iniquity might suspend or forfeit, and the absolute security of the ultimate promise to David, of the eternal royalty, which all Israel expected to spring from him, and which was to triumph over all opprobria and to give peace to Israel and the world: see Dr. W. H. Mill on the Genealogies, pp. 174, 175.

This promise was always in David's mind, even to the end of his life; and in it is the consummation of all the blessings, for which he praises God in his song at the close of his days: see below, on xxvii. 50, 51.

rod of men Thy seed, though favoured by Me, will not be excepted from punishment any more than that of other men, if they fall into sin (Jerusalem, A Lapide, Bengart.

This warning was providentially and mercifully given, lest David and his seed, presuming on God's favour to themselves personally, might be tempted thereby to commit sin.

so did Nathan speak Nathan honestly delivered the message, which showed that he himself had been mistaken: see v. 3.

David—sat before the Lord Before the Ark, "sedit oratus: Augustine (de Divers. Qu. ad Simplician. ii. 4), who thinks that his attitude was the same as that of Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 42—43), and that under the Law no special attitude was prescribed for prayer, "sed liberum esse quolibet gesto uti, qui quaesu conditioni et devotioni fortem accommodat." But probably the word, here rendered sat, is not to be taken eternally, but means, as it often does, he remained. Gen. xxiv. 55.

David's feelings at this time may be seen in Ps. cxxxvii.

19. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God? Lit., is this the law of Adam? This is the only place in the Authorized Version where the Hebrew word torah is rendered manner; in all other places it is rendered law.

The sense is, "Dost thou thus confound, O Lord God, to one, who is a mere man (lit., Adam); one made of earth, earthly?"

In that Psalm, where he uses the same titles in addressing God, he had a vision of Christ, the Son of God, taking the nature of man, and made a little lower than the angels, to be crowned in His human nature with glory and worship. And David, who, as St. Peter declares (Acts ii. 30), understood these promises of God as implying that Christ would arise from himself; they reasonably be supposed to be looking to Christ, and to His everlasting kingdom (see v. 24, 29), when he exclaims, "Is this the law of Adam, O Lord God?"

All the Ancient Versions, as well as the Authorized Version, render the words "Lord God" as a vocative; and for this and other reasons, we cannot accept the rendering of those (such as Luther, Calvinus, Gerhard, Pfeiffer, and others) who consider these words as put in apposition with man, or Adam (this is the law of the man who is the Lord God), and who see here a direct statement of the doctrine of the Humanity and Divinity of Christ.

Others also (as Bp. Horsley) see here a prophecy of Christ, and render the words, "This is the law of (or concerning) the Man (Christ Jesus, O Lord God," and they infer this sense also from the parallel place (1 Chron. xvii. 17), Thou hast regarded me according to the estate of a man (the man) of high degree; i. e. from above.

But this parallel is in harmony with the interpretation offered above at the beginning of this note; and that interpretation seems to be the less forced, while at the same time it includes a reference to Christ, Who, being of David's seed, and therefore Very Man, would exalt David and his house to a Divine dignity, which David contemplates with awe and admiration.

Is this the law of one that is a mere man created from the dust, as I am, that I should be elevated to such a glorious elevation as this? I had supposed that the "law of Adam," after the Fall, was to be subject to mortality (Gen. iii. 19), but Thou hast spoken of everlasting continuance to my seed, and to my kingdom; the curse of sin is revoked; the law of death is repealed to me.

And no wonder; for though "in Adam all die," yet, "in Christ," who is the Second Adam, and of the seed of David, and the Lord from heaven, "all are made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22, 47).

23. God went to redeem The plural verb is used here with
people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? 24 For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, Lord, art become their God. 25 And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said. 26 And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee. 27 For thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed forever.

VIII. 1 And after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took || Metheg-annmah out of the hand of the Philistines.

2 And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, cast them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.

3 David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he was able to set the math of the wester out of the hand of the Philistines, that is, of the metropolis, or mother city. The dependent cities are called daughters: see Josh. xv. 45. 47.

To take the bridle of a mother city out of the hand of its rulers, is to dispossess them of their government, as a man who takes the reins into his own hands out of those of the driver of a chariot, or rider of a horse, and deprives them of control over it. (Schulten. Geen. 97, Groen. B. D. ii. 344; Kol. 255.)

In the parallel passage (1 Chron. xviii. 1) we have "Gath and her daughter towns."

There is a somewhat similar figure in Deut. xix. 19, where the census-taker is represented as taking into his hands the reins of two personified countries, Asia and Greece, yoked to his car.

2. he smote Moab, and thus he fulfilled Balaam's prophecy in part (Num. xxiv. 17).

This and the other victories of David related here, were pledges and earnest of the final triumph of the mighty Conqueror, whom Balaam pre-announced (see the note there), and whom David prefigured: cp. David's own prophecy, Ps. lx. 8; and viii. 9, where, under the name of conquests over Philistia and Moab, he describes the victory of Christ over His enemies.

— with two lines measured he Two parts for destruction, and a full line for keeping alive: cp. Ps. lx. 6; "I will utter the valley of Succoth."

3. Hadadezer] which means Hadad (the sun-god of the Syrians, Movev, Phan. i. 196) is our 
 help; but he was no help. 8
David's conquests; 2 SAMUEL VIII. 4—14. he dedicates the spoil.

went to recover his border at the river Euphrates. 4 And David took || from him a thousand || chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David "houghed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them for an hundred chariots. 5 And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. 6 Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts. 7 And the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went. And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. 8 And from || Betah, and from || Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass. 9 When || Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer, 10 Then Toi sent "Joram his son unto king David, to || salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer || had wars with Toi. And "Joram || brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass: 11 Which also king David || did dedicate unto the Lord, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued; 12 Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah. 13 And David gave him a name when he returned from || smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt, 14 And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all they of Edom || did || forsake. 15 He is called "Hadoram in 1 Chron. xviii. 10; and hence some have imagined a discrepancy here. But "Joram is in the MSS. and Versions here, and in Josephus vii. 5. 4. And is it not probable that the Syrian or Arabic name Hadoram (cp. 1 Kings xii. 18. 2 Chron. x. 18) was Hebraized into "Joram in honour of David and of David's God? 16 David dedicated the presents of Toi to the service of Jehovah (e. 11. 12; cp. 1 Kings vii. 51), and may not the son of Toi, who came to bless David, have received a spiritual blessing for himself from his visit to Jerusalem? 17 David did dedicate] David by his conquest, procured times of peace for his son Solomon, in order that he might build the Temple; and he also provided silver and gold wherewith the Temple might be adorned. The victories of Christ, as our David, are all preparatory to the peaceful days of Christ as our Solomon, and to the building up of the Church militant here and of the Church glorified in the heavenly Jerusalem hereafter. 18 David || gave him a name] By his victories; and Christ by His conquests has obtained "the name that is above every name; "see on Phil. ii. 9; cp. below, on v. 16. — from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt? How is this to be explained? The Syrians, who dwelt on the N.N.E. of Palestine, are said to be defeated in the valley of salt at the southern extremity of Judah. The literal rendering is—'from smiting of Aram in the valley of salt.' The Sept. has Edom instead of Aram; and (as Movers and Robinson have observed) this seems to be the true reading; the change in the MSS. (written without Masoretic points) would be simply that of two very similar letters, resh and dalath; and this is confirmed by the parallel, 1 Chron. xlvii. 12, "Abashai slew of the Edomites, in the valley of salt, eighteen thousand men;" and thus the geographical difficulty disappears. The Syrians (Aram) were far from the valley of salt which is to the south of the Dead Sea, but the valley of salt separated Edom from Judah (Robinson, ii. 483; cp. 2 Kings xiv. 7), and if the Edomites came against David, then the valley of salt would be the most likely place for their cuucnter. A similar confusion of Edom and Aram is supposed by some to occur in the hitherto collated MSS. of 2 Kings xvi. 6, and above v. 12, Syria (i.e. Aram). 19. he put garrisons in Edom] And thus fulfilled, in part, Isaac's prophecy (Gen. xxvi. 37); 20. which has its perfect accomplishment in Christ. Cp. on Isa. lix. 1.
David reigns over all Israel. 2 SAMUEL VIII. 15—18. IX. 1. Zadok and Ahimelech priests. 

15. David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people. 16. And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; 17. And Zadok the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Seraijah was the scribe; 18. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers.

IX. And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul,

Tabernacle. These coalesced in Zadok, when the Temple was built by Solomon. Similarly in the Gospel we find two contemporaneous priests (Annas and Caiphas) mentioned at the epoch of Christ's public inauguration into His ministry: but all the Jewish priesthood (then in confusion) is summed up in our text in Zadok's successor, who abides a Priest for ever: see below, on Luke iii. 2.

— scribe [Secretary of state].

18. Benaiah the son of Jehoiada] So xxiii. 20. was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites] David's body-guard (Joseph, vii. 5. 4: cp. xv. 22. Chron. xii. 11. 1 Kings x. 15.): perhaps, the executioners (from corah, to cut off), and the carriers (from paloth, to run). This is adopted by Gesenius, 417. 677; Keil, 266, 267; and Theod. on 1 Kings i. 35: and see vi. 14, xxvi. 17, 18.

The names are derived by others (Johannes, Pfeiffer, Ewald, Bertheau, Movers, Nitizig, Stark, R. S. Poole) from the Philistines, and from a Philistine tribe (Cerethim) mentioned 1 Sam. xvi. 14. (cp. Zoph. xvi. 6. xxv. 266.; cp. Jer. xxxvii. 1, 46). We find Jethro the Gittite distinguished by loyalty to David (xx. 18.; xxii. 12).

The Cherethites and Pelethites were David's ministers for execution of justice and mercy. Christ, the Divine David, has His angelic Cherethites, who execute vengeance on the evil, and He has His angelic Pelethites, who speak on messages of love to the righteous (Heb. i. 14. — chief rulers]. The original word here is ekanaim, the same as in i. 17. it does not mean Priests here, but as the parallel place in 1 Chron. xvii. 17 shows, they were "at the hand of the king," or, "near his person," as Josephus expresses it (vii. 5. 4. principal officers in his courts. The word is derived from ekanon, to administer any one's affairs, to plead his cause, to transact his business (Selden de Synod. B. 16. Gesen. 385.); hence its double sense. The sons of the true David are made "Kings and Priests to God" by Him (Rev. i. 6).
Mephibosheth, lame in his feet, 2 SAMUEL IX. 2—11. bowes before David, and is excelled.

that I may a shew him kindness for Jonathan’s sake? 2 And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was b Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he. 3 And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew c the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is d lame on his feet. 4 And the king d ch. 4. 4. said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar. 5 Then king David e ch. 17. 27. sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

6 Now when f Ch. 4. 14. g ch. 16. 9. h See ch. 16. 4. & 19. 29. || Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! f ver. 1. 3. g 1 Sam. 24. 14. And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy f ver. 1. father’s sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually. 8 And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such e a dead dog as I am? f ver. 4. 9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul’s servant, and said unto him, h I have given unto thy master’s son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house. Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master’s son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master’s son i shall eat bread alway at my table. Now k ch. 19. 17. 7 Ziba had k fifteen sons and twenty servants. 11 Then said Ziba unto the king,
made tributary to Mephibosheth; but Ziba was not faithful (see xvi. 3), and Mephibosheth remained loyal to David, and was content to part with all his earthly goods if he could only see David in peace (xiii. 30). So "the Israelite indeed" loves Christ not for any worldly benefits he receives from Him, but for His own sake.

12. Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Michal. Who had a numerous offspring (1 Chron. viii. 34, 35; iv. 40), and so the house of Saul sprouted up and flourished afresh from one who had seemed without help and hope, but being received into David’s favour, was endowed with new life. Such will the Hebrew nation be when restored to God’s favour in Christ.

But as it was with David and his ambassadors, so it is with Christ and His ministers. Whosoever despiseth them, despiseth Him (Luke x. 16). He sympathizes with them, as David did with his ambassadors in their shame (c. 5), and resents their injuries as offered to Himself (Acts ix. 4); and as the insults offered to David in the person of his ambassadors became the occasion of greater triumph and glory to David, and of greater shame and misery to his enemies, though confederate against him, so it will be in the end in the cause of Christ and His Church.

— cut off their garments And thus reduced them to the contemptible condition of prisoners—captive led in triumph: see Isa. xxi. 4; xxv. 12. But see that they stank! Cp. Gen. xxxiv. 30. Exod. v. 21.

— hired the Syrizers With a thousand talents (1 Chron. xix. 6). They paid dearly for the insult to David.


— Ziba] See viii. 3.


— Ish-tob] Rather, men of Toth (see Judg. xi. 5); between Syria and the land of the Ammonites.

7—10. he sent Joab—Abishai his brother] David not only makes war and gains victories in his own person, but by means of his generals, the two brethren, Joab and Abishai; so the Divine David not only conquers His enemies by His own hand, but He conquered also by means of His Apostles, among whom were three pairs of brethren, and whom He sent forth two and two (see Matt. x. 1. Luke x. 1). And this work He continues even unto the end, till all enemies will be put under His feet.
rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put them in array against the children of Ammon. And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. 12 And he drew nigh, and the people that were with him, unto the battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him. And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city. So Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.

And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together. And Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the river: and they came to Helam; and Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer went before them. And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him. And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there. And when all the kings that were servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more.

XI. 1 And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when the children of Ammon any more.

11. If the Syrians be too strong for me] Here Christ's soldiers and Christian Churches may see an example to themselves, that they should strengthen and succor one another in the spiritual conflict against the common enemies of the True David, and for the advancement of His kingdom: cp. Luke xii. 32. 1 Cor. xii. 21.

Joab's language on this occasion, as related here (and in 1 Chron. xix. 13), presents also a noble example of faith and resolution. "Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the Lord do that which is good in His sight." And so the great Christian Captain speaks, "Stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong!" (1 Cor. xvi. 13).

16. Hadarezer] King of Zobeh (vill. 3). — they came to Helam] That is, the Syrians beyond the Euphrates crossed the river westward, and came to Elam; perhaps Anahita, on the west of that river (Ewald, Grove), or a site rather more to the south.

17. it was told David] Who passed over Jordan with all Israel, represented by their captains, and went against the enemy and put an end to the war (v. 10). So the Divine David, after the conquest gained by His soldiers, will come in person and destroy His enemies.

18. David slew the men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians] In the parallel passage in 1 Chron. xix. 18 we read that David slew of the Syrians seven thousand men which fought in chariots. Observe the word slew as applied to chariots in both these places: it obliges us to supply some such words as are supplied in our Version.

The Arabo Version has a clause here to the effect that to each of these chariots several men were attached; and confirms the view taken of the two passages in our Authorized Version, viz. that in the present passage the Historian, by seven hundred chariots, means all the men that belonged to them; and in the Chronicles the Historian adds the information that ten men on an average belong to each chariot. In the array of Porus which marched against Alexander we are told by the Historian that each chariot carried six men: "Sedexis singularis quadrige vehebatur" (Curtius, vii. 14. 2).

Indeed, whenever more than a thousand chariots are mentioned (which was a vast number for any king to muster), we may infer that the drivers and warriors who manned them are included in the number. But whenever a great victory, such as that before us, is described, and the number of chariots does not amount to one thousand, it may be that to each of these chariots were attached many men, and that the defeat of these many men is implied by the mention of the destruction of the chariots.

— forty thousand horsemen] In 1 Chron. xix. 18 we have forty thousand footmen. The Syriac Version inserts, "and much people," etc. The Arabic has, "a vast multitude of footmen." It is observable, that in the present passage there is no mention of footmen, and in the parallel place in Chronicles there is no mention of horsemen: and it is not credible that the Historian intended to convey in the present passage that no footmen were slain, or in Chronicles that no horsemen were slain. And from this circumstance, and the identity of the number in both places, it may be inferred that in the Syrian method of warfare the horsemen sometimes dismounted and fought on foot, and that the footmen, when weary, mounted on horseback, and so they relieved one another, and thus they might therefore be called either horsemen or footmen as distinguished from those in chariots. It is supposed by some that forty thousand of each were slain. Josephus says that Shobach had eighty thousand footmen and ten thousand horsemen under his command (Joseph. vii. 6. 3).

PRELIMINARY NOTE TO CHAPTER XI.
DAVID'S SIN.

After the erection of David's throne on Mount Zion, and after the divine promise made in chapter vii. of perpetuity to David's seed, and of an everlasting dominion to his house, a dominion to be established in Christ, it appears that the Enemy of God and man envies of such a privilege, which he knew would be disastrous to himself, assailed David with successive temptations.

He first raised up enemies against him on all sides, and endeavoured to overthrow his kingdom by a combination of confederate forces marshalled against it.

These open and violent attacks recoiled upon those who made them, and rebounded to the greater glory of the King of Israel and Judah: see above, Prelim. Note to chap. vii.

In the present chapter, a new and more dangerous form of
temptation assails him; a temptation from within; and he who had vanquished all his enemies in the battle-field is now by temptation overcome. S. Augustine says (Apol. Dav. ii. 3), "David, vir magnus, et qui alolphymum inuansem corpore armis quoque inerentem fide victor, utinam s se ipse viessent! Utinam sic inferiorem adversarium sternere potisset!" Gravior est jugum eius ora!" (Cass. 14). He is guilty of adultery, then of damnation and murder: adultery with the wife of Uriah, one of his most valiant soldiers; damnation with Uriah and with Joab; and murder of Uriah himself. And though, by his private conduct his conscience was awakened from its slumber, and was brought to repentance, yet his sin was forgiven with respect to the future life and the eternal world, yet from this time forth, as far as this world was concerned, the sword never departed from his house (xii. 10), and his life was embittered by sins and sufferings in his own family—the fruits of his own sin—even to the day of his death.

Yet even here Satan is defeated, and God is glorified by means of Satan's devices: which appears as follows, viz.:

—awakened his forethoughts; revealed, to him the death of his son, which was as right in the sight of the Lord (1 Kings xxv. 5). Besides, one of the worst consequences of the publication of his sin would be that he would have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme (Cass. 15). Might it not therefore have been expected that a veil would have been thrown over his sin, and that it would not have been exposed to the eyes of the world in Holy Writ?

If Holy Scripture had been the work of men, these considerations would probably have prevailed, and David's sin would not have been disclosed to our view; or, if it had been revealed, the historian would probably have extenuated it—as many of the Hebrew Rabbins have done (see Bp. Patrick's note on 1 Kings xxv. 5)—and have dwelt on David's virtues, especially on his repentance.

But the Author of this history is the Holy Ghost: it is divinely inspired. He reminds us that we have to do with One Who is no respecter of persons. Who keeps His eyes upon the hearts of all, and penetrates the secrets of their hearts; and will one day bring to light the secret sins of Princes and Potentates of this world, and call them to receive their doom at His Judgment-seat.

In reading the Bible, we have the satisfaction of knowing that in it there is no suppression of facts, no disguise or extenuation from worldly motives; that in the Bible, and the Bible alone, we have the realization of the perfect Historian: "Ne quid falsi dicerent audae, ne quid veri non audae." Here there is one benefit to be drawn from this record of David's sin: it supplies an argument for the Truth and inspiration of Holy Scripture.

(2) This history is also a moral test of the readers of the Bible.

The consequence of David's sin is thus stated by Nathan, that "it would give great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme" (xii. 14). But woe to the enemies of the Lord! Woe to those who blaspheme Him! For it is written, "All Things written are written for our learning" (Rom. v. 11). The right hand shall find out them that hate Thee" (Ps. cvi. 8). The enemies of the Lord may turn the food of Scripture into poison, and may abuse David's sin into an occasion for selling themselves captives into the hands of the Tempter; but the friends of God will take warning from his fall; and, however great may be their occasional privileges, they will "not be high-minded, but fear," and they will meditate on David's repentance, and bear in mind the sorrows which were cuttled on "the man after God's own heart" by the children of sin, and the friendship of God to such of His children as will derive a blessing from this divine record, and they will bless His Name for it.

(3) If David's sin in the matter of Uriah the Hittite had not entirely entangled and bewildered, and staggered by the series of tribulations which followed him henceforth to the grave.

But this sad scene explains them all. Here is the wellspring, from whence flowed forth that dark stream of sorrow, that we have a similar view of men's secret sins, if we had a clear insight into our own, as they are seen by God, the anomalies of the present state of things in this world would in a great measure disappear. The tangled web of its intricate ties and perplexities would be unraveled. We should doubtless behold the true cause of the misery which prevails around us, and we should be in effect to a strong encouragement to a party to become a Moral Governor; and that the day is coming, when every work will be brought to judgment, and men will be rewarded or punished according to an exact rule of retributive justice.

(4) David, in many respects, was a signal type of Christ. But, as in the case of all types, their manifestions are in their character in which they are contrasts to Christ (see above, Intro. to Judges, pp. 78, 79). So it is in the history before us. David was a man of deep and tender affections; but here he was mastered by his passions, which hurried him into the commission of deadly sin. The love of Christ was stronger than death, but it was as pure as it was strong. It is an unfathomable fountain of unsullied holiness. He, in the eventide of the world, looked down from the heights of heaven, and brought to Himself His Christ in glory, and in His temporal government, and the promises of everlasting glory made to David's house are fulfilled to all those of every age and nation who believe and obey Him (ep. S. Ambrose, Apol. Dav. c. 3 and 4).

(5) Personally as a sinner, David cannot be said to be a type of Him who was sinless, and yet, inasmuch as it is said in Holy Scripture that God laid on Christ the iniquities of all us (Isa. lii. 6), and God made Him to be sin for us Who knew no sin (2 Cor. v. 21), and that He was made a curse for us (Gal. iii. 13), therefore even in David's sin and in the repentance and the promises of everlasting glory made to David's house are fulfilled to all those of every age and nation who believe and obey Him (ep. S. Ambrose, Apol. Dav. c. 3 and 4).

(6) David's sin and St. Peter's sin, and David's punishment, are recorded in Scripture, that no one may presume; and David's repentance and Peter's repentance and pardon are recorded in Scripture, that no one may presume. "Sine remissione David cantus facit eos qui non ceciderunt, sic desperatos esse non vult qui ceciderunt" (S. Augustine in Ps. 50). "In Scripturis Sacris, David et Petri peccata sunt infausta, ut cantala minorum sive seniorum voluntas et anima aevis aestimaretur, et ut esse seps peccantium sit recuperatorium perditionis. De statu suo, David cadens, nemo superlat: de lapsu suo, David cadente, nemo desperet." (Augustine). How can we presume of not sinning, or despairing of sinning, when we find so great a savior thus fallen, thus risen? (Bp. Hall).
And it came to pass in an evening-tide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; and for she was purged from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. And the woman conceived, and sent and David, and said, I am with child. And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.

And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house. And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing. And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and I will send thee after to-morrow. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.

1. it came to pass] With regard to the date of these events, it may be noted that Solomon, the second child of David's connexion with Bathsheba, was born not much sooner than two years afterwards, and that at David's decease, who died when he was seventy years of age, Solomon must have been at least twenty years old, for at his accession to the throne Solomon had a son one year old (1 Kings xiv. 21. Cp. xi. 42). Amnon, who is mentioned soon after the events in the present chapter (xiii. 1), was born after David's accession to the throne of Judah (ii. 2), and was his firstborn son after that event, and must have been, at least, nearly twenty years old, at the time described in that chapter. It is probable, therefore, that David was about forty-eight years of age at the time here spoken of.

— after the year was expired] That is, at spring time.


— But David tarried still at Jerusalem] At the time when kings go forth to battle. Observe the contrast; and compare the lines of the Latin poet—

"Quarritur, Egidius quâ re sit factus adulter?"

— in prompta causa est—desidiosum est."

2. in an evening-tide, that David arose from off his bed] From his mid-day sleep: see iv. 5.

— upon the roof] To enjoy the cool air and the view: perhaps for religious meditation. They who read this history may think themselves safe like David. They may know the history of his father and of the Lord's battles as he did; they may have sung and written holy psalms as he had. And yet, perhaps, in some tranquil season, in the peacefulness of their own home, in the cool of eventide in the season of spring, their ghastly enemy may be near them, and they may be most in danger when they think themselves most secure. Then it is that they have most need to pray. "Lead us not into temptation" (Matt. vi. 13). Cp. Deut. xxiv. 8. Josh. ii. 6, 8. 1 Sam. ii. 25. Matt. x. 27. Acts x. 9.

This palace-roof, on which David walked when he conceived this sin in his mind, was probably the scene of the incestuous

set of his son Absalom, which was the bitter fruit and punishment of David's sin: see v. 11, and xvi. 22.

— he saw a woman washing herself] Probably, in the fountain in the court-yard of her house.

3. esquired after the women] The first step towards sin had been in his multiplying wives to himself, contrary to God's law (Deut. xvii. 17). If he had kept close to that law, he would not have fallen into this sin. The only safeguard against Satan is in obedience to God's will and word. — Bathsheba] called Bath-sheba in 1 Chron. iii. 5. The term, according as it is vocalized, would be pronounced either sh or f; and v would easily pass on to its cognate labial b.

— Eliah] called also Ammiel (1 Chron. iii. 5), which has the same meaning, and is, indeed, the same word, its component parts being inverted, and means God's people. Eliah was the son of Ahithophel, xxiii. 34 (Jerome), and one of David's most valiant soldiers (xxiii. 34). Here was an aggravation of David's sin, and perhaps the sense of wrong done to Bathsheba excited Ahithophel, her husband, to help the son against him.

— wife] David had probably hoped she was unmarried; but now that his passion was inflamed, the knowledge that she was a wife did not deter him from his purpose; "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." (James i. 15).

— Uriah] One of David's most faithful subjects and valiant soldiers (xxiii. 39); another aggravation of the sin.

4. for she was purifig] Rather, and she was purifig from her uncleanness (see Lev. xv. 18); and then she returned home. She was more than a fugitive from the ceremonial law than the moral (W. Womers, Keil).

Sin often seeks for a shelter in superstition.

5. and sent and told David] In order that he might protect her from the punishment due to adultery—death (Lev. xv. 18). Uriah slept at the door of the king's house] As one of his body-guard. Cp. 1 Chron. xi. 41.

11. The ark] Perhaps it had been carried with the army to the battle. Cp. 1 Sam. iv. 3.

13. he made him drunk] And tried to make him break his oath (v. 11).
David's sin. 2 SAMUEL XI. 14—27. XII. 1—4. Nathan is sent to him.

14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.

16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

18 Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king, And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? Who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him, from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

20 So the messenger went, and came and shewed David all that Joab had sent him for. And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate. And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him.

26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

XII. 1 And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. 2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. 4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man,
and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. 5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: 6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I анointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul. 8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. 9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? 10 Thou hast killed Uriah the Hitteite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. 11 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. 12 Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee (Theodoret); "Immoderatæ libido n non permansissus, sed transitus; propter vocatus est hospes" (S. Augustine de Doct. Chris. iii. 22, Sermon 58 de Tempore).

5. David's anger was greatly kindled] David had not recognised his own sinfulness in the parable, and held up to his own eyes; he did not see Uriah in the poor man, nor himself in the rich man, nor his own lust in the traveller, nor Bathsheba in the ewe lamb, and he pronounced sentence of death in the Name of the "Lord" on the rich man for his sin.

Our Conscience therefore is no safe rule of life unless it be regulated by the Divine Word. The conscience even of a David may be seared, as with a hot iron, by sin (1 Tim. iv. 2), it may become callous and insensible. The sinner may continue, month after month, in a treacherous and fatal sleep, hugging his darling sin, sleeping soundly on his pillow with his belovèd Bathsheba in his bosom, unless he takes heed to examine his own life and conversation by the rule of God's commandments, and to ascertain from his own heart and conscience whether he has sinned in the sight of God.

Here then is a warning against the prevalent notion, that reliance may be placed on our own personal assurance, as to our own spiritual state, and as to our own acceptance with God. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. xiv. 12; xvi. 25). Cp. below, Acts xxiii. 1. 5. 14. Rom. xiii. 5; xiv. 5. 14. 1 John iii. 20. Our conscience is indeed to be heard, but it is first to be informed. Its dial is to be illuminated by the solar beams of Divine light. If David had thus dealt with his conscience, if he had tried his own actions by the test of God's law, if he had remembered that it was written by the Divine hand in the Divine code, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and "Thou shalt not kill," he would have become a Nathan to himself; his conscience would have become a prudent and holy guide to him in God's Name, Thou art the man. Here also is a lesson to hearers and readers of Scripture and of sermons. David listened to a sermon from Nathan, which exactly suited his own case, and he did not apply it to himself. He turned the edge of it from himself to another. The benefit of sermons depends more on the hearer than on the preacher. The best sermon is that which is best applied by those to whom it is preached.

6. fourfold] David remembers and quotes God's law (Exod. xxii. 1) as against others, but not against himself. Nathan manifested David's sin by the indignation which David himself expressed at a less sin in another: "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.

7. Nathan said to David, Thou art the man] Such was the courage of the prophets of old. God sent them and spoke by them; being strong in the consciousness of their Divine mission, they rebuked kings for their sins. Samuel rebuked Saul; Nathan rebuked David; the man of God from Judah rebuked Jeroboam, standing at his own altar; Elijah rebuked Ahab; Elijah rebuked Jehoram; Isaiah rebuked Ahaz; John the Baptist rebuked Herod; S. Ambrose rebuked Theodosius. When will this prophetic spirit of courage return to the Church of God?

8. thy master's wives] No wife of a king of the Hebrew nation could ever be married to any one but his successor: cp. below, 1 Kings ii. 29.

9. thou hast killed] Thou, king David, hast slain thine own brave and faithful soldier, while fighting thine own battles. Thou hast slain him by the sword of the Ammonites, the enemies of God! Thou hast robbed him of the first of his wife, and next of his life. Thou art the man: I show thee thyself, I reveal to thee thy most secret acts.

If the prophet was enabled thus to expose secret sins, how much more will this be done by the God of all the prophets! Compare below, the act and words of Elisha to Gehazi, "Went not mine heart with thee?" (2 Kings v. 26). "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. xv. 3); and "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 13). "He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." at the Great Day (1 Cor. iv. 5). Thou hast slain—it was not Noah, nor the Ammonite in the battle-field, but thou at Jerusalem, in thy palace, writing that letter privately, and sending it by the hand of Uriah—thou hast slain Uriah the Hittite. Thou art the murderer, and must pay the penalty for thy sin.

Sins committed by the intermediate agency of others will be brought home, at the Day of Judgment, to those who have employed that agency: and however far removed in time and place the effect of the sin may be from the prime author of it, the complicated maze of all its intricate windings will be unravelled by God's Omniscience; and He will lay the sin at the door of him who was the prime mover of it, and will say, "Thou art the man."

10. the sword shall never depart from thine house] Henceforward, for about twenty years, David had no respite from domestic affliction.

If we turn to the next chapter, we find his son Amnon guilty of incest; and if we proceed further, we find another son, his beloved son Absalom, guilty of murder, and of rebellion against his own father, and of adultery in David's own house, and destroyed by Joab, who had been employed by David in the murder of Uriah; and a third son, Adonijah, raising an insurrection against him when he was lying on his deathbed. "What a world of mischief and misery did he create unto himself by that one presumptuous act in the matter of Uriah (1 Kings iv. 5), almost all the days of his life after!" See Bp. Sanderson, i. 99, Sermon on Ps. xix. 13.

Let those who are tempted by David's sin be deterred from sin by David's punishment. If he, who was in other respects the "man after God's own heart," was thus chastised for his sin, even till the end of his life, what may not others expect, if with greater means of grace, and with David's history as their warning, they abuse it into an occasion for sin?
out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. 13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. 14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

15 And Nathan departed unto his house. And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. 16 David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. 17 And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. 18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? 19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. 20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. 21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive: but when the child was dead,
Solomon's birth. 2 SAMUEL XII. 22—31. XIII. 1. Rabbah is taken.

thou didst rise and eat bread. 22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: * for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? 23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

24 And David comforted Bath-sheba his wife, and went unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the Lord loved him. 25 And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord.

26 And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city. 27 And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters. 28 Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it: lest I take the city, and it be called after my name. 29 And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. 30 And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance. 31 And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brickkiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.

XIII. 1 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a ch. 3. 2. 3.

incidents recorded in these verses, see the concluding paragraphs of the Preliminary Note to chap. xi.


See below, the notes on Matt. xvii. 3; cp. Col. i. 22, 28; 1 Thess. ii. 19.

24. Solomon] Heb., Shelomôh; in the Sept., Solomon; in the New Test. and in Josephus the second syllable is short, Solomon. The name signifies peaceable (Genen. 501), as compared with his father, who was a man of war (see 1 Chron. xxii. 9).

Let it be remembered, that in the genealogy of Christ, the Holy Spirit says, "David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias" and thus gives sinners the hope of peace in Christ (see on Matt. i. 6).

Solomon, in his name, was a record of the peace which God had restored to David's conscience; and a figure of Christ, the "Prince of Peace.

25. he sent by the hand of Nathan] God, who "loved Solomon," sent by the ministry of Nathan, and gave him an additional name expressive of that love, "Jedidiah" (beloved of the Lord), and thus made him to be in another respect a type of David's Son, in whom the Father is well pleased (Matt. iii. 17; xii. 18; xvii. 5). The name David signifies beloved, and after his repentance, and when he had been pardoned by God, David revived, as it were, after his fall, and rose up again in his son Jedidiah, the beloved of Jehovah.

Solomon prefigured Christ, as Prince of Peace; and as the Well-beloved of God; and as the Builder of the Temple; and as excelling in Wisdom and knowledge. (Cp. Eucherius, in lib. iii. Regnum in Bibl. Patrum, Max. iv. 965.)

27. the city of waters] of the river Jordan, or upper Jabbok (Keil).

29. David—went to Rabbah] David comes with his people at the close of the conflict, and gains the victory, and receives the crown, and executes judgment: so will Christ.

30. the weight whereof] Rather, the value, according to some Jewish interpreters in Kimchi; and so Bochart, Patrick, Keil; cp. Kitto, 394. with the precious stones] That is, as is expressed in 1 Chron. xx. 2, he took the crown, which was valued at a talent, and there were precious stones in it.

Some suppose that the crown of the king of Ammon was melted down, purified, and refined, and made anew for David, and adorned with its jewels, and then set upon David's head (Angelom. Wouvers).

— it was set on David's head] A type of the victories gained over the heathen world by Him of Whom it is said, "Thou hast set a crown of pure gold on His head" (Ps. xvi. 3).

31. saws—brick-kiln] This seems to be the right interpretation, though controverted by some: cp. Keil, p. 286, and Kitto, pp. 395—398. It does not appear, that this severe punishment was inflicted upon any of the Ammonites who had not resisted the arms of David; and it must be remembered, that the Ammonites were guilty of savage cruelties toward Israel (cp. 1 Sam. xi. 2), of which the prophet speaks,—"The children of Ammon ripped up the women with child of Gilgal, that they might enlarge their border" (Amos i. 13. Cp. Ezek. xxxvi. 2); and that they had treated the ambassadors of David with wanton insult; and that they had lapsed from the worship of God into the foulest and most unnatural idolatry.

Besides, the acts of David, exacting vengeance on the enemies of Israel and of God, are doubtless recorded in Scripture as a prophetic warning to all, that they may not incur the terrible dooms, which will be pronounced by the Divine Son of David on His enemies, who will be cast by Him at the last day into outer darkness, where will be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

PRELIMINARY NOTE TO CHAP. XIII.

REDEMPTION FOR DAVID'S SIN, WHICH WAS PARDONED.

Henceforward, for about twenty years, to the end of his reign and life, David, though penitent and pardoned by God, is afflicted by sufferings produced by sins in his own household.

If we were to consider David's life as ending in himself in this world, he would appear to be an object of commiseration, and to be forsaken of God.

But this would be an erroneous view of his history.

(1) We must extend our view to another world, and see the blessed fruits of his godly sorrow, ripened into an eternity of bliss by the gracious woes and sunshine of God's grace and mercy to the penitent.

(2) Yet further, David, as guilty of sin, and as punished for sin, and yet pardoned and beloved of God, is a signal type of Him Who, in His own Person, knew no sin, but who bare our sins and their punishment (see above, Prelim. Note to chap. xi.);
1 a fair sister, whose name was 2 Tamar; and Ammon the son of David loved her. 3 And Ammon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and Ammon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her. 4 But Ammon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimmeah David’s brother: and Jonadab was a very subtil man. 5 And he said unto him, Why art thou, being the king’s son, a lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me? 6 And Ammon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom’s sister. 7 And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand. 8 So Ammon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.

7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon’s house, and dress him meat. 8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon’s house; and he was laid down. And she took flesh, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. 9 And she took a pan, and poured them out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him. 10 And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. 11 And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come, lie with me, my sister. 12 And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for there is no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this foolishness. 13 And I, whether shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee. 14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her.

and Who in this respect was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief. 15 He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; and the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (Isa. lii. 3–6). Thus He was a Man in sorrow and suffering; yet He was the well-beloved Son. He was the true Solomon, the Prince of Peace, the Divine Joshua, the "Beloved of the Lord:" and therefore the Prophet, having described His sufferings, proceeds to say that, though “it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, yet when His soul had been made an offering for sin, He shall see His Seed, and prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord would prosper in His hand” (Isa. liii. 10).

Here is the true key to the history of David’s life. We must not limit our view to David as a sinner, and as punished for his sin during the rest of his life; but we must see him as pardoned and justified in Christ; we must contemplate his repentance as a "repentance unto salvation," and as yielding the peaceable fruits of righteousness in those inward spiritual comforts which he received from God in the salutary discipline of sorrow, and which are abundantly manifested in the Psalms which he composed at this time: see Ps. iii., xli., xlii., lv., lx., lxx., lxxi., which ought to be read together with the history of this period.

We must not confine our view to David’s personal life and reign. After that we have seen him fallen and suffering for sin, we must see him rising again, reviving in a more glorious reign in Solomon his son, who began to reign while David his father was still alive, in order that the continuity might be more clearly marked. And above all, we must contemplate him as culminating upward, and attaining the climax of his glory, which God had reserved to him, and for which he yearned with devoted aspiration, in Christ, the Divine David, and the Son of David, the Solomon, the Jedidiah, the builder of the Temple of the Lord, and the glorified in heaven.

Different phases of Christ’s Person and Office were foreshadowed in David and Solomon his son; as different phases of Christ’s Person and Office had been foreshadowed in the successive lives of the Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. See above, on Gen. xxxiv. 1. 1. Absalom—had a fair sister 2. The daughter of David by Machlah, the daughter of the king of Oeshner (iii. 2, 3). 3. Tamar which signifies a pomegranate. 4. Tamar and Jonadab— 5. Are the characters of David by Ahinoam, after he had been made king of Judah, at Hebron: see iii. 2. 6. For she was a virgin; and Amnon thought it hard 7. These words are to be connected; she was a virgin, and therefore secluded from him in a separate house (v. 7) or part of the palace; and so he could not execute his wicked design against her. 8. Shall 9. And he burned his house down, and murdered him before his father (the same Shimei) and Shannah (1 Sam. xxxv. 9). 10. Day to day: Literally, morning to morning. 11. He took hold of her: David’s sins are reproduced in his own house, by his own children: he had been guilty of adultery, dissipation, and murder; his son Absalom is guilty of incest and deceit; and is murdered by his own brother Absalom (v. 25). 12. My brother: He reminds him of the near relationship by blood between them, to deter him from sin. 13. Speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee: Either she was so confounded that she knew not what she said, for such a marriage was strictly forbidden by the Levitical law (Lev. xvii. 9; xx. 17), or perhaps David’s example in
15 Then Amnon hated her † exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone. 16 And she said unto him, There is no cause: this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her. 17 Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her. 18 And she had  a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king’s daughters that were virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.

19 And Tamar put  ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and  laid her hand on her head, and went on crying. 20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath † Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; † regard not this thing. So Tamar remained † desolate in her brother Absalom’s house.

21 But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth. 22 And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom † hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar. 23 And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom † had sheepshearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king’s sons. 24 And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheepshearers; let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants go with thy servant. 25 And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him. 26 Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee? 27 But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king’s sons go with him.

28 Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon’s † heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: || have I not commanded you? be courageous, and be † valiant. 29 And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king’s sons arose, and every man † gat him up upon his mule, and fled.

30 And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king’s sons, and there is not one of them left. 31 Then the king arose, and † tare his garments, and † lay on the ground.

multiplying wives to himself, contrary to the law, had introduced lax notions into his family that their father as king could dispense with the law. The history before us is one of the many proofs of the evils consequent on polygamy. 15. hated her] Instead of laying his own sin. Thus he showed that the love he had professed to her was not love, but lust; that it was not of God, but of the Evil One. 16. There is no cause: unto me] There are no reasons (Genes. 15) for this evil, which is great even compared with the other wickedness wherewith thou hast done to me—this evil of thus sending me away, and of ordering thy servants to bolt me out, which will expose me to the suspicion of being an immodest and guilty person, and of having tempted thee to sin, whereas thou hast been the only author of the sin, and hast put me to shame. Tamar was therefore obliged in self-defence to publish her own shame, and to declare the wrong that had been done to her. 18. a garment of divers colours] Her long mantle, with fringes and sleeves: see on Gen. xxxvii. 3.

21. David—was very wroth] David was wroth, but did not punish his son Amnon; being conscious of the sin which he himself had committed, and by which he had tempted his children to sin. And because the king did not execute justice, therefore Absalom, Tamar’s brother, takes the law into his own hands, and murders his brother Amnon. Thus one sin leads to another by an almost endless chain of consequences.

29. the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon] Joab, David’s servant, had been the instrument of Uriah’s death: here again, David’s sin is reproduced in his family; and he weeps over it, but does not punish it. 30. mule] This is the first mention of a mule in Scripture. The meaning of Gen. xxxvi. 24 is questionable. Cp. below, xxvii. 9; 1 Kings 1. 33, where is mention of “the king’s mule.”
2 SAMUEL XIII. 32—39. XIV. 1—11. for Absalom’s return.

Joab’s device

u r e 2.

And and an Or, cp. k

Now and Or, f

 deliverer them.

dt

Ex.

Ps.

Gen.

Joab’s

servant.

Heb. with a
great weeping
greatly.

ch. 2, 3.

ß Or, Ammihur.

a ch. 14, 23, 32.
& 15, 8.
ß Or, was con-
cerned.

Ex. 84. 2.

b Gen. 38. 12.

c a ch. 13, 39.
& 2 Chron. 11. 6.
& See Ruth 3. 3.

d ver. 19.

Ex. 4. 15.

e 1 Sam. 29, 41.
& ch. 1, 2.
ß Heb. Sure.

This 2 Kings 6.

26, 38.
& See ch. 12. 1.

ß Heb. no
deliverer between
them.

b Num. 35, 19.

Deut. 19. 12.

ß Heb. upon the
face of the earth.

1 Gen. 27. 13.

ß Sam. 25, 24.

1 Matt. 27. 25.

ß ch. 3, 28, 29.

ß Kings 2, 33.

Joab’s device

2 And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David’s brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that they have slain all the young men the king’s sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the † appointment of Absalom this hath been || determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar. 33 Now therefore † let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king’s sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead. 34 ¶ But Absalom fled.

And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side behind him. 35 And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king’s sons come: † as thy servant said, so it is. 36 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king’s sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept † very sore.

37 But Absalom fled, and went to † Talmai, the son of || Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day. 38 So Absalom fled, and went to † Geshur, and was there three years. 39 And the soul of king David || longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was † comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.

XIV. 1 Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king’s heart was † toward Absalom. 2 And Joab sent to † Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, † and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead: 3 And come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab † put the words in her mouth.

4 And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she † fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, † Help, O king. 5 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, † I am indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead. 6 And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and there was † none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him. 7 And, behold, † the whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and so they shall quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband neither name nor remainder † upon the earth. 8 And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee. 9 And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, † the iniquity be on me, and on my father’s house: † k and the king and his throne be guiltless. 10 And the king said, Whosoever saith ought unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more. 11 Then said she, I pray thee,
let the king remember the Lord thy God, † that thou wouldest not suffer the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, "As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.

12 Then the woman said, Let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak one word unto my lord the king. And he said, Say on. 13 And the woman said, Wherefore then thou thought such a thing against the people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished. 14 For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him. 15 Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, it is because the people have made me afraid: and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid. 16 For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God. 17 Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable: for as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad: therefore the Lord thy God will be with thee.

18 Then the king answered and said unto the woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee. And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak. 19 And the king said, Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this? And the woman answered and said, As thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from ought that my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of thine handmaid: 20 To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth.

21 And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again. 22 And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the king: and Joab said, To day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant. 23 So Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. 24 And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face.
25 But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. And when he polled his head, (for it was at every year's end that he polled it; because the hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it;) he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels after the king's weight. And unto Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter, whose name was Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance.

26 So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face. Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; but he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come. Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is nigh mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire. Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?

27 And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? it had been good for me to have been there still: now therefore let me see the king's face; and if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me. So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king kissed Absalom.

XV. 1 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. 2 And Absalom rose up early, brook Kidron, his ascent of the Mount of Olives, his tears on that Mountain, the meekness of his deportment there; his tenderness for Absalom, who rebelled against him; his forbearance toward Shimei, who cursed him; the treachery of Ahithophel, his familiar friend whom he trusted—the type of Judas the traitor, in his sin, and in his wretched end—these incidents bring before us some prophetic and figurative foreshadowings of the last days of our Lord's Ministry: His weeping over Jerusalem, when He was on the Mount of Olives; His Agency in the Garden; His betrayal, His rejection and Crucifixion by the people of His own city, Jerusalem; and His prayers for those who reviled and slew Him.

Nor is this all. The counsel of Ahithophel comes to nought; the rebellion of Absalom is quelled, he himself is slain; and Solomon, who carried David, is humbled; David is brought back to Jerusalem in triumph, and is received by the people with joy. May we not see here a foreshadowing of Christ's Resurrection and Ascension, and of the discontinuance of His enemies, and of the final establishment of His Kingdom?

Of this we are assured by the Holy Spirit Himself in the New Testament, that David "knew that God would raise up Christ to sit on his throne," and that, "being a prophet, and seeing before, he spake of the Resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither did His flesh see corruption" (Acts ii. 29—31). The interest and beauty of the history of David in this severe trial are enhanced by these considerations. May we not be permitted to suppose, that he was cheered and comforted by the sense that he himself was travelling on the same road of suffering in his way to glory, which would be traversed by Him, who was to be raised from his seed and to sit for ever on his throne? and so the sorrows of Olivet may have even been brightened to David by visions of the Ascension to heaven from that Mountain of Tears: and in his return to Jerusalem he may have had a glorious revelation of what he himself describes, the triumphant entry of his own Son, the King of Glory, the Lord of Hosts, within the gates of the earthly Zion (Ps. cviii. 18—29) and the heavenly Jerusalem (Ps. xcvii. 1—9).

Ch. XV. 1. Absalom] Whose name means father of peace; but he belied his name by his acts.

— houses] A sign of pride and vain-glory: see above, xiii. 20, and Deut. xviii. 16. 20.
Absalom steals the hearts

2 SAMUEL XV. 3—16.

of the people.

and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!

And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obsequies, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron.

For thy servant vowed a vow while I abide at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord. And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron.

But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron. And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.

And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.

And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he take us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword. And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.

And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the

3. See, thy matters are good! Thus the grand rebel Absalom, by discredit ing his father's government, pretending a great zeal for justice, and making shows and promises of great matters to be done by way of reformation, if the supreme power were settled upon him, did by little and little ingratiate himself with the people, and loosen them from the conscience of their bounden allegiance, and engage them in an unnatural war against his own father, and their undoubted sovereign. By. Sanderson, i. 388; ii. 199.

7. after forty years] This is the reading of almost all our hitherto collated Hebrew manuscripts. Two in Kennicott have forty days. It has been supposed that they ought to be corrected from some ancient Versions, Syriac, Arabic, Sixtine edition of the Vulgate, and that the true reading is four years; and so Josephus, Theodoret, Keil, and By. Cotton, B. D. i. 14. Absalom had dwelt two years at Jerusalem without seeing the king's face (xiv. 28), and after four years, probably, since his return to Jerusalem, he rebelled against him.

They who maintain the genuineness of the reading in the Hebrew MSS. hitherto collated (forty years), date those years from the union of David by Samuel (1 Sam. xvi. 14); see Catonis, p. 773, and Woulcers, p. 878, who says that the first union of David was an era in Hebrew history, like that of the Birth of Isaac in the history of Abraham.

To Hebron] Where he was born (iii. 3), and where probably he had many friends, and would find many persons who were disaffected and discontented on account of the transfer of the capital of the kingdom from Hebron—the old patriarchal city, associated with the memory of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob— to Jerusalem its rival.

Absalom, the son of David, on religions pretences, endeavoured to make Hebron itself to be a seat of schism and rebellion against David, and against Jerusalem, the city of God. This is imitated by those who, on the plea of religion, rise up in separation and opposition to Christ and His Church.

10. spies] Intelligence, couriers; literally, runners on foot.

11. called] Invited by him to his sacrificial feast at Hebron; and drawn away in their simplicity, under pretence of religion, to rebel against David.


Ahithophel, David's "familiar friend, in whom he trusted" (Ps. iv. 13), "who did eat of his bread" (Ps. xlii. 9), seems to have been already in the plot, and to have imitated Absalom, in masking his treachery by a plea of religion, for he was offering sacrifices at the time. Such was also the pretext of the Chief Priests and Pharisees—perhaps even of Judas himself—when they conspired against Christ.

14. and smite the city] David retired from Jerusalem, in order that he might not be the occasion of bloodshed there. He preferred the safety of the people to his own; and was thus also a figure of Him who said in the Garden of Gethsemane, "If ye seek Me, let these go their way" (John xviii. 8).
king left "ten women, which were concubines, to keep the house. 17 And the
king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was
far off. 18 And all his servants passed on beside him; * and all the Cherrithites,
and all the Pelothites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after
him from Gath, passed on before the king. 19 Then said the king to 'Ittai the
Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide
with the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile. 20 Whereas thou
camest but yesterday, should I this day * make thee go up and down with us?
seeing I go * whither I return, thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and
truth be with thee. 21 And Ittai answered the king, and said, * As the Lord
liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king
shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be. 22 And
David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and
all his men, and all the little ones that were with him. 23 And all the country
wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself
passed over the brook || Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way
of the 7 wilderness.
24 And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, 24 bearing the ark of
the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiaithar went
up, until all the people had done passing out of the city. 25 And the king said
unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour
in the eyes of the Lord, he * will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his

16. ten women—concubines | It would seem, therefore, that
his wives followed him.
17. a place that was far off | The house outside the city, and
at some distance from Zadok's house (1 Sam. 30:7, 8). On the way toward
Jericho there seems to have been a house that bore this name, as
the Sept. has εὐεργής τοῦ ἄνδρου, "the far-house." The Sept.
adds that it was near an olive-tree.
18. all the Cherrithites, and all the Pelothites, and all the
Gittites | Observe the repetition of the word all, marking their
faithfulness to David in his affliction, when his son and many of
his own subjects rebelled against him. These Cherrithites,
Pelothites, and Gittites, his body-guard, were probably strangers
(Cp. v. 19), and perhaps of Philistine origin: see on viii. 18.
Our Lord found more faith in a Roman centurion than in
all Israel (Matt. viii. 10); and Greeks were desirous to see Him,
when the Chief Priests were plotting against Him (John xii. 20); and
the first and greatest harvest of the Gospel was among strangers
who came from distant lands to Jerusalem (Acts ii. 5); the
Gentiles were eager to receive the Gospel which was rejected
by the Jews (Acts xvii. 6; xxii. 21; xviii. 28. 1 Thess. i. 16).
19. Ittai the Gittite | A beautiful instance of loyal constancy
and faithful devotion to David in a Philistine soldier at a time
of apostasy and defection: see xviii. 2. His truth and fidelity
are brought out in stronger and clearer light by the contrast
with the treachery of Absalom, Ahithophel, and of Achithen of
Job and Abishai (2 Chron. i. 19, 25; ii. 20, 24) and by the
permission given to him by David to retire from his service.
Ittai's profession of fidelity to David has been compared with
that of St. Peter to the Divine King of the Jews near the same
place, Matt. xxvi. 35 (Stanley, p. 115).
— abide with the king | Whoever may be king, serve him:
thou art a stranger, it is not for thee to concern thyself about
our political conflicts, it is enough for thee to adhere to the
ruling power, whatever it may be,—εὐεργής τοῦ ἄνδρους ὥσποτέρως ἦν.
20. I go whither I may | Like the Son of Man, who had not
where to lay His head (Matt. viii. 20).
21. Ittai answered | A noble answer of genuine loyalty. Compare
the reply of the Moabish stranger Ruth to her mother-in-law of Bethlehem (Ruth i. 16, 17); and of Simon Peter to
Christ, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of
eternal life" (John vi. 68).
22. Go and pass over | the brook Kidron (c. 23),
— the little ones | see Exod. xii. 37. Such was
his trust in David and in his fortunes.
David ascends Olivet; 2 SAMUEL XV. 26—37. worshippers on the top of the mountain.

habitation: 26 But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. 27 The king said also unto Zadok the priest, Art not thou a seer? return into the city, and 2 your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. 28 See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me. 29 Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.

30 And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and b had his head covered, and he went b barefoot: and all the people that were with him c covered every man his head, and they went up, k weeping as they went up. 31 And one told David, saying, c Ahithophel c is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, c turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

32 And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai the c Archite came to meet him in Joshua 16 2. o with his coat rent, and earth upon his head: 33 Unto whom David said, If p ch. 19. 35. thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me: 34 But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, a I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel. 35 And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it in the 17. 15. 16. to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.

36 Behold, they have there a with them their s two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.

37 So Hushai 'David's c ch. 16. 16. ch. 27. 3. ch. 16. 15.

Surely it was not without a providential coincidence that he did this on the very spot where afterwards the Son of David, when He had been betrayed by Judas, and rejected by Jerusalem, went up on the Mount of Olives, at the sight of His faithful disciples into heaven itself, and sat down on the right hand of God (see the note below, on Acts i. 10. On the place of the ASCENSION, David worshipped God there. Did God reveal to him there the glories which David himself had celebrated in the twenty-fourth Psalm? "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in" (Ps. xcv. 3. 7).


- cout] Tunic, or long inner garment, with sleeves; Heb. caddath; Gen. 420.

38. as I have been thy father's servant] The words as and have been are not in the original, and had better be omitted: Thy father's servant hitherto, and now I am thy servant. There is mental reserve here, but in a certain sense the words were true. Hushai would best serve Absalom by serving his father, by infatuating the counsel of his godless counseller Ahithophel.

David in his distress was driven to stratagems and artifices. In this respect we have a contrast with the Divine Antitype, the Son of David, who in all His sorrows and sufferings retained His holiness, purity, and truth, unsullied and undefiled.

David's feelings of sorrow at this time were expressed in his Psalms, especially Ps. ci., lix., cxx., cxxx., to express his feelings at the tides of the treachery of Ahithophel.

- into foolishness] Did David allude to the meaning of the name Ahithophel (brother of a fool)? Cps. Genesis 571.

32. when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God] The conjunction when is not in the original, and would be better omitted. The fact recorded is that David came to the top, or head (Heb. rabbah, which has been preserved in the Sept.) of Olivet, and there bowed down before God.

After that he has received the tidings of the treachery of Ahithophel—a type of Judas—he mounts the hill, and there, on the top of Olivet, he falls down and worships God.
Ziba and Mephibosheth.  
2 SAMUEL XVI. 1—12.  

Shimei's curse.

XVI. 1 And 
1 And when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, b Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine. 2 And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses be for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink. 3 And the king said, And where is thy master's son? 4 And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father. 5 Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king. 6 And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: 7 he sware therefore, saying, The curse of Jehovah be upon them, and upon the manner of their father. 8 He sware moreover, saying, The curse of Jehovah be upon them, and upon the manner of their father. 9 And he turned to the king, and said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zebah? so let him curse, because a few of your fathers are brought down in the day of David, and in the day of Saul. 10 And the king said, What have I to do with thee, son of Zebah? 11 And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? 12 It may be that the Lord will look on mine

|| † affliction, and that the Lord will require me good for his cursing this day, 13 And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and 14 cast dust. 14 And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves there. 15 And * Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, 16 And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, 1 David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, 17 † God save the king, God save the king. 17 And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? * why wentest thou not with thy friend? 18 And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom the Lord, and this people, and all the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide. 19 And again, * whom should I serve? should I not serve in the presence of his son? as I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence. 20 Then said Absalom to Aithophel, Give counsel among you what we shall do. 21 And Aithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou hast abhorred of thy father: then shall * the hands of all that are with thee be strong. 22 So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines b in the sight of all Israel. 23 And the counsel of Aithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had enquired at the † oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Aithophel c both with David and with Absalom.

XVII. 1 Moreover Aithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night: 2 And I will come upon him while he is weary and weak handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people that are with him shall flee; and I will b smite the king only: 3 And I will bring back all the people unto thee: the † Zech. 13. 7.

12. the Lord will require me good for his cursing] Let them curse, but bless Thou! (Ps. cx. 20—23.) S. Augustine says well (de Gratia, c. 20), "Teus utitur cordibus malorum ad laudem atque adjudicamentum bonorum. Sic unus est Judae tradente Christum; sic unius est Judeus cruciabigitur Christum. Et quanta sibi bona praestat papulis creditur! Quin et ipsa Diabolo utitur pessimis, sed optime ad excederem et pro- bandum fiendum et pleiteam bonorum."

God willied David's chastisement, but hated Shimei's wickedness; whose lewd tongue, moved by God, moved heeadly from Salai (Bp. Hall). For some excellent remarks derived from David's example here, on the benefits to be elicited from injuries, see S. Ambrose de Officiis, 1. 6. S. Chrysostom, in Ps. xxxviii., and Theodoret here. S. Gregory, Moral. xxxii. 17, who observes that David was thus brought to a deeper sense of his own sins, and was exercised in true repentance, and so found cause to be thankful for these indignities, which made him nearer and dearer to God, "Stieque fit, ut contumeliat gratia magis quam iram debuerit." It was a wise saying of S. Chrysostom, that "no man is ever really hurt by any one but himself." And on account of the benefits to be derived from injuries, and not from being overcome of evil, but from overcoming evil by good, even the heathen poet could bless heaven for injuries, and say, "Miscirima est fortuna, qua minime caret."

14. refreshed themselves there] At Bahurim; so Jesus Christ, in His Passion Week, retired from Jerusalem, in the evenings, to the village of Bethany, on those eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives, and refreshed Himself there in the house of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, whom He loved (Matt. xxi. 17. Mark xi. 1. 11. Luke xxi. 37. John xi. 1. 5). 15. Go in—concubine] This will be a public declaration that then cliamed thy father's throne (op. iii. 7; xii. 8. 1 Kings ii. 22), and that the breach between thee and him is irreparable. Though this was a capital crime (Lev. xx. 11; op. 1 Cor. v. 1), and Reuben had lost his birthright by it, and incurred his father's curse (Gen. xlix. 3—5), yet Aithophel, in his worldly policy, did not scruple to recommend it; and Absalom complied with the advice, and "declared his sin, as Solomon."

Perhaps (as A Lapide and others suppose) Aithophel was influenced by feelings of private revenge against David for his conduct to Bathsheba, who was the daughter of Eliam (xi. 9), the son of Absalom (xxviii. 34). Observe here the bitter fruits of David's own example in the violations of God's laws, by Polygamy and Adultery. Those sins recoiled on himself. But Absalom imitated David in sin, not in repentance. Observe also the end of Aithophel's counsel. He armed the son, Absalom, against his own father, David; and at last he armed his own hands against his own life (Theodoret). 22. So they spread] And thus even by their sin they proved God's truth, who had foretold this by Nathan (xii. 11, 12). Thus also they gave additional evidence that the prediction made to David by means of the same prophet, of Divine punishment to David's children if they sinned (vii. 14), and of the perpetual establishment of his kingdom in the Divine Son of David, Jesus Christ, would be fulfilled also (vii. 16). This "roof of the house" was probably the same scene in which that evil desire was conceived by David, which brought all this misery on him and his family (see xi. 2). "David walked on the roof of the king's house." It was like a Naboth's vineyard to him. His sin and punishment met together there; so Otho was the scene of Job's sin and punishment: see below, xx. 8.
man whom thou seekest is as if all returned: so all the people shall be in peace. 4 And the saying of Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith.

6 And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do after his word? or shall we not hearken to the voice of him that is at home?—his word is preferable.

7 Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel of Ahithophel that is good, is not so good at this time. 8 For, said Hushai, thou knowest thy father and his men, that they be mighty men, and they be chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people. 9 Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some other place: and it will come to pass, when some of them be overthrown at the first, that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom. 10 And he also that is valiant, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy father is a mighty man, and they which be with him are valiant men.

11 Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go at battle in thine own person. 12 So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground: and of him and of all the men that are with him there shall not be left so much as one. 13 Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found there. 14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For the Lord hath appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom.

15 b Then said Hushai unto Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counselled. 16 b Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily pass over lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that are with him. 17 k Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz kept by En-rogel; for they might not be seen to come into the city: and a wench went and told them; and they went and told king David. 18 Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in Bahurim,
which had a well in his court; whither they went down. 10 And the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known. 20 And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where is Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said unto them, They be gone over the brook of water. And when they had sought and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

And it came to pass, after they were departed, that they came out of the well, and went and told king David, and said unto David, Arise, and pass quickly over the water: for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you.

Then David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.

And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and got him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. 25 And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a man's son, whose name was Ithra an Israelite, that went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruiah Joab's mother. 26 So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.

And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, brought beds, and basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse. 29 And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were for his house, but cared not for his own. How foolish is it to be wise, if we are not wise in God! (Bp. Hall.)

Mahanaim: A fortified Levitical city on the east of Jordan in the tribe of Gad, near the ford of Jabok, and celebrated in the history of Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 2) and of Ishbosheth, who had there been made king of Gilead; see i. 8, 9.

Amasa: A nephew of David, and cousin of Joab and Absalom: see i Chron. ii. 16, 17. Ithra an Israelite: Called Jether the Ishmaelite in 1 Chron. ii. 17. Perhaps he was a proselyte from Ishmael (Vatabl.). Compare Josephus, vii. 10. 1. Or Israelite may mean that he was not of the tribe of Judah, as might have been expected from his marriage with Abigail, David's sister; he was an Ishmaelite by descent, and not an inhabitant of Judah, but of some other tribe.

Nahash: Sonned by Kishah and others to be another name of Jesse; but this is doubtful; and others think that he was the king of the Ammonites (x. 2).

Shobi: Whom David perhaps had put into Hanun's place (cp. xii. 26). David had received benefits from Nahash, and had shown kindness to Hanun which was ill requited by him (x. 2), but not forgotten by Shobi.

Machir: Who had brought up Mophibosheth, and knew David's kindness to him (ix. 5).

Barzillai: contrasted with Ahithophel and with Absalom. See on v. 29, and xix. 31.

Mattresses.

Basons: caldrons, or kettles.

Cheese of kine: from buttermilk (Borckh. Kril.

David was received with kindness in the land of Gilead, on the east of Jordan, at a time when he was driven by his own son out of his own capital, Jerusalem, in his own tribe. The Jews rejected Christ, but the Gospel was gladly received by Samaritans (Acts viii. 4-6) and by the Gentiles (Acts xiii. 46-48; xviii. 29).
with him, to eat: for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, a in the wilderness.

XVIII. 1 And David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. 2 And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, a and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also. 3 b But the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not + care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now thou art + worth ten thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou + succour us out of the city. 4 And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands.

5 And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. 6 And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.

6 So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the 4 wood of Ephraim; 7 Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand men. 8 For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

9 And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away.

Ch. XVIII. 3. but now thou art] Instead of the Hebrew attah (with initial ayin), signifying now, some would read attah (with initial aleph) thou; and this seems probable, though not necessary; and the former word appears to have been read here by the Chaldee Psephist. 6. wood of Ephraim] where was this “wood of Ephraim”? It seems evident, that it could not have been in the tribe of Ephraim, on the west of Jordan (as is supposed by some, Winer, Keil), because the people said to David, who remained in Mahanaim, that he should succour them out of the city (v. 3); therefore it was not far from Mahanaim, and therefore on the east of Jordan. Also in xvii. 26 it is said that “Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead,” that is, on the east side of Jordan. And there is no mention of any crossing of the Jordan by David’s army, after the battle, in order to come back to him at Mahanaim.

This opinion, which is that of the ancient expositors, is maintained by Edward, Thesaurus, and others.

Why the wood or forest bore the name of Ephraim is uncertain. Some (with Grotonius and Prof. Blunt) have supposed that it was so called from the slaughter of the Ephraimites by Jehoshaphat in that neighbourhood (Judg. xiii. 1—9).

Others think that it derived its name from this very battle between David’s army and Absalom’s, which is called the army of “Israel” (see xvii.; 24. 26; xviii. 6, 7), and in which probably the tribe of Ephraim took the lead.

But the more probable opinion is, that there was a settlement of Ephraim there, in connection with the neighbouring brother-tribe of Manasseh (Rp. Cotton, Stanley).

For a remarkable parallel to this supposed geographical anomaly see above, on Judg. viii. 3.

8. the wood devoured] In swamps, morasses, and pits (see v. 17): and because, being entangled in the forest, they could not escape from their enemies: cp. below on Ps. lixii. 10.

Death of Absalom—The King’s Mule.

9. Absalom met the servants of David] Who would not attack him, on account of the king’s commandment (v. 5 and 12); but (though they let him go, God met him, and put a stop to his flight (Rp. Patrick)).

Absalom, by the counsel of Ahithophel, had perpetrated

that other crime by which he declared in the sight of all Israel that he had usurped his father’s throne (see above, xvi. 21—23), and now, in the sight also of the people, bore upon the king’s mule. Compare the incident mentioned in Beth, vi. 8, “Let the horse that the king rideth upon, be brought for the man whom the king delighteth to honour;” and Henry IV. (Bolingbroke) riding on King Richard II.’s “Roan Barbary” (Act v. Sc. v). David, we are told, as if in reference to this act, had written to Mount Zion to bereave (xx. 39); not on his mule. He had left that behind him. Absalom, as if he were king, mounts his father’s mule, and rides upon it; but, as we shall see, this act of usurpation was the cause of his death.

— Absalom rode upon a mule] Lit., upon the mule; Josephus (vii. 9. 2) says that it was “the king’s mule.” Compare 1 Kings i. 33. 38. 41, where the riding on the king’s mule (see above, xiii. 29) is represented as an act of royal authority, which Absalom claimed, and which David afterwards gave to Solomon. This circumstance makes the manner of Absalom’s death more remarkable. He was caught by his hair, in which he gloried (xiv. 25, 26). The justice of God plighted a halter with that in which he sinned by pride; and he was left hung up in the tree by the mule which he had usurped; a fit punishment for a rebel son and a traitor. Ahithophel, his counsellor, and Absalom, both perished by the death which was accounted accruing by the Hebrews, that of hanging (cp. v. 10. Dent. xxi. 23. Cp. Rp. Pearson, Art. v. p. 207 note).—of a great oak] Lit., of great terebinth; probably it remained to after-ages, and was pointed out as the tree in which Absalom had been caught; like the oak in which a lawful English monarch escaped, when his throne had been usurped. Absalom’s head caught hold of the oak. Probably (as Josephus says, vii. 10. 2) his hair was caught in the black boughs and twigs, and then his head was wedged in by his neck in a forked bough, while his mule ran swiftly under him. — between the heaven and the earth] Absalom was rejected, as a traitor, by both heaven and earth (S. Chrys.).

The mule, on which he rode, as if it were weary to bear so unnatural a burden, resigned its load to the tree of justice. Absalom, Ahithophel, Judah, all lifted up their hand against God’s Anointed, and all died the same death (Rp. Hrdl). A warning to all conspirators and regicides.
Absalom’s death; 2 SAMUEL XVIII. 10—23.

And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak. And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle. And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king’s son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none touch the young man Absalom. Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me. Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.

And ten young men that bare Joab’s armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him. And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people. And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent. Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king’s dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom’s place. Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the Loam hath avenged him of his enemies. And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear another day: but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king’s son is dead. Then said Joab to Cushi, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cushi bowed himself unto Joab, and ran. Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cushi. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings? But howsoever, said he, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cushi.

11. Joab said] Joab, whose conduct was swayed by regard to his own interest, rather than by love to David, knew that if Absalom succeeded, he himself would be superseded in the chief command by Amasa (xvii. 25).

We see here the same man, acting on the same motives as the murderer of Abner (iii. 23—30). This is evident from Joab’s subsequent treachery and murder of Amasa (xx. 9, 10).

12. a girdle] A captain’s commission, which perhaps was signified by the delivery of a girdle: see Isa. xxii. 21 (M. Henry). 13. I should have wrought falsehood] I should have been untrue to myself, as well as to the King and the King’s son. 14. three darts] Literally, three rods, which is supposed by some to be the meaning here (Keil). And in the more than one hundred places where it occurs, this is the only one where the original word (shebet) is rendered in our Version by dart: a rendering however which is supported by Sept., Vulg., Syriac, and Targum.

16. blew the trumpet] Sounded a retreat; for, with the death of Absalom, the victory was won. 17. cast him into a great pit] They spared David the sorrow of seeing his son’s mangled body.

— laid a very great heap of stones ] And thus Absalom, as a rebel against his father, was in a manner punished according to the Law of God with the penalty prescribed for a son’s rebellion — stoning (Dent. xxi. 20, 21).

18. Now Absalom in his lifetime—pillar] The Sacred Historian, having described the heap of stones, which was the monument of Absalom’s sin and shame — like the heap of stones which commemorated the sin of Achan (Josh. vii. 26), and like the heap of stones raised over the body of the King of Ai, who had been hanged (Josh. viii. 29). Cp. Josh. x. 27) — now proceeds to speak, by way of contrast, of the monument which Absalom had designed for himself. His real monument was a solitary cairn in the wild forest, instead of a lordly pillar in the “King’s dale” near the capital city, to be admired by passing crowds in future ages. Such was the result of his hopes.

By his unnatural rebellion his glory was turned into shame. “But the memory of the just is blessed,” and though in this world he may have no monument, Christ will make him to be “a pillar in the house of his God” (Rev. vii. 12).

— a pillar, which is in the king’s dale] About a quarter of a mile to the east of Jerusalem, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, near the brook Kidron. Cp. Josephus, v. 10. 3; and above, Gen. xiv. 17.

— I have no son] The three sons mentioned in xiv. 27 were either born after the erection of the pillar, or (as Kimchi and other Hebrew writers and Theodoret suppose) had died before it. Absalom, a rebellious son, was punished by leaving no son behind him.

— Absalom’s place] Literally, Absalom’s hand, or monument, that which pointed to him (cp. the word monumentum, from monere). Cp. 1 Sam. xv. 12. Isa. lvi. 5. Gesen. 332. And perhaps also, as being his handiwork, cp. Ps. xix. 1. The pillar, which was designed by Absalom for his own glory, only remained as a memorial of his shame.

And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone. And the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings. And the watchman said, † Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok. And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

29 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, || † All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath † delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king. 30 And the king said, † Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was. 30 And the king said unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

And, behold, Cushi came; and Cushi said, † Tidings is brought, my lord the king: for the Lord hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee. 32 And the king said unto Cushi, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cushi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is. 33 And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, ⁴ O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

XIX. ¹ And it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom. ² And the † victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son.

³ And the people got them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. ⁴ But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, ⁵ O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!

⁵ And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; ⁶ II in that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends. For thou hast declared this day, † that thou regarded neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. ⁷ Now therefore arise,

24. the two gates] The inner and outer gate of the city.
25. unto the porter] or, to within the gate where the king was.
26. Is the young man Absalom safe? † Lit., is there shalom (peace) to Absalom?
29. would God I had died for thee? † Lit., who will grant me to die for thee? Was not this done by David, in type of the true King and Redeemer of Israel? (Bp. Halt.)
30. David had not mourned after the death of his infant child, but had said, “Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me” (xii. 23). Why then this mourning for Absalom? Why so intense a sorrow for it? (see xix. 4.) It was because David believed in the Resurrection, and in the judgment to come, and in a future state of Rewards and Punishments. It was because (as Theodore suggests) his son Absalom had been cut off in an act of sin: the wages of which are the second death, and because by Absalom’s death the door of repentance and pardon was shut upon him.
31. David did not weep because he had lost a son, but because he well knew into what punishments that son’s guilty soul (tam impé nupercidues et adultera) was carried away by death. S. Augustine (de Doct. Christ. iii. 21. Cp. e. Faust. xxii. 66).
32. covered his face] as in mourning (xv. 30).
33. Joab came] Thinking it best to assume a haughty tone, and to proceed with a high hand, as if David was in the wrong, and not Joab himself, who had disobeyed the king’s orders and slain his son.
David is brought back

2 SAMUEL XIX. 8—22.

by Judah to Jerusalem.

go forth, and speak † comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the Lord, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now. 8 Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent.

9 And all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he is † fled out of the land for Absalom. 10 And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why † speak ye not a word of bringing the king back? 11 And king David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house. 12 Ye are my brethren, ye are my bone and my flesh: wherefore then are ye the last to bring the king back? 13 And say ye to Amasa, Art thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? 14 God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab. 14 And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man; so that they sent this word unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants. 15 So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.

16 And † Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David. 17 And there were a thousand of Benjamin with him, and † Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king. 18 And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king’s household, and to do † what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan; 19 And said unto the king, † Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember † that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should q take it to his heart. 20 For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king. 21 But Abishai the son of Zeraiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he q cursed the Lord’s anointed? 22 And q Ex. 22. 28.

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[8. Israel had fled Absalom’s forces (called Israel, xvi. 24. 26; xvii. 6, 7) had dispersed themselves to their own homes. 13. say ye to Amasa] Let him not fear or resist me, because he was Absalom’s general; see xvii. 25. 14. he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah—Return thou, and all thy servants! So it will one day he with the Jewish nation, which is now serving an Absalom of their own will, but will then great the return their true King, and say, “Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh in the name of the Lord—Hosanna in the highest!” (Mark xi. 9, 10). 15. Judah came to Gilgal—to meet the king] This turning “of the heart of all the men of Judah” to David, whom they had rejected at Jerusalem, and this bringing of him back from Gilgal to his own city, was a foreshadowing of the future conversion of the Jews to their true King, Jesus Christ, whom they have crucified, and whom they will hereafter hail with joy as their King; see Matt. xxiii. 9. Rom. xi. 25, 26. 2 Cor. iii. 16, 115. 16. Shimei the son of Gera] Who had cursed David when going over Olivet, in his flight from Jerusalem in sorrow, but now desires pardon from him, because David is returning in power. 17. they went over Jordan before the king] This passage of Jordan was the most memorable one since the days of Joshua and the Ark; and like that, ought to be associated in our minds with the history of the Divine David, Who by His baptism in that river brought back His people to God. 20. of Joseph] Not of the tribe of Benjamin only, my own tribe; but before any others, except thy own tribe, Judah. Joseph comprehends all Israel (cp. Josh. xvi. 1). Keil. Shimei avoids the mention of Benjamin, the tribe of Saul. 21. Abishai] Again eager to revenge David (see 1 Sam. xxvii. 9; 2 Sam. xvii. 9), and again restrained by him.]
David said, 'What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? 'shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I am this day king over Israel? 23 Therefore 'the king said unto Shimmei, Thou shalt not die. And the king swore unto him. 24 And "Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace. 25 And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, "Wherefore wentest thou not with me, Mephibosheth? 26 And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant received me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king; because thy servant is lame. 27 And "he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in thine eyes. 28 For all of my father's house were but "dead men before my lord the king: "yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king? 29 And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land. 30 And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house. 31 And "Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan. 32 Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man. 33 And the king said unto Barzillai, Come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem. 34 And Barzillai said unto the king, "How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem? 35 I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet according to my original grant, and I revoke the concession to Ziba, which he obtained from me by misrepresentation. See xvi. 4, where David said to Ziba, "These are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth." Why, it may be asked, did not David punish Ziba for his slander of his master by dispossessing him altogether of the land? Probably for the same reason as that for which he spared Shimei; because this was a day for joy (v. 25). 24. And Mephibosheth said—"Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house." A beautiful contrast, not only to Ziba, but to Joash, Ahithophel, and Absalom. Mephibosheth, the heir of Saul, did not envy David, whose family had superseded his own in the throne of Israel; but he loved David, as Jonathan his father had done, and he loved David for David's own sake. Others loved themselves when they professed love to the king. They were selfish-seekers; and if they did anything for David, it was not for David's sake, but for their own. In Mephibosheth we see the picture of the true Christian soul, which loves Christ for Christ's sake. "Minus Te amat " (says S. Augustine), "Domine, qui Teum amas " (see above), is the true sentiment of the heart, and the heart we love. Mephibosheth and Jonathan were the two just men in the Old Testament. The latter was a man of peace, and a friend of the poor; the former a most zealous lover of his sovereign, as well as of his family. 25. Why speakest thou any more? Why dost thou labour to defend thyself? I am fully persuaded of thy innocence. 

— I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land. That is, I before declared (ix. 10) that Ziba should labour in tilling it, and should render to thee a part of the produce. This is what I first commanded; and I now restate thee in thy possessions,
a burden unto my lord the king? 35 Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward? 36 Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother. But behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee. 38 And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, that will I do for thee. 39 And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned unto his own place. 40 Then the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him: and all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel.

41 And, behold, all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, Why have our brethren the men of Judah stolen thee away, and brought the king, and his household, and all David’s men with him, over Jordan? 42 And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, Because the king is near of kin to us: wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? have we eaten at all of the king’s cost? or hath he given us any gift? 43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, We have ten parts in the king, and we have also more right in David than ye: why then did ye despise us, that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? And the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

XX. 1 And there happened to be there a man of Belial, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel. 2 So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.

3 And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten women his concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in ward, and fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were shut up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood.

4 Then said the king to Amasa, Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here present. 5 So Amasa went to assemble the men of Judah: but he tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him.

memory this speech of the aged Barzillai to his father when he wrote in his own old age the words of Ecclesiastes xii. 4, 5? “The daughters of music shall be brought low—the grasshopper shall be a burden, because man goeth to his long home.” 37. [let him go over] Chimham seems to have received an inheritance from David in his own city, Bethel (see Jer. xii. 17), or from Solomon, to whom David gave charge to show kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite (1 Kings ii. 7). 38. [Gilgal] Whither Judah had come to meet David (v. 15). 39. [ten parts] As against Judah. Ephraim and Manasseh are counted as one: the Levites are not reckoned. 40. [fiercener] and thus gave occasion to the contention which followed. They had right on their side, but they did wrong, and caused evil, by urging their right with fierceness.

Cf. XX. 1. a man of Belial] a worthless man: Deut. xii. 13. — to his tents, O Israel] This national proverbial expression, used in Israel long after they had settled habitations (see 1 Kings xii. 16. 2 Chron. x. 16), is an evidence that there had been a time when they had no houses, but dwelt in tents; and confirms the Mosaic history of their long wanderings in the desert: cp. Dr. Thomson, Land and Book, p. 296. 3. the ten women his concubines—widowhood] being polluted by Absalom’s sin; and they were shut up in privacy, lest their appearance in public might be an occasion to others to speak of it; and they were punished for consenting to it as an example and warning to others. Here is another bitter fruit of David’s sin in multiplying wives to himself, against the law of God (Deut. xvii. 17). The punishment of these concubines may be regarded as a warning to unfaithful Churches.

4. Amasa] Whom he had appointed in Joab’s place (xix. 13.)
6 And David said to Abishai, Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than did Absalom: take thou the lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities, andاليابان escape us. 7 And there went out after him Joab's men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

8 When they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa came before them. And Joab said to Amasa, Art thou in health, my brother? 9 And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. 10 But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and put not his stroke again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri. 11 And one of Joab's men stood by him, and said, He that favoureth Joab, and he that is for David, let him go after Joab. 12 And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still. 13 When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

14 And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto Abel, and to Beth-maachah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him. 15 And they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maachah, and they east up a bank against the city, and it stood in the trench: and all the people that were with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down. 16 Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee. 17 And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, Art thou Joab? And he answered, I am he. Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear. 18 Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, This shall be the word of counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter. 19 I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swollen up
the inheritance of the Lord? 20 And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. 21 The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall. 22 Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.

23 Now Joab was over all the host of Israel; and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites: 24 And Adoram was over the tribute: and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; 25 And Sheva was scribe: and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests: 26 And Ira also the Jairite was a chief ruler over David.

XXI. 1 Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David inquired of the Lord. And the Lord answered, It is for Jezebel that you are murmuring against me; and I will scatter you to the face of all the kings. 

As proportion as the World draws nearer to its end, we may expect that national sins will be visited more closely by national judgments; because Nations, as Nations, will have no existence in another world, and therefore they must look for retribution in this world: see Ezek. xiv. 13—21, and the remarks in the Editor's Occasional Sermons, No. xxxiv., on this subject.

—It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibonites! Perhaps, when Saul slew the priests at Nob (1 Sam. xxii. 18), he slew also the Gibonites, who were their friends, “the prophets of God and drawers of water” for the Tabernacle (Josh. ix. 21. 27).

The slaying of the Gibonites was a heinous offence, because they were God's ministers; and because the obligation of Israel to protect them had been shown by the history of Joshua (see above, Josh. x.), who hastened from Gilgal to rescue them from their enemies.

It has been alleged, that it could not be consistent with divine justice to visit Israel with a famine of three years, at the end of David's reign (which lasted forty years), for a sin committed by his predecessor Saul and his house.

To this it may be replied with Dr. Waterland (Script. Vind., p. 147), —It ought not to be said, because it cannot be proved, that the Israelites of that time were punished for crimes that they were no way guilty of. We know not how many, or who, were confederate with Saul in murdering the Gibonites, or guilty in not hindering it. We know not how many, or who, made the crime their own, by approving it afterwards. We know not what share of guilt might be derived upon the whole nation for suffering so much innocent blood to be shed, against a national contract; or for not expressing their horror and detestation of it by some public act. Further, we know not what other sins (which had no relation to that) the people might be guilty of, to deserve a famine; which sins, though God would have remitted or passed by at another time, He would not remit them, when the sins of their fathers, added to theirs, called for an act of discipline. We know not, how for such an act of discipline at that time, we may not be made to believe, because of the like murders of the time to come, or to preserve the whole nation of the Gibonites from ruthlessness and insult; or to raise in the minds of the Israelites a proper regard and respect for them. We know not, what the nature of national oaths or contracts might be concerned in that matter. In a word, we know not the depths of the divine counsels, nor a hundredth part of the reasons which an all-wise God might have; and therefore it behoves us, in such cases, to be moderate in conjecturing that God is in heaven, and that we dwell in dust, and that He knows all things, and we nothing in comparison.}

Forty years and more are past between the sin and the reckoning for it. It is a vain hope that is raised from the delay of God's judgments. No time can be any prejudice to the Ancient of days” (Bp. Hall). CP. Pet. iii. 4—12.

Nearly forty years passed between the Crucifixion and its punishment,—the destruction of Jerusalem.
Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. 2 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.) 3 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord? 4 And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you. 5 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel, 6 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord in Gibeah of Saul, a whom the Lord did choose. And the king said, I will give them. 7 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the Lord's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. 8 But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. 9 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.) 10 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord? 11 And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you. 12 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel, 13 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord in Gibeah of Saul, a whom the Lord did choose. And the king said, I will give them. 14 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the Lord's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. 15 But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. 16 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.) 17 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord? 18 And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you. 19 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel, 20 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord in Gibeah of Saul, a whom the Lord did choose. And the king said, I will give them. 21 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the Lord's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. 22 But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.
Acts Philistines 13 Saph, and Chron. the Ruth from then yaledah, and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest. And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, which had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gibbon: And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged. And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that God was intreated for the land. Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint. And Ishbi-benob, which was of the sons of || the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David. But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel. And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then Sibbechai the Hushathite slew || Saph, which was 1 Chron. 11. 29. | Or, Sippai.

Meholahite] The Hebrew text has, whom she bore. Heb. yaledah, and so Sept. and Vulg. In 1 Sam. xviii. 19, it is said that the wife of Adriel was Merob. The Chaldee Tarquins has the name of Merob here; but it adds, whom Michael the daughter of Saul had brought up; and the Syriac and Arabic have Nadah.

The rendering, brought up, in our Authorized Version was suggested by the Hebrew expositors (e. g. Kimchi—who cites Ruth iv. 17—so Jeromist, A Lapide, and Selden).

Two of Kennicott's MSS. have Merad here; and perhaps when more MSS. have been collated the name Merab may be found in some of them. Josephus (vii. 4. 3) asserts that Michael had four children; cp. on 1 Chron. iii. 3. Some recent critics say that there is an error in the MSS., and that for Michael we ought to read Merob here (Keil, Archdson Brown, Grove, in B. D., under the words Adriel, Merob, and Michael). It seems not improbable that the Sacred Historian wrote "the five sons of the daughter of Saul," and that some of the copies first placed the name Michael in the margin, and then gave it first found its way into the text.

in the beginning of barley harvest At the Passover. See Lev. xxiii. 11. 15. Deut. xvi. 9. Ruth ii. 23. The beginning of harvest was a critical time, and the expiation was to be effected then, lest there should be a fourth year of famine. 10. until water dropped upon them out of heaven] If this were the "former rain," it would be about the end of October. See on Lev. xxvi. 4. If this was the case (as some of the Hebrew expositors suppose, and so Stanley, Lectures, xxxi. p. 84), the affectionate and faithful woman watched the bodies for half a year, i.e. from Passover to October.

But it seems more probable, that God sent rain in moderation ("the water dropped from heaven") soon after the beginning of the barley harvest; and this would be very opportune, after the long drought, and would make the grain to swell, and would produce an abundant wheat harvest, and would be a sign that "God was entertained for the land" (r. 14), and then the bodies would be taken down and buried. The law (Deut. xxiv. 22), which did not allow dead bodies to remain all night on a tree, did not apply to such a case as this (Keil).

11. it was told David—and David went] David heard what Rizpah had done, and he was pleased with her tenderness, and was excited by her example to do honour to the bodies of Saul and Jonathan, and thus showed that he did not war with the dead, and that his recent act, in delivering up Saul's sons, was not one of personal revenge, but of public justice:—from the men of Jabesh-gilead] who had buried them (1 Sam. xxxi. 13).

the street] Heb. rechab, the market-place, not in the middle of the city, but near the gate (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. Neh. viii. 1. 3. 10), and therefore the bodies are said to have been fastened by the Philistines on the wall of Beth-shan (1 Sam. xxxi. 10).

14. Zelah] Probably the birth-place of Kish and his family; it is mentioned as in the allotment of Benjamin, in Josh. xix. 29: perhaps it was the residence also of Saul himself before he became king.

15. Moreover] This brief specimen of some of David's deliveries is introduced here as a prelude to his hymn of thanksgiving (ch. xxvii.).

16. Ishbi-benob] i. e. whose dwelling is at Nob (Gezer, 372), or on a high place. three hundred shekels] Half the weight of Goliah's (1 Sam. xvii. 7).

17. swear unto him] This, therefore, seems to have happened after the rebellion of Absalom.

18. Gob] The same as Gezer, or near it (1 Chron. xx. 4); near the modern site of El-Kubab, about four miles east of Joppa. Cp. Josh. x. 33.
of the sons of || the giant. 19 And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of || Jaare-oregim, a Beth-lehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. 20 And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to || the giant. 21 And when he defined Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimeah the brother of David slew him.

22 *These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

XXII. *And David *spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: 2 And he said, || The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, Christian Church fall by the hand of the Divine "David, and by the hand of his servants;" cp. 1 Chron. xx. 8.

PRELIMINARY NOTE TO CH. XXII.— THE SONG OF DAVID.

The Books of Samuel begin and end with a Song of praise for God's mercies (see 1 Sam. ii. 1—10). So Moses had begun and ended the Wanderings in the wilderness with a Song of thanksgiving (Exod. xvi. Dow. xxxiii.).

The present long Song appears with some modifications in the body of the Psalms, as Ps. xlviii., where the title has "to the chief musician," or "preterit." The variations are probably to be accounted for from the circumstance that in the present context the song was composed in the king's private devotions; and in the 18th Psalm it exhibits the form in which he delivered it for the general liturgical use of the Hebrew Church: cp. below, on 1 Chron. xvi. 7.

Moses in his song, and Hannah in her song (as we have already seen; cp. above, on Deut. xxxii. and on 1 Sam. ii.), rise from a consideration of God's mercies to themselves personally, and ascend by a lofty flight of inspiration to a contemplation of God's goodness to all nations in Christ, the Seed of Abraham, the name of the Anointed One of God (18); and then he casts his view forward, and beholds the glorious Antitype of all Israel's Deliverances, and he sums up all by an ascription of praise, uttered in the name of all nations, both Jew and Gentile (as the Holy Spirit, speaking by St. Paul, has taught us; see below, on vv. 50, 51), and magnifies and blesses God for His goodness in Christ to "David and his seed for evermore."

"The grace which the Lord has shown to David is so great, that his praise for it cannot be limited to the narrow range of Israel. Together with the dominion of David over the nations, the knowledge of the Lord and the praise of His name, who had given him the victory, extended themselves. Rightly has St. Paul (Rom. xv. 9) added v. 50 of the present chapter, together with Deut. xxxii. 33, and Ps. cxv. 1, as an evidence that the salvation of God was designed also for the heathen (Krell). The king, for whom God is a tower of salvation (v. 51), is not merely David as an individual, but "David and his seed for evermore," and the royal race of David, which culminates in Christ. David's joys and hopes terminate, as ours ought to do, in Christ (Ibp. Patrick, M. Henry).

A critical comparison of the text of this chapter with that of Ps. xlviii. may be seen in Dr. Kennicott's Dissertation, Oct. 1753, vol. i. pp. 364—472, and vol. ii. 565—570. 2, 3, my rock or my cliff, or cleft. In the English Version the word rock appears twice, here and v. 3, but the original
God the Rock.

2 SAMUEL XXII. 3—11.

David's deliverances.

And my deliverer; 3 the God of my rock;

4 In him will I trust:

He is my 4 shield, and the 5 horn of my salvation,

My high 6 tower, and my 7 refuge,

My sanctuary; thou savest me from violence.

I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised

So shall I be saved from mine enemies.

When the 8 waves of death compassed me,
The floods of 9 ungodly men made me afraid;

The 10 sorrows of hell compassed me about;
The snares of death prevented me;

In my distress 4 I called upon the Lord,
And cried to my God:

And he did 1 hear my voice out of his temple,
And my cry did enter into his ears.

Then 2 the earth shook and trembled,

The foundations of heaven moved and shook,

Because he was wroth;

There went up a smoke 5 out of his nostrils,
And 6 fire out of his mouth devoured;

Coals were kindled by it;

He 7 bowed the heavens also, and came down;

And 8 darkness was under his feet;

And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly:

And he was seen 9 upon the wings of the wind;

conveys two distinct ideas. David first speaks of God as a high cliff (sela), a steep lofty place to which he resorted for refuge (cp. Ps. xvi. 5; xxii. 11; 32; xlii. 4), as he had done to the steep cliffs of Palestine, as a refuge from Saul: see 1 Sam. xxii. 5; xxi. 4. This is the first passage in the Old Testament where God is called a selo. It is observable, that it is first used by David, who had often found refuge on a selo in his persecutions, and it is used more frequently by him than by all the writers of Scripture; indeed, it is only once used by any other writer in the Old Testament, in a figurative sense—viz. Isaiah (xxxii. 2), and there the metaphor is derived from the shadow, and not from the height, of the rock.

But the word rendered rock in v. 3 (viz. tsur) conveys a different idea.

It signifies what is solid, firm, compact, and unmovable: cp. Deut. xxxii. 4.

These two words (sela and tsur) intimate that God is a sure refuge at all times to the faithful.

3. shield 4 A figure borrowed from God's own language to Abraham (Gen. xxi. 1), and from the words of Moses speaking of God (Deut. xxxiii. 29).

— horn 5 The figure is from animals, whose strength is in their horns. This figure appears first in the song of Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 1.10), and like the other figure here, the rock (see vv. 2, 3), serves to connect this song of David with that of Hannah; and this figure is adopted in the Gospel and applied to Christ in the Song of Zacharias (Luke i. 69), who says He has "raised me up a horn of salvation in the house of His servant David."

5. the waves] In the parallel place in the Psalms, xviii. 4, 5, we have the word cords twice (zorrons in the English Version), where the figure is from a hunter taking a wild beast in the folds of a net; cp. Ps. civ. 3.

Here David may seem to compare himself to Israel of old, delivered from the waves of the sea, which overwhelmed their enemies (cp. Isa. l. 9, 10, 15), and to foreshadow the Divine Son of David, delivered from the waterfloods of Death and the Grave, and rising by his glorious resurrection to life everlasting.

Accordingly, St. Peter seems to refer to these words when speaking of the Resurrection of Christ (Acts ii. 24). See Bp. Pearson, Art. v. p. 249, note. — of ungodly men Literally, of Belial, who is spoken of as a person by St. Paul (2 Cor. vi. 16). See above, on Judg. xix. 22; xx. 13. 1 Sam. i. 16; ii. 12; x. 27.

7. of his temple 5 Heaven itself.

8. These the earth shook] David here again seems to compare himself to Israel, delivered, amid storm and darkness, by God's power, from the depths of the Red Sea, in which their enemies were overwhelmed (see especially Ex. 16, 17), and so he foreshadowed the true David, whose Death and Resurrection were prefigured by that glorious deliverance, and who by that Death and Resurrection redeemed all true Israelites, all the genuine seed of David, and overcame their enemies thereby. See above, the Preliminary Note to Exod. xiv.

The intention of the Holy Spirit, speaking by David, to associate his deliverance with the Exodus of Israel, and with the passage through the Red Sea, and with the future Exodus of all true Israelites, from a spiritual Egypt, in Christ;—so that David in his Divine Son is, as it were, a connecting link between the Ancient Hebrew Church coming out of Egypt, and the Church of Christ Universal, delivered by the Divine David from the Egypt of Sin and Satan, and brought through the Red Sea of His Passion, into "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. viii. 23);—will be evident to those who compare the descriptions here of David's deliverances, with the description of the deliverance of Israel. Compare with v. 16 here the language of Moses (Exod. xv. 8), David's own words referring to Israel's deliverance (Ps. cvi. 7; civ. 5), and Habakkuk's magnificent description (iii. 8—15).

11. a cherub 6 Another reference to the scenery of the Exodus from Egypt and the Wanderings in the Sinaite wilderness, where God vouchsafed to appear enthroned on the Cherubim over the Ark (see Exod. xxv. 20: cp. note on Gen. iii. 22); and, inasmuch as the Ark was carried through the wilderness, the Mercy Seat became, as it were, God's Triumphant Chariot, as well as His Royal Throne; whence the imagery in Ezekiel (x. 2—22: cp. i. 4—29), and in the Apocalypse (Rev. iv. 7).

— he was seen 9 Manifested Himself in His glory. In Ps. xviii. 10 it is, He came flying as an eagle. Cp. Deut. xxviii. 49.
And he made darkness pavilions round about him,  
† Dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies;  
Through the brightness before him  
Were coals of fire kindled.  
The Lord thundered from heaven,  
And the most High uttered his voice;  
And he sent out arrows, and scattered them;  
Lightning, and discomfited them;  
And the channels of the sea appeared,  
The foundations of the world were discovered,  
At the rebuking of the Lord,  
At the blast of the breath of his nostrils.  
He sent from above, he took me;  
He drew me out of many waters;  
He delivered me from my strong enemy,  
And from them that hated me:  
For they were too strong for me.  
They prevented me in the day of my calamity:  
But the Lord was my stay;  
He brought me forth also into a large place:  
He delivered me, because he delighted in me.  
The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness:  
According to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompenced me;  
For I have kept the ways of the Lord,  
And have not wickedly departed from my God;  
For all his judgments were before me:  
And as for his statutes, I did not depart from them;  
I was also upright before him,  
And have kept myself from mine iniquity.  
Therefore the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness;  
According to my cleanness in his eye sight.  
With the merciful thou shewest thyself merciful,  
And with the upright man thou shewest thyself upright;  
With the pure thou shewest thyself pure;  
And with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury;  
And the afflicted people thou wilt save:  
But thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down.  
For thou art my lamp, O Lord:  
And the Lord will lighten my darkness;  
For by thee I have run through a troop:  
By my God have I leaped over a wall.  
As for God, his way is perfect;  
The word of the Lord is tried:

15. [Another reference to the Exodus; see Exod. xiv. 24 (Kaj).]  
17. [Another reference to the Exodus. The original word here is mashah, which occurs only here and in Exod. ii. 10, with reference to the deliverance of Moses (Luther, Kay, Keil).]  
27. [With the froward thou shalt shew thyself unsavoury]
God the Rock. 2 SAMUEL XXII. 32—46. David’s victories.

He is a buckler to all them that trust in him. 32 For who is God, save the Lord? And who is a rock, save our God? 33 God is my strength and power: And he maketh my way perfect. 34 He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet: And setteth me upon my high places.

He teacheth my hands to war; So that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms. 36 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: And thy gentleness hath made me great. 37 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; So that my feet did not slip. 38 I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; And turned not again until I had consumed them.

And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: Yea, they are fallen under my feet. 40 For thou hast girded me with strength to battle; They that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me. 41 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, That I might destroy them that hate me.

They looked, but there was none to save; Even unto the Lord, but he answered them not. 43 Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth, I did stamp them as the mire of the street, And did spread them abroad. 44 Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people, Thou hast kept me to be head of the heathen:

A people which I knew not shall serve me. 45 Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: As soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me. 46 Strangers shall fade away, And they shall be afraid out of their close places.

Ps. 66. 3. & 81. 15. 32. who is God, save the Lord? And who is a rock, save our God?] He adopts the language of Moses in his song, Deut. xxii. 4. 15. 18. 30. 31. in which places the word tow, rock, is applied to God; and that is the first passage in the Bible, and the only chapter in the Pentateuch, where that figure is used; and it is next adopted in 1 Sam. ii. 2, “There is none holy as the Lord; for there is none beside Thee, neither is there any Rock like our God.” In the present chapter the figure is used four times, ev. 3. 32. 47 twice, and below, xxiii. 3. These are the only places up to this point in the Hebrew Bible where the word tow is thus used, and they serve to mark the connexion between the hymns of Moses, of Hannah and of David.

34. like hinds’ feet] Like the feet of a gazelle. “The sacred writers (says Dr. Thomson) frequently mention gazelles under the various names of harts, roes, and hinds. They are celebrated for their activity. Thus Jacob says of Naphtali, ‘he is a hind let loose’ (Gen. xlix. 21); and his mountains abound in gazelles to this day. Ashael was light of foot like a wild roe (2 Sam. ii. 18); and David says, ‘He maketh my feet like hinds’, and setteth me upon my high places. I have often stopped to admire the grace, ease, and fearless security with which these pretty creatures bound along the high places of the mountains” (Dr. Thomson, The Land and Book, p. 172).

— setteth me upon my high places] So God exalts believers in Christ, even to heavenly places, and makes them to sit there together with Him, Eph. ii. 6.

35. He teacheth my hands to war] Compare the language of the Apostle, speaking of himself, 2 Cor. x. 4. 5.

36. thy gentleness] Thy gracious condescension to my prayer for help.

41. Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies] See above, Josh. x. 24; where is also a figure of Christ’s victory, and of the victory of all Christians in Him. 1 Cor. xv. 25—28. 27.

44. Thou also hast delivered me—A people which I knew not shall serve me] This and the two following verses, fulfilled in part in David, will be accomplished completely in Christ; cp. Isa. lv. 5; lxv. 1. Rev. vii. 15, 16; xii. 16.

45. Strangers shall submit themselves unto me] shall lie to me; play the hypocrites; render me homage in an obsequious and servile manner; there is a reference here to the words of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 29.

46. shall fade away] Shall wither, as if scorched up by my power.
The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; And exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.

Is it God that avenge me, And that a bringeth down the people under me, And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: Thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me: Thou hast delivered me from the violent man.

Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, And I will sing praises unto thy name.

Now these be the last words of David.

David the son of Jesse said,

And the man who was raised up on high,

The anointed of the God of Jacob, And the sweet psalmist of Israel, said;

The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, And his word was in my tongue.

The God of Israel said,

The Rock of Israel spake to me; || He that ruleth over men must be just,

Preliminary Not to Chap. XXIII.

The Last Words of David.

These "last words of David" are not to be considered as the last which he spoke as a man in his personal capacity (for later sayings of his are found in 1 Kings i. and ii.), but they are his "novissima verba," his farewell utterances, as a divinely inspired Prophet of God. All his hopes and desires are summed up in them. They are like the seal, which God the Holy Ghost, Who spake by him, sets to the whole history of his life; and in them he leaves a last testimony to the world, of his faith in the promise of perpetuity, which he had received through Nathan the prophet from God: see above, vii. 12-17.

It is to this faith, in which David spake, and in which he fell asleep; it is to this blessed hope, and to its farewell utterances, that St. Peter refers when he says, "The patriarch David, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne—he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ:" see Acts ii. 29-31. Cp. Acts xiii. 33-37.

The Jews themselves acknowledge these words to be the 120

proposition of faith, which David, the King, the Psalmist, and the Prophet, delivered as his final utterance to the world; cp. Luther's Works, xxvii. p. 1. Calovius, Bibl. Illustr. p. 778. Heerenstagen, Christologie, i. 109.

1. David the son of Jesse said] Literally, the saying or utterance of David the son of Jesse. The word here used and rendered, said, is properly the passive participle nāmūm, from nāmu, to speak by Divine inspiration (see Gesen. 525).

By means of this solemn word, this prophecy of David is linked on to that of Balaam concerning the Messiah, which is introduced in the same way: see Num. xxiv. 3, 4, 15, 16.

But there is this difference between the nāmūm, efflōsum, or prophetic utterance of Balaam and David, that one is the utterance of a man falling into a trance, the other is that of one lifted up on high, and greatly favoured by God (Keil).

—raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob] Raised from the low estate of a shepherd to the throne of Israel (see Ps. Ixviii. 72), and anointed by God Himself. This is the correct interpretation; the other, which is found in the Vulgate, " cui constitutum est de Christo," is adopted by Luther, Eisleber (Dubia, p. 211, "David confirmatus est de Messia"), and others, cannot be maintained on grammatical grounds.

—the sweet psalmist of Israel] Literally, who is acceptable (to God) in the psalms (in hymns of praise to God) of Israel. David here speaks by inspiration, concerning what the Holy Ghost had uttered by his means (see v, 2). This is not self-praise, any more than the words of Moses, "the man Moses was very meek," are: see above, on Num. xii. 3, and the words of Samuel, 1 Sam. xii. 11.


It is not without reason that many expositors have seen here a prophetic revelation of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, speaking to David:

(1) The Spirit of the Lord, God the Holy Ghost.
(2) The God of Israel, God the Father.
(3) The Rock of Israel, God the Son: see Luther, i. c., and Calovius, Bibl. Ill. p. 778.

3. The Rock of Israel] See above, on xxii. 2, 3. The original word here is fūrēs. "Trinita Scripturae Christo peculiarum nomen Petrum" (Calov. 169). Cp. below, on Matt. xvi. 18, 3, 4, 5. He that ruleth over men must be just—rain] The
David's prophecy of Christ. 2 SAMUEL XXIII. 4—7. Christ's Coming and Kingdom.

Ruling * in the fear of God.
4 And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, 
* Even a morning without clouds; 
* As the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.
5 Although my house be not so with God; 
* Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, 
* Ordered in all things, and sure: 
For this is all my salvation, and all my desire, 
* Although he make it not to grow. 
6 But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, 
* Because they cannot be taken with hands: 
7 But the man that shall touch them 
* Must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; 
* And they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.

Ordered in all and guarded. He compares the covenant to a strong fortress or city wall, ordered, and furnished, and safely guarded, so as to be impregnable: cp. Genes. 654 and 837 for an explanation of the original words here used. 
For all my salvation, and all my desire, will He not make it grow? Will not God make my salvation and my desire to spring forth and flourish in His own appointed season? Assuredly He will. David here looks forward to the coming forth of Christ with all His blessed influences, as a branch from the stem of his own family, of which the Prophets speak, “There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots” (Isa. xi. 1), which St. Paul applies to Christ (Rom. xv. 12).

But Belial (i.e. worthlessness and wickedness: see Deut. xiii. 13; xx. 9; Judg. xix. 22; xx. 13. 1 Sam. i. 16; 2 Sam. xx. 1). All of them are thorns cast away. They are thorns which are uprooted from the field in order to be burned. Such are the wicked rooted out of the field of God's Church: cp. Matt. xiii. 30.

For men will not gather them in their hand. They are not like good wheat, which men gather into sheaves. “With them the mower fillet not his hand,” as David says, “neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom” (Ps. cxix. 7).

He who graspeth with them will provide himself with iron, and spear, and staff; and they shall utterly be burned with fire in their own place. David is here speaking, as the Jews themselves confess, of the future judgment to be executed by the Son of David, the Messiah, at the Great Day: see the Chaldee Targum here. Cp. Luke xix. 27. Heb. vi. 8.

David's Writings. After the foregoing final prophecy of David, concerning the Coming of Christ, and its blessed spiritual consequences to the World, even to the end of time, the Sacred Historian inserts a Catalogue of David's mighty men—his heroes or worthies.

In their names and deeds we may see a foreshadowing of the noble acts effected by the Apostles, and others in succession after them, in the Christian Church, its Martyrs, Confessors, and other champions of the Cross, anointed by the Spirit, Whom Christ sent to enable them to overcome the enemies of the Faith. Thus the acts of these mighty men are exemplary to the subjects of Christ.

David's worthies are divided into three classes:—
(1) Consisting of the three (8—12).
(2) Of two (18—23).
(3) Of 32 (24—30); v. 34 contains three names.

Twelve of these, viz. the five of the first two classes, and seven of the third, were chiefs for a month respectively of a body of 24,000 apiece (see 1 Chron. xxvii. 1—15). Joab is not mentioned in this catalogue. Cp. v. 23.

Many critics have endeavoured to force the two accounts, here and in 1 Chron. xxvii. 1—15, into verbal identity; and a great many constrained conjectural emendations have been proposed by them for this purpose. It seems more reasonable to suppose that the two writers are giving various details concerning David's worthies, and, sometimes, concerning different periods of David's history, and that the latter writer is not a mere copyist of the former.
An elaborate essay on the catalogue in this chapter, as compared with the catalogue of worthies in 1 Chron. xii., may be seen in Dr. Kennicott’s Dissertations, ii. 4753, vol. 15-16. The learned author of that essay seems to have been biased by a theory that the two catalogues were originally almost identical, and ought to be brought into coincidence with one another.

The phrase [the son that sat in the seat] or, Jashobeam the son of Haachonai: see 1 Chron. xi. 11; and compare v. 9 here, where the son of Achoch is the same person with the Achochite.

The reading in the extant MSS. here is supposed by some to have arisen from the occurrence of the words boshethahel, in the seat, in the previous verse (Dr. Kennicott, who enlarges on much length on the words of the text here, as compared with 1 Chron. xi. 11: see his Dissertations, vol. i. pp. 64—129).

If the words in the MSS. here are genuine, they mean sitting in the seat (Genesis 37:2). This reading is confirmed by the Targum here, and by Syriac, and Arabic, and Vulgate, and is not hastily to be abandoned. The name Jashobeam, in Chronicles, means to whom the spear turneth. Cp. Paeret, p. 616.

— the captains: So Genesis, p. 828; or, rather, adjutants of the king (Keil, p. 356).

— the same was Adino the Ezrite: The Hebrew words here (ha adino ha-ezre) are supposed by some to be equivalent to those in the parallel place of Chronicles (nu erer och chashilo), he lifted up his spear. But it is not easy to see how they could have been formed from it. It is conjectured by Saxonius and Genesis, pp. 605, 648, that the sense is he (ought with) the wounding (or vibration) of his spear against —. Cp. Grove and Bullock in B. D. i. 604; and below, on 1 Chron. xi. 11.

The Sept. has, “Adino the Ezrite, he drew his sword;” and the Targum has, “burling with his spear;” and the Syriac has the name “Godbehn.” Aharon (that thinks his second name was Adino ha-ezre. Adino occurs as a name 1 Chron. x. 43. The words, he lift up his spear, might be omitted without detriment to the sense “he stood alone against;” and the difference of numbers (see next note) seems to suggest as probably that he had been one of the first, not one from them in the Chronicles; and that it is not reasonable to attempt to force the two accounts into verbal identity.

The opinion of Pfleiffer (Dubia, p. 213) deserves attention. The words Joshob boshethahel here, and Jashobeam in Chronicles, contain two or three conjectures of the same person; and the words Tachmonte and son of Hachmoni represent reciprocally the cognomen of the person and the name of his father; Adino ha-ezre is another name of the same hero, with the addition of the name of his birth-place; this is omitted in the Chronicles, and it is there added that he “brandished his spear,” and routed the enemy therewith. “Binomines Hebraei erat, nec opus ut omní simul et semel in uno loco referantur.” So Pagninus, Vulgata, and Coclemon, p. 784. We shall see numerous instances of double names borne by the same person among David’s worthies: see below, vv. 25, 27, 28. Why should we be surprised at this, any more than at the different names borne by the same Apostles of Christ? (see on Matt. x. 3, 4, — eight hundred—at one time) In the extant MSS. of the Chronicles the number is three hundred: cp. v. 18. But (as Keil supposes) the two writers are probably speaking of two different incidents, which see the following note; and there is the reason why each of the two writers adds “at one time,” suggesting that other feats were done at another time (Pfeiffer).

Eleazar the son of Dodo: or, of Dodi: see 1 Chron. xxxii. 14, — the Athelite: Literally, the son of Achochit; in the Chronicles he is called an Achochite; the patronymic.

— with David: The Chronicles here adds the place, “at Pas-dammim” (1 Chron. xi. 13; probably Ephes-dammim (1 Sam. xvi. 13). — when they defied the Philistines: In answer to the former proud boast of Goliath, who had defied the armies of the Living God in the same place (1 Sam. xvii. 10, 30).

This incident, recorded here, is not mentioned in the Chronicles; here is one of the numerous evidences that the two catalogues are supplementary to each other, and ought to be treated as such, and not to be forced (as they are by some critics) into identity by violent conjectural alterations. This has been attempted, in part, by Kennicott, pp. 158—144.

11. Hararite: Perhaps the mountaineer (Syriac, Arabic, Genesis).

— a troop: The original word, signifying a heap, is explained in the Chronicles (1 Chron. xii. 15, 16). — lentiles: In the Chronicles it is added that there was barley there (1 Chron. xi. 13). Doubtless the field (a large plain) was sown with both; the independence of the two writers is thus shown; and the latter intended that his own account should be supplementary to the former: see the notes there.

13. three of the thirty: Their names are not mentioned. God knows them, as He knows the noble acts of all His Saints and Martyrs, and will reward them at the Great Day, although the far greater part of the animus and sufferings of the holy Apostles themselves, they are not written in any earthly histories. Their names are “in the book of life” (Phil. iv. 3), and their acts, unknown to men, are registered in God’s Martyrology.

— harvest time: When thirst would be most intense. In the Chronicles it is added that they came “to the rock.”

— cave of Adullam: Where David had hid himself, when persecuted by Saul (see 1 Sam. xxii. 1), and where he was fortifying himself against the Philistines when they came against him, as described above (v. 17, 18), as appears probable from the mention of “the valley of Rephaim.” Cp. Josephus, viii. 12, 4. — an hold: A fortress.

14. their feats.
and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate! 16 And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord. 17 And he said, Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

18 And Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, and slew them, and of seven hundred he had the name among three. 19 Was he not most honourable of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit he attained not unto the first three.

20 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, 1 Chron. 15. 21.

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15. That one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem: His own birth-place; water which he knew to be refreshing, especially at that sultry time of harvest. But it was then possessed by the Philistines, the enemies of Israel and of God.

Bethlehem itself is now ill supplied with water (Thomson, p. 647), and no well has been found within the city or near the gate (Robinson, ii. 155). There is a cistern of clear cool water about half a mile N.E. of the town (Ritter, Tödter), and it is called “the Well of David” (Robinson); near it, according to tradition, was “Jesse’s house” (Keil). Josephus says (vii. 12. 4) that the Well was near the gate.

David and the Water of the Well at Bethlehem.

16. He would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord: As a drink-offering. He gives the reason: that he looked to the cross of the appetite and pulled down the will, and the hazard of their lives; and he knew that it was forbidden by the Law to drink of blood (Lev. xvi. 11, 12); as is related in 1 Chron. xlv. 18, 19, he said, “Shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy?” Therefore he would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord. Josephus adds (vii. 12. 4) that he gave thanks to God for the preservation of their lives.

(1) There is a moral lesson in this history, as an example of resistance to, and sacrifice of, the fleshly appetite. Examples of this kind are cited from profane history; viz. of Alexander the Great, in his Indian campaign, refusing a proffered draught of water, when he was parched with thirst, saying, “Nec solus, inquit, bibere mutaverit; non tam exiguam omnium dividendum passum” (Quintus Curtius, x. 5).

—Somni percussisset ipse est;Ultimus hauster aquae; quum tandem fonte repertoIndiga constans latice potare juventus,
Stat dum lixa hibat (Jaucob, ix. 500). In the words of Bp. Sanderson (i. 107), slightly modified: When thou observest thy will eagerly bent upon some one thing, deny thyself: curb thy desires, though they be somewhat important, and thou shalt find incredible benefit by it. This is one of the best uses of fasting; to cross the appetite and pull down the will, as Solon’s words, “Put a knife to thy throat” (Prov. xxvii. 2), and “Buffet thy body” (1 Cor. ix. 27). Exercise over thy will (1 Cor. vii. 87). David would not taste a drop of the water of the well by the gate of Bethlehem, but in condemnation of his appetite, and of his fleshly desires, which were much worthy reasons to the hazard of their lives, poured it out before the Lord. What a mass of sin and misery would he have escaped, if he had so delivered himself in the matter of Uriah! Verily, there is no conquest like this, for a man to conquer himself.

Fortior est, qui se quam qui fortissima vincit Oppida—

“Est virtus licitis absintiisse bonum.”

And to adopt also the words of S. Ambrose (Apol. David i.), “David overcame nature by not drinking when he thirsted: and he thus taught his army by his example to endure thirst; and showed them that he would not expose his soldiers to danger in order to gratify any ambitious desires of his own. To him the water would have no sweetness, being tainted with the taste of the death of his friends.”

(2) Some of the Fathers suppose that this incident is related in order to show that David, who had not been content with his own wives, nor to drink “water out of his own cistern” (Prov. vi. 15), but had coveted his neighbour’s wife, and had been guilty of adultery with her, had now mastered his passions: see Chrys. in Ps. i, and S. Ambrose de Jacob i. 1: “Humannam passum est David ut conscriptureret, sed conscriptum rationabiliter et conveniuntur.” It is a remarkable fact that the Saturi ad Bookum relicked. Cp. S. Gregor. in Registro ix. 39: “Liebet ut bibes iniquitatem; sed habeas licitas se licite necinserit, haudstellarit licitis absitubet.”

David, who before had yielded to his carnal appetite in a lawless lust, in his palace at Jerusalem, in the cool evetide (see xi. 1), now triumphed over the natural appetite of his unclean heart, and was drinking, at the scorching summer’s day. He who before had shed the blood of his faithful soldier Uriah, now shrinks from drinking the water because it seemed to be purchased by those who willingly hazard their lives; and he poured out the water on the ground. It is well said by an ancient exposer: “In sacrificing Domini effusa aqua conversa est, quia culum cum conscriptum mactavit pro penitentiis. Qui quondam consciens alienam uxorern non timuit, post etiam quia conscriptum expirat. Quia illorum qui perpetravisse contemnient, contra seipsum jam rigidum etiam a licitis absitubet.” “Quod aquam bibere noluit, sed comm Domino bisavit, exemplum praebuit militibus suis. Visit naturam, ut suo exemplo omnis exercitii vincere sitam disceret” (Augustin).

(3) Yet further, as some of the Christian Fathers suggest, the incident here recorded by the Holy Ghost has not only a moral, but also a spiritual, prophetical, and typical meaning (see S. Ambrose, in Apol. Dav. i. 7). David was a prophet; he spoke by the Spirit; he foreknew that Christ would spring from his own loins (Acts ii. 30). He prophesied by this action: though we are not bound to suppose that he himself understood its meaning; any more than we are to suppose that he, or any other prophet, understood the full meaning of what they uttered in sincere. The event of the Gospel has explained to us the meaning of many acts and utterances of Patriarchs and Prophets, which were not significant to themselves. Christ is the true Well-spring of Bethlehem, gushing forth with living waters of salvation. David predicted for the water which should spring from that divine well. But he did not drink it, and it was overlooked by a divine instinct to pour it out, as blood, before the Lord. David represents the faithful souls of the Patriarchs thinking for Christ’s sake (xix. 3).

The Well of Bethlehem was in the hands of the Philistines, and David’s three valiant men broke through the host of the enemy and drew water from it at the risk of their lives, and gave it to David, who poured it out, as blood, before the Lord. The water is called their blood. They represent Christ’s self-sacrifice for us, and our own duty. To win Christ requires a spirit of martyrdom; and when He is gained, and when the soul receives Him who was pierced on the Cross, and who is the “true fountainhead” of the house of David; and for sin and for our uncleaness (Zech. xiii. 1), and from whom “came forth blood and water” (John xix. 34, 1 John v. 6) to save, cleanse, and refresh us, then we are not to look for carnal delights, but for something far higher, nobler, and sweeter than all earthly pleasure; we are to find our joy in Him, and in sacrificing ourselves for Him; then He becomes our all-sufficient Sacrifice before the Lord, and we are accepted thereby: cf. Methodius in Hypappaste; Eucherius, Bode, Angelovius here.

18. Abishai! See i Sam. xxvi. 6. 1 Chron. xi. 20.

—three] Three with whom he was classed, not the first three.

David's worthies. 2 Samuel xxii. 21—39. xxvi. 1, 2. He numbers Israel.

† who had done many acts, *he slew two † lionlike men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow: 21 And he slew an Egyptian, † a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear. 22 These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men. 23 He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three. And David set him over his † guard.

24 *Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Eliphanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem, 25 *Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite, 26 Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, 27 Abiezer the Anathothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, 28 Zalmon the Ahobite, Maharai the Netophathite, 29 Helec the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai the son of Ribai out of Gibeon of the children of Benjamin, 30 Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash, 31 Abi-albon the Arbahite, Azmaveth the Barhumite, 32 Eliabha the Shaalbonite, of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan, 33 Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite, 34 Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, 35 Hezrai the Carmelitte, Parai the Arbite, 36 Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, 37 Zelek the Ammonite, Nahari the Beerothite, armourbearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah, 38 *Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite, 39 *Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all.

XXVI. 1 And *again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, b Go, number Israel and Judah. 2 For

xxvii. 5: cp. 1 Chron. xii. 27. Benaiah was the captain of the Cherethites: viii. 18; xx. 23.

— the son  And therefore renowned, through his grandfather as well as his father, in war. So Turgon and Vulg. — valiant  Literally, of life and valor (Gesen. 273). — of Kabzeel  In the south of Judah (Josh. xv. 21). He was a Levite by descent, but an inhabitant of Judah.

— two lionlike men  Literally, two oriel, or lions of God; a name given to valiant men (like “Ceur de Lion”) by the Arabs and others (Bochart). He slew two lionlike men, and a lion also.

— of a pit  or cistern, where he had taken refuge. Benaiah leapt into it and grappled with the lion there, in a snowy day, which is apt to benumb man's strength and to cool the courage, and when beasts of prey are most fierce and ravenous from hunger. The pit was probably near a house, and the lion was lying in wait for his prey.

21. a goolly man  A prodigious man, a man to be gazed at with wonder, for his size; he was five cubits high: see 1 Chron. xi. 23.

23. his guard  His body-guard (viii. 18; xx. 23). Who the third was, is not mentioned. Could it be Joab? Was he degraded, and is his name omitted, on account of his crimes? Both his brothers, Abishai (v. 19) and Asahel (v. 24), occur in the list. His armour-bearer is mentioned (v. 37). Thus there are some first that shall be last, and the last first.”

Joab's prowess is described in the first place in the catalogue in 1 Chron. xi., and though his name is not expressly mentioned in this list, it being well known, it is supposed here in order to complete the number, 37 (Kenicoff, p. 15).

25. Shammah  Called Shammath, 1 Chron. xi. 27.

— Harodite  See Jud. xvii. 29.

26. Pollyte  Called Polly, 1 Chron. xi. 27.

27. Mebonanan  Called perhaps Shebbace, 1 Chron. xi. 29.

28. Zalmon  Called also perhaps Haid, 1 Chron. xi. 29.

29. Helec  Called also Haled, 1 Chron. xi. 30.

30. Pirathoth  Of the tribe of Ephraim, s.w. of Nobles, Judg. xii. 13.

31. Hiddai  Called also Hurni, 1 Chron. xi. 32.

32. Gaash  In Ephraim, Josh. xxxiv. 30.

33. Abi-albon  Called also Abiel 1 Chron. xi. 32.
David's sin

2 SAMUEL XXIV. 3—9.

in numbering the people.

(2) But it seems better to refer the pronoun he to the Lord; and this is quite consistent with what is said in the passage in Chronicles, which throws additional light on the history. God is not the author of any sin; but nothing can happen without Divine permission (Ps. ciii. 7, and from the mode in which it was punished by God: see August. c. Faust. xxii. 66,—"Populo numerato, peaecatum clationis ejus sic puniret Deus, ut eundem numerum innumerat morte mutilorum, eujus multitudine orare, in servum superum satetum: in quo occulto judicium Dei, apud quem non est iniquitas, quos non videat indignos lac vitæ subtraxit huic vitae.") It was the sin of lack of faith in God, and in His protection; it was the sin of self-confidence, vain-glory, and reliance on an arm of flesh. "Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord." (2 Cor. x. 17.) David says himself, "Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God." (Ps. xx. 7.) "No king can be saved by the multitude of an host, but the Lord is our help and our shield." (Ps. xxxii. 15, 19.)

5. Aroer] In the east of Jordan, in the tribe of Gad, before Rabbah, in Wady-Nahr-Ammud (Num. xxxii. 34. Josh. xiii. 25. Judg. xi. 30), to be distinguished from the other Aroer in Reuben, on the bank of the river Arnon (Deut. ii. 36. Josh. xii. 9.). — Jazer] See Num. xxxii. 3. Perhaps on the site of Es-Sair, about nine miles w. of Ammaad (Seetzen, cp. B. D. i. 900.)

6. Talhia-bodshi] The site of which is uncertain. The etymology of this word seems to tend to the translation, the lower parts (see Gesen. 862) of the new moon (Gesen. 263). But what the meaning of this is, can only be conjectured. Some have supposed that the sea of Galilee may sometimes have been called the crescent moon (Bölicher), and that this phrase means the lower parts of Gennesaret.

Is it not possible that Hodshi (new moon) may be one of the many names in Palestine (like Jericho, Beth-shemesh, &c.), which preserve a tradition of the old Canaanish worship of the heavenly bodies, and that this word, Talhia-bodshi, signifies the lower parts of that region which was formerly celebrated for the worship of the new moon?

— Dan-jaan.] It is doubtful whether this is the Dan which was originally called Laish (Josh. xix. 47. Judg. xvii. 29): see Keil here, and above, on Gen. xiv. 14. It seems however to be specified as the northern limit of David's kingdom; and as the census was to be taken of the people from "Dan to Beer-sheba" (v. 2), that is an argument for their identity.

7. [Heb. 6, and of the Canaanites] In Naphath and Zebulun (Judg. i. 30. 33).

8. At the end of nine months and twenty days] This period of time, nine months and twenty days, and the mention of it by the sacred Writer, are remarkable. It is not to be equal to the interval which elapsed between the commission of David's great sin with Bath-sheba and the birth of the child, after which Nathan was sent to him by God (ch. xlii.). On that occasion it needed the stern denounced of the Prophet to arouse David from his spiritual lethargy; but now David is a Nathan to himself: see v. 11.
The pestilence

9. in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men | In 1 Chron. xxvi. 5, the number is stated 1,100,000 men. In the former instance it is probable the standing army of David (1 Chron. xxvii.) which had been before numbered, is not reckoned, but it is inserted in the latter. This standing army consisted of 12×2,000 = 24,000 men, and that with their chibillars and twelve generals, will make 300,000; and if these are added to the 300,000 mentioned here, the number in both places would coincide (Dutchel, Janius, Grot, Walther, Pfleiffer).

— Judah—five hundred thousand | In 1 Chron. xxi. 5 the number of Judah is 470,000 men. Perhaps David had 30,000 stationed with him at Jerusalem, and the other 470,000 were numbered by the prophet, and the presence of the king (v. 4) unto other cities of Judah.

10. For when David was up | Rather, and David arose. The conjunction for in our Version leads to an impression that David’s confessions were produced by it. This is a mistake. David had made spiritual progress since the time when it required the parable of Nathan and the prophetic announcement “Thou art the man” to awaken him from his spiritual slumber (see above, xii. 7). At this period of his life, he examined himself, and weighed his own actions in private, especially at night time, and no sooner was the census of the men of war reported to him, than, instead of being elated with self-confidence, and puffed up with vain-glory, his heart smote him, and he confessed his sin (cp. 1 Chron. xxvii. 9), and (v. 1), who heard his confession, sent Gent to him with a message.

— David’s seer | See 1 Sam. ix. 9, 1 Chron. xxix. 29.

11. I offer thee three things | God reminded the future punishment in another world, in consequence of David’s confession; but He punished him with temporal chastisements, as in the case of his former sin (see above, xii. 13, 14). Spiritual pride, and reliance on human strength, are therefore heinous sins in God’s sight, as well as adultery and murder. And God punished Israel also for their sin (cp. 1). 

12. Shall seven years of famine come | In 1 Chron. xxi. 10, 11, it is, “Choose thee either three years’ famine.” And the Sept. has three years; but Vulg. Syriac, Arabic, Chaldee, and Josephus confirm the reading of the text. It has been supposed by some expositors, that in the Chronicles the Author calls the three years, because three successive years of famine to come were offered; and that here they are called seven, because, together with the three former years of famine (see xxi. 1), and with the year then in course, they would make seven (Kimchi, Junius, Calovins, Pfleiffer). 

13. let us fall now into the hand of the Lord | War and famine would not have hurt David’s own person; with noble disinterestedness he chose pestilence, in which he himself would be exposed to death no less than his subjects (Theodoret).

The pestilence till the time appointed. 

15. to the time appointed | or, rather, to the time of the evening sacrifice (Tregman, Jerominaster, Patrick, Keil).

It would seem that the pestilence began in the morning, and was not extended to three days, but the time was shortened by God, saying, “It is enough” (v. 16), and was not extended beyond one day (Josephus, Sept., Syriac, Arabic, Kimche; and so Theodoret, who says that it lasted only six hours; and S. Ambrose, in Ps. xxxvii.), and seems to have stopped at the hour of evening prayer, called edh midr, the ninth hour (Acts iii. 1). It is remarkable that this was the hour of Christ’s death (Matt. xxvii. 46—Mark xv. 38—Luke xxiii. 44—40), by which the wrath of God against all Mankind for sin was appeased; and God said to the destroying Angel, holding his drawn sword over the World, “It is enough: stay now thine hand.” The Angel Gabriel came to David, at “the time of the evening obligation,” and brought the message of the Messiah (Dan. ix. 21).

God’s miraculous manifestations of mercy often take place at the stated times of public prayer, and thus He shows His approval of such appointments, and His gracious acceptance of united prayer in His house: cp. 1 Kings xviii. 20; 2 Kings ii. 20; Acts x. 3. 30. God stayed the Angel—who had the sword drawn in his hand—from destroying Jerusalem, in the same place where He had stayed Abrahams, who had the knife in his hand, from sacrificing his son Isaac. God “spared not His own Son,” but gave Him for us all, and thus He has saved us from the sword of the destroying Angel; and He raised His beloved Son to eternal glory, and has caused us up, in hope with Him, that we may worship, in the everlasting Temple of the heavenly Jerusalem, Him who was prefigured by David and by Solomon, and by all the sacrifices that were offered in that Temple, which Solomon built on the place which David purchased, and where he built an altar, and offered a sacrifice of thanksgiving for the deliverance of Jerusalem, which was a figure of a far greater deliverance by Christ (S. Augustiniæ ad. Advers. Legi. i. 18).

— seventy thousand | David had gloried in the number of his subjects, and had relied on their strength, and is punished in that which was the cause of his pride.

16. threshing-place | On a hill, as most threshing-floors were,
David buys the threshing-floor  2 SAMUEL XXIV. 18—25. of Araunah the Jebusite.

David spake unto the Lord when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, y I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father’s house.

And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite. And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the Lord commanded.

And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground. And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshingfloor of thee, to build an altar unto the Lord, that the plague may be stayed from the people.

And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood.

All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The Lord thy God accept thee. And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and for ventilation. It was on Mount Moriah, n.e. of Zion.

The altar of David at Moriah on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

18. Go up, rear an altar—Jebusite. On Mount Moriah, so called from the Appearing of Jehovah; where Abraham, in will, had offered up Isaac, at God’s command (see Josephus, Ant. iii. 13, 4; and the notes above, on Gen. xxvii. 2). And there, as we read in 2 Chron. iii. 1, Solomon built the Temple: “Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite;” one who was descended from the old heathen inhabitants of Jerusalem: see above, v. 6.

22. behold, here be oxen. With which Araunah was then treading out the wheat on his threshing-floor. “Oran saw the angel, and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Oran was threshing wheat” (1 Chron. xxii. 20). The plague had not yet reached Jerusalem (c. 16).

23. All these things did Araunah—king. Rather, all these, O king, Araunah gives to the king (Keil), as it is in 1 Chron. xxii. 23. “Take it to thee—I give it all.”

The willingness of Araunah the Jebusite to give gifts to David, foreboded the readiness of the Gentiles to bring tribute and to do homage to Christ (Ps. xxxii. 10, 11; ex. 9).

24. I will surely buy it—cost me nothing. It is heartless piety to desire to serve God cheaply (Bp. Hall). Cp. Malachi i. 13, and notes below, on Mark xiv. 3, and on John xii. 3—6. David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. In 1 Chron. xxii. 25, we read that David gave to Oran six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the place. David did two things: he purchased for fifty shekels of silver the oxen and the threshing-floor for his own immediate use on that particular occasion, when he built an altar, and offered sacrifice to God, for this special mercy to himself and his;

But he did more than this; he also purchased the place, probably the area of the house and the threshing-floor of Araunah, as a site for the Temple to be built, by Solomon, and for all its glorious apparatus of services in future generations.

The author of the Chronicles supposes his readers to be acquainted with the Books of Samuel, and adds fresh materials to them.

On the history of Moriah and its religious associations from the days of Abraham to those of David, Solomon, and Christ, see above, notes on Gen. xxvii.

In Holy Scripture the Universal Church of Christ is often compared to a ‘threshing-floor’ (Matt. iii. 12; Luke iii. 17); compare above, on the history of Gideon (Judg. vi. 37), whose threshing-floor was always considered by ancient expositors as a figure of the Universal Church.

Boaz at Bethlehem, the lord of the harvest, sleeping on his threshing-floor, and finding there his bride, Ruth the Moabitess, presents another image of Christ, the Lord of the Spiritual Harvest, and the Husband of the Gentile Church: see above, on Ruth iii. 9. And as the threshing-floor at Jerusalem formerly belonged to Araunah the Jebusite—a Gentile—so the World was formerly under Heathenism. And as David would not receive it for nothing, but bought the threshing-floor at a price, so Christ has purchased the Church with His own Blood (Acts xx. 28).

“Quod per quod Araunah Jesu, nisi Ecclesiæ ex omnibus gentibus colletum, significant?” (Angelomus.)

David, offering his own life for his people (c. 17), and sacrificing on the threshing-floor of Araunah, and appeasing God’s wrath, and staying the plague on Moriah, was a type of Christ offering Himself at Jerusalem as a propitiation for the sins of the world, and staying the plague of Death, which threatened to destroy them. The Altar of David, and the Temple of Solomon, erected on the threshing-floor and field of Araunah the Jebusite, the heathen lord of the soil at Moriah, where Abrahams sacrifice was offered, were a figure of the
peace offerings. 'So the Lord was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

Church Universal, built of lively stones of all true Israelites of all nations, on the foundation of the faith of Abraham (see A Lepide).

The purchase of the Floor was the sign of the cessation of the Pestilence; so the purchase of the Church Universal by Christ, followed on the cessation of the power of Death, and on the propitiation of God's wrath. And as the site of the floor became a Temple, built by Solomon, the Peaceable, son of David, so our Solomon, the Prince of Peace, the Divine Son of David, has made the threshing-floor of heathendom to be an universal Temple of God, where sacrifices of prayer and praise are ever offered to Him. And still that Temple is a threshing-floor, for, at the end of the world, the Son of Man will come with His fan in His hand, to judge, and "will thoroughly purge the Floor" of His Visible Church, "and will gather the wheat into His Garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. iii. 12). And the Lord will grant, that we may be found to be good wheat, at that Day, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.
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