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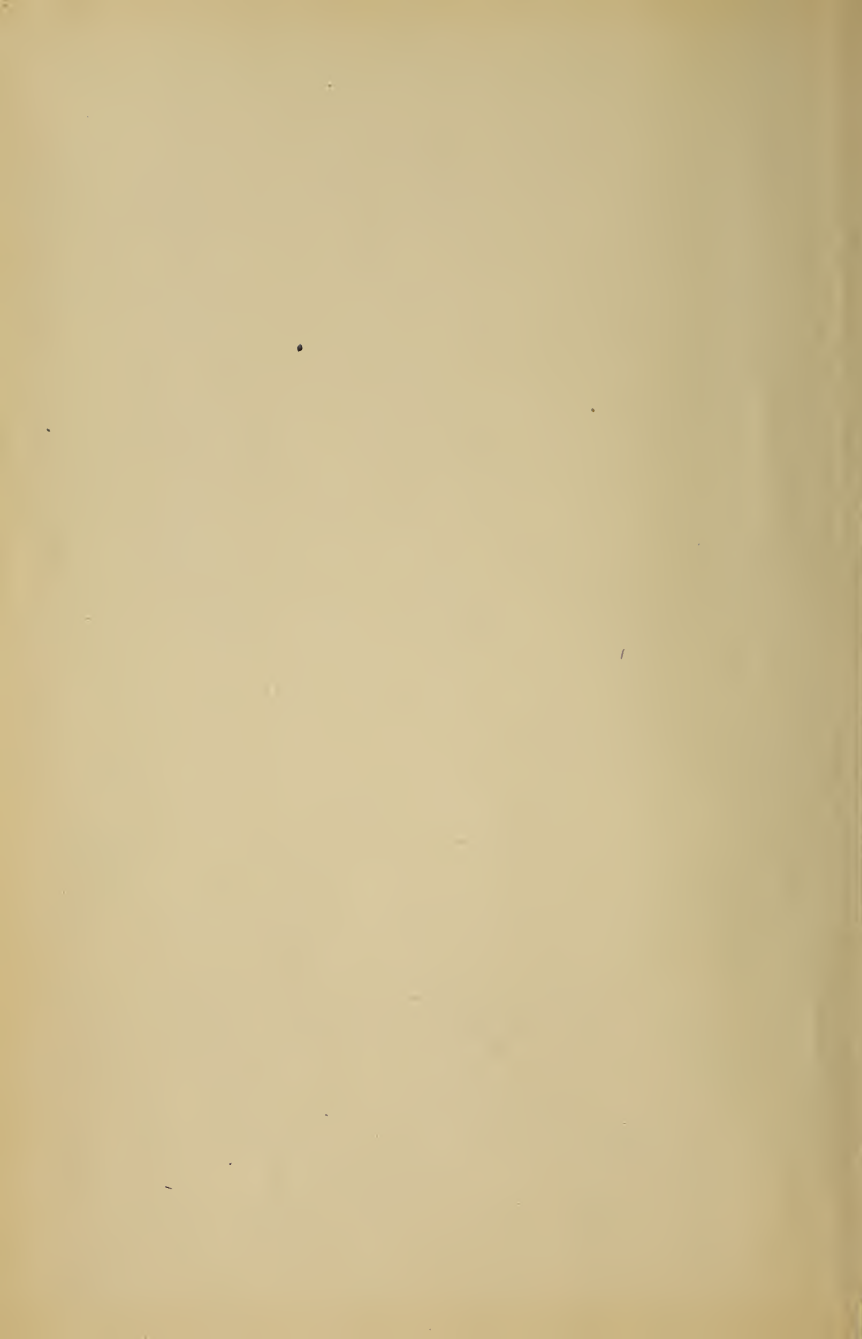
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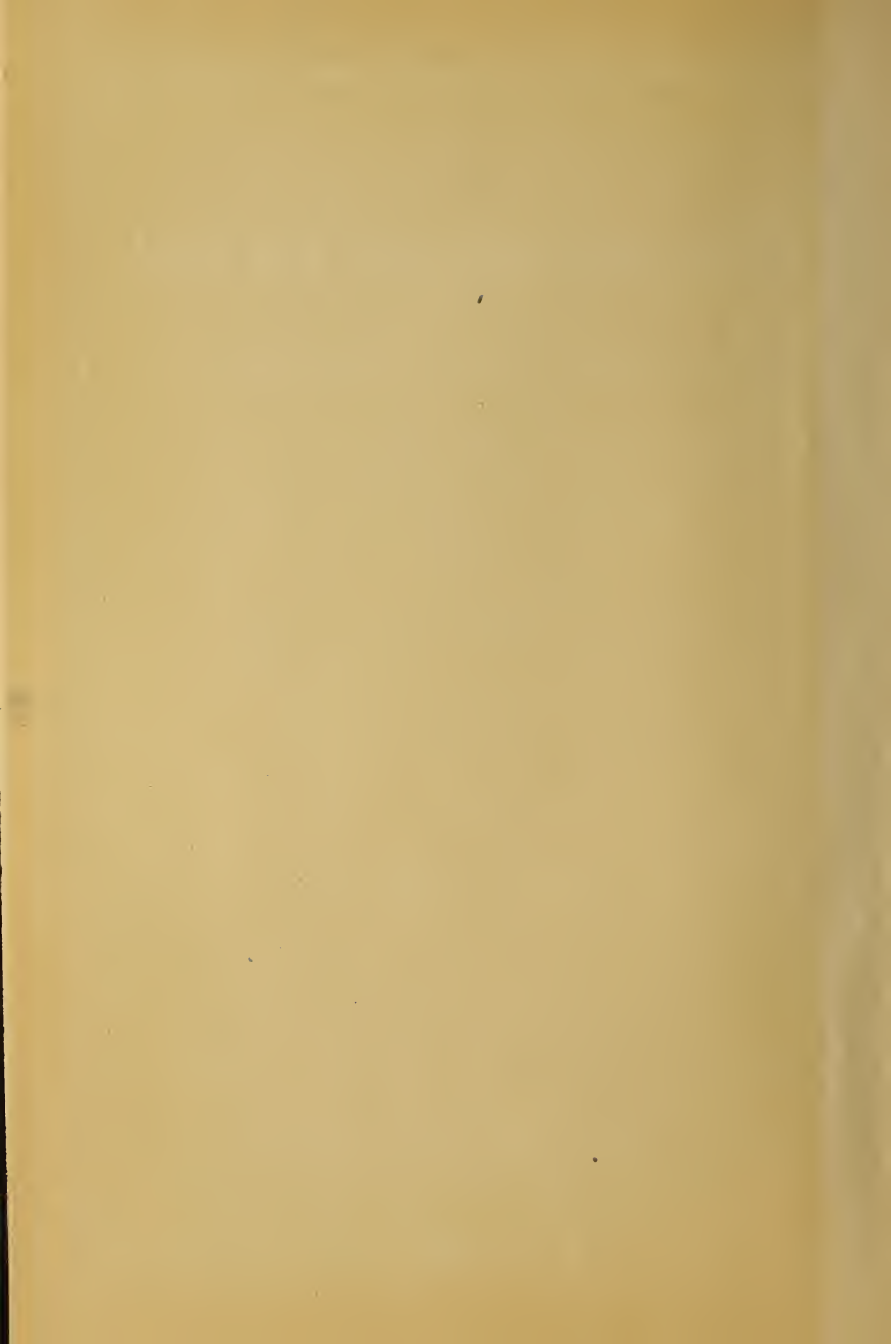
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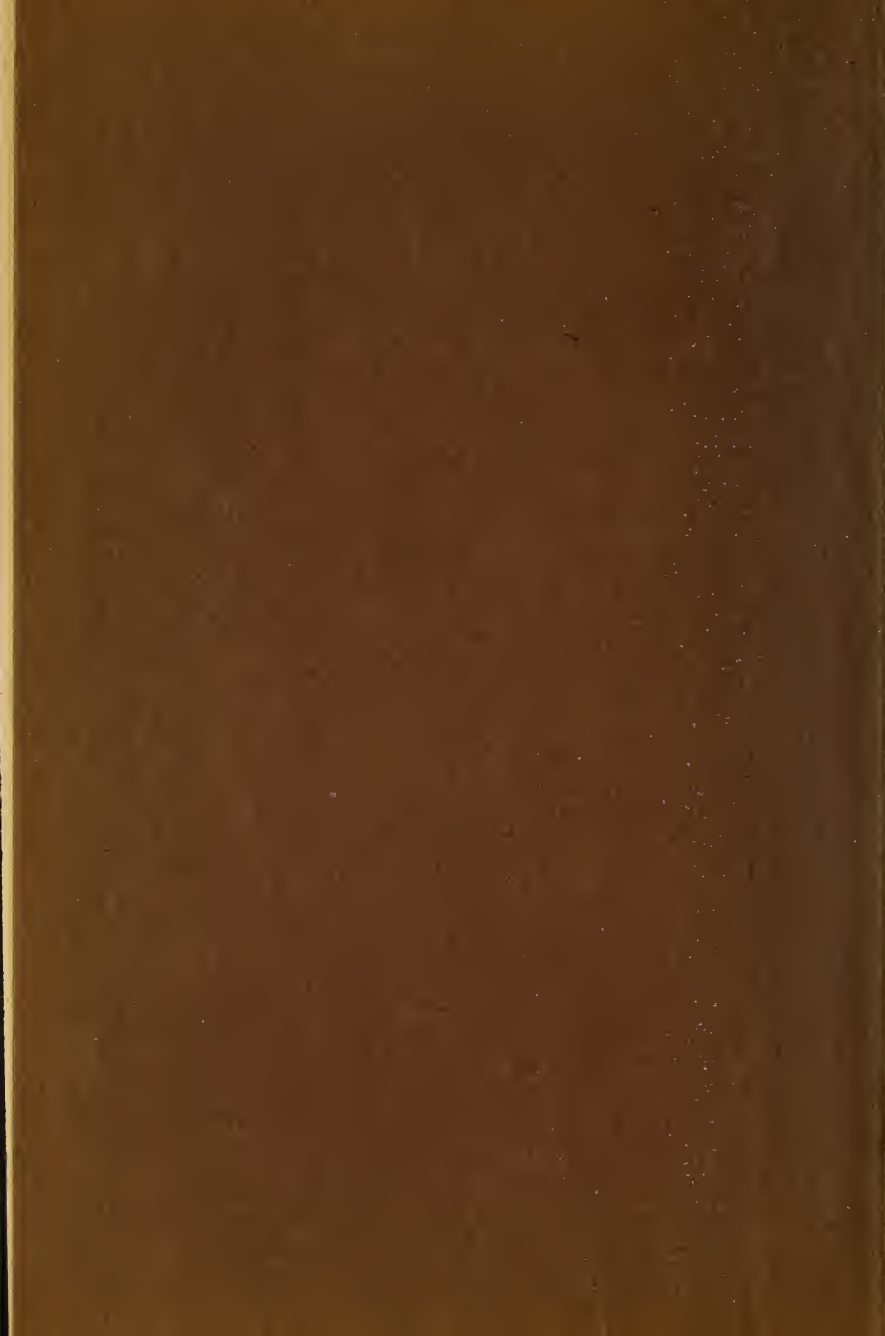
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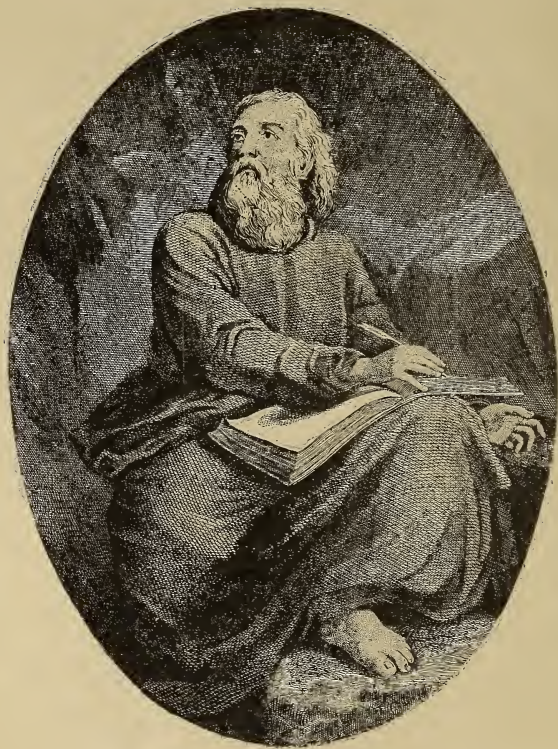
BY G. G. RUPERT

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OKLAHOMA CITY, O. T.









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# THE THEOCRACY OF ISRAEL

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## PART I

*Of "The Inspired History of the Nations"*

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BY G. G. RUPERT

Author of "The Inspired History of the Nations"



UNION PUBLISHING COMPANY  
Oklahoma City, O. T.

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## PREFACE.

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IN offering this volume to the public, we do it with the assurance that the one who understands the formation and principles governing the government of God in ancient Israel will be better prepared to comprehend the Bible as a whole; for these principles are the foundation of the truths as given by inspiration, and especially is this true when we consider that God has said He would set His hand the second time to recover the remnant of His people. When this work is done, the same principles will be again brought to view, and without an understanding of them we would not be prepared to understand the movement when it does take place. This makes this volume of special interest to us in this age of the world.

The principles of government in the theocracy of Israel are the best ever given to the children of men. These principles related both to the civil and religious rule, and, so far as the civil regulations were concerned, there are no better to-day. All true principles governing man's relation, one to another, are there laid down. That the reader may be benefited by the reading of this volume is the sincere desire of the author.

THE AUTHOR.

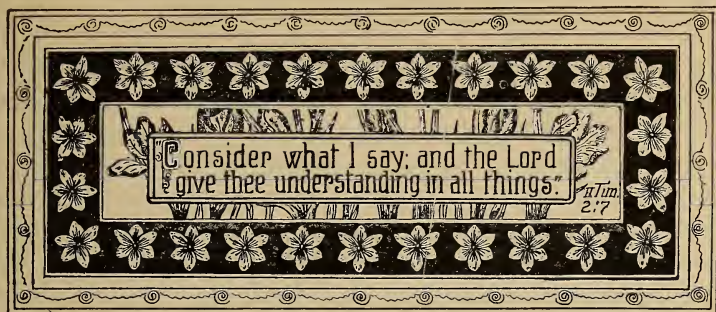


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## CHAPTER I.

### CREATION OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

“IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Gen. 1:1, 2.

The word “beginning” has caused much comment, but we think this is unnecessary, as it is evident from the Scriptures themselves that it embraces the first thirty-three verses of the inspired Book, and refers to the work of God in the first seven days of the world’s history, and is used as man uses the word when relating his experience in beginning a new work in a new place. To illustrate: A man locates in a new and uninhabited country. He afterward says, “In the beginning we built a house, cleared ten acres of land, planted an orchard, and made our first preparation for our future home.” This man refers to a period of time as the beginning of his work. So God relates in these verses the work performed in the beginning. In the early part of this beginning, “the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” One translation gives the words “without form” as “without adornment, or fitness.” This, we think, gives the proper thought;

for everything has some form or shape in order to exist. "Darkness was upon the face of the deep." This planet had not at this time been brought into action among the great systems of worlds, hence its revolutions did not bring the light of day upon it. The great motive power in this work of creation is stated to be the Spirit of God. It moved or brooded over the face of the waters. "By His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens." Job 26:13.

"And God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." Gen. 1:3-5.

"And God said, Let there be light." Says the apostle Paul, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." Heb. 11:3. "For He spake, and it was; He commanded, and it stood fast." Ps. 33:9, R. V. God's will was that this uninhabited planet should now take its position in the great machinery of the universe, and by His word it was put in motion. And as a result, a hemisphere of light dawned upon this new world. There was now both darkness and light as the globe revolved upon its axis. "And the evening and the morning were the first day.

"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day." Gen. 1:6-8.

Although light had dawned upon the planet, yet it could not penetrate through the darkness of the earth's surroundings; and while light and darkness had been separated into day and night by the revolutions of the earth, the heavens

were ungarnished, and the place was not yet fully fitted for the habitation of man. The next work was the dividing of the firmament in the midst of the waters. The waters must be divided, and the firmament placed in their midst. This also is in harmony with the statement of the inspired Word where it says that the windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up, at the time of the flood. This firmament God called heaven, and the apostle Paul recognizes this fact when he speaks of being caught up to the third heaven, thus implying that there was a first. "And the evening and the morning were the second day." Although the firmament was created on the second day, yet the light of heavenly origin could not penetrate the darkness of the atmospheric heavens.

"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas; and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day." Gen. 1:9-13.

The next thing in order in the preparation of man's home was the gathering of the waters under the firmament (or heavens) into one place, that the land might appear. "And it was so." These waters were called seas. The land now having appeared and separated from the water, God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind." How naturally God does His work! Thus vegetation was produced, and the tender plants, unaccustomed to the heat of the sun, were

in this way first brought into existence and shielded, as it were, for a few moments from the rays of light, until they would be prepared to receive it in greater abundance on the following day. All God's works were wrought in wisdom. We set out our plants in the evening, and they are watered with the dews of night, and thus prepared for the morning light. The preparation for the creative work of the fourth day is now completed. The earth is covered with its carpet of green, the trees are clothed with foliage, and every preliminary provision of divine wisdom is made for the rays of light to shine upon the products of nature, and to invigorate them with that element that they so much need in their growth.

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; He made the stars [of our solar system] also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.” Verses 14-19.

The fourth day marks the completion of the preparations overhead. The heavens are now garnished with the orbs of light. The earth is adorned by the Spirit of God. It is all pronounced good by the Maker whose hand hath created it. But were the work to stop here, it would be of no avail; it could only be enjoyed by Him alone who had brought it into existence. But the great mind of the Maker had a different purpose in view. God is now fitting up a home for man, whom He intended to make in His own image and in His own likeness. This work of creation was done step by step.

On the fourth day light from the newly-made sun reaches the earth's surface itself. On the same day it penetrated through the space surrounding this world, called Tartarus, consisting of all interstellar spaces of our solar system. But not until the fourth day did it dawn upon the earth's surface as the divider between day and night. Now it could be said that day and night existed permanently on the earth, as these orbs were made to rule the day and the night respectively. When the earth was set in motion, and exposed to the hemispheric light of the first day of creation, covering one-half of the earth's surface, this light was seen divided from the darkness by the revolutions of the earth. As the veil was thus removed from the space surrounding the earth, light shone upon the planet itself. But the light from the sun did not reach the earth's surface until the fourth day. And a veil of darkness even now exists to a certain extent on the earth, as the result of sin, which intercepts the rays of the light from God's throne, hindering them from shining on the surface of the earth to the extent that they did at the creation of the world; for when Eden shall be restored to us as it was at the creation, light will again shine with its original luster, as it did on the fourth day.

“Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.” Isa. 30:26.

That this is the truth as given by inspiration will be shown later in this book, under the subject of the earth's desolation for one thousand years. At this time the light from these heavenly bodies, because of the prevailing darkness, will not shine upon the earth.

We will now pass to the work of the fifth day.

“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly

above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind; and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day." Gen. 1:20-23.

These scriptures show clearly that God never does anything without a purpose. It was as much His purpose to have the water and the firmament inhabited as it was to have the earth itself; and so God created these creatures and adapted them to the places made for them. These creatures were made to understand God's instruction. They were commanded to multiply, and inhabit the place given to them.

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind; and God saw that it was good." Verses 24, 25.

The sixth day was the crowning act of God's work of creation. He begins the work by the creation of the various animals and creeping things upon the earth. And as we look over the earth, and see the great variety, and remember that, as they came from the hand of the Creator, they did not possess the disposition they now have, neither were they cruel in their natures, but were made for an ornament or adornment to Eden, it is a pleasure to meditate, and think of the work of God as it came from His hand. And in His own language He said it was "very good." But who would enjoy all that had been done at this time, had the work stopped here? In His great heart of love God felt that there must be some one nearer to Him, some one who would be more closely associated with Him in this special work, to

share these blessings and pleasures with Him. There is no such thing as real pleasure to a lone individual. It is only by the associations with those who are adapted to like things that real pleasure is attained. This could not be realized with the association of the angels, for they were created beings themselves, and made to inhabit another planet. Hence there must be a production on this planet that would supply the connecting-link that would connect this world and the God who made it. This production was man.

“And God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” Verses 26-28.

We do not realize in our present dwarfed, sinful condition the nearness God intended should exist between man and his Maker. He says He made him in His own image. In Daniel the seventh chapter is given a description of the Father. In Revelation the first chapter is given a description of His Son, showing that Christ is made in the image of His Father. The apostle says He was “the express image of His person,” and now we have it stated that man also was made in His image. God did not only make him in His image, but He made him to have dominion and rule over all the works of His hand, so far as this world was concerned. And God blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. It is evident that, had man never sinned, when this command was fulfilled, the increase of all created beings would have

ceased. The Lord did not only give man dominion over all the works of His hands, but He prepared him a sustenance, and the earth itself produced the food upon which he should subsist.

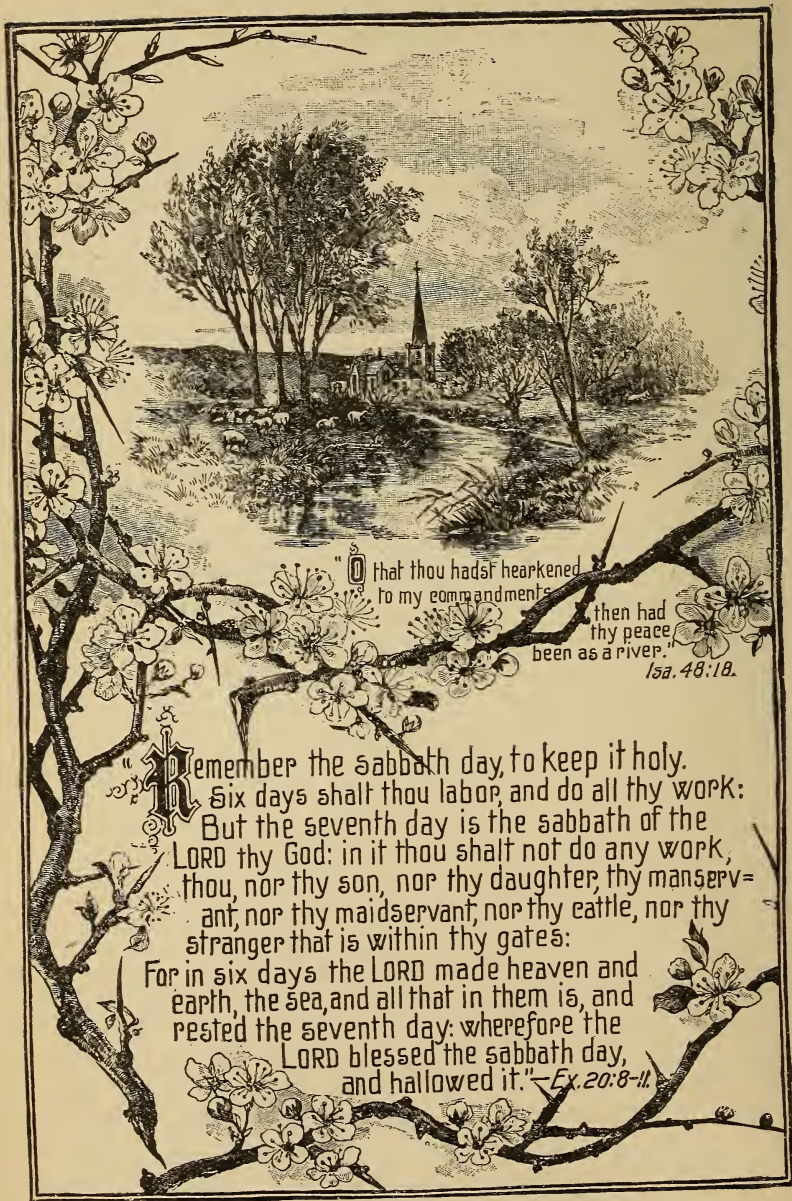
“And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat; and it was so. And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”  
Verses 29-31.

We will learn as we proceed in this study that all living creatures lived upon the life imparted to them through the Spirit of God, as it was breathed into their nostrils. And that Spirit was to perpetuate life to all things. It was never intended that man or beast should slay to eat, but every herb and every fruit should be for their food. There was one diet provided for all. There was not a poisonous vine, there was not a weed, not a poisonous reptile, nor a ravenous beast in all God's creation. But only life issued forth from every plant and everything that the hand of God had touched. Man himself enjoyed the power and privilege of giving names to all created beings, and, as God viewed all the work of His hands, He could but say that it was “very good.”

There was one more act necessary in order that the connecting-link between man and God might never be broken. God never designed that man should lose sight of Him as the Creator and the Giver of every good and perfect gift. And as man would always enjoy these blessings, they should be a continual reminder to him of the source whence they came. Thus when he ate the food God had created, he would be continually reminded of the Creator. When he







"O that thou hadst hearkened  
to my commandments,  
then had  
thy peace  
been as a river."  
Isa. 48:18.

**R**emember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.  
Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:  
But the seventh day is the sabbath of the  
LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work,  
thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manserv-  
ant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy  
stranger that is within thy gates:  
For in six days the LORD made heaven and  
earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and  
rested the seventh day: wherefore the  
LORD blessed the sabbath day,  
and hallowed it."—Ex. 20:8-11.

A SABBATH SCENE.

drove the beautiful horse, his mind should be carried from the animal to the Giver. When he looked upon the flowers, they should lead his mind to Him who made all these for man's pleasure. And when he looked over all the creation of God's hand, they were all to remind him of the Giver of all things. In order to teach man this lesson, there was still another day in the first seven days' history of the world, which must be devoted to the erection, as it were, of a milestone to lead man from nature to nature's God.

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.” Gen. 2:1, 2.

This brings to view the great memorial institution, made as a blessing to man. And had man always remembered this memorial, there ever would have been but one God worshiped in the world. God rested on the seventh day from all the work which He had done. He did not rest because He was tired or weary, but His purpose was to set an example to man, that he might in like manner devote that day to the worship and honor of Him who created all things. And, in order that this day might be a delight and a pleasure to man, God placed upon the day itself a divine blessing. Then He sanctified it. The word “sanctify” signifies to appoint, or set apart for a sacred and religious use. He did not only appoint, sanctify, and set apart the day, but He also gave us the reason why He did it,—“because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.” Says Christ, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” Man was not a servant to the Sabbath, and he should not keep it from a point of servitude; but it was made for man, to be a blessing, and to add to his pleasure and comfort as he lived in the world.

## CHRIST THE CREATOR.

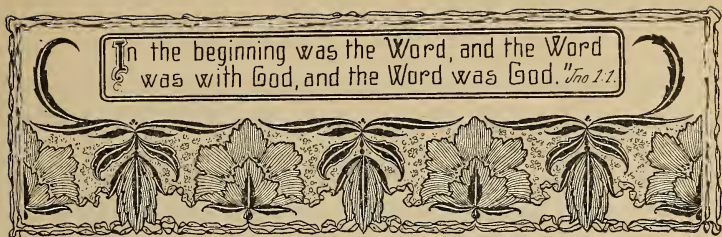
“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds.” Heb. 1:1, 2. The Son of God was the appointed agent of His Father in the creation of the world. It was the Son that spake, and it was done. It was He that “commanded, and it stood fast.” Says the apostle Paul, in Col. 1:14-17, “In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” And once more we read, but this time from the apostle John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.” “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” John 1:1, 2, 14, 3. These scriptures are very explicit concerning the preexistence of our Lord and the part He acted with His Father in the creation of the world. Thus it was Christ that rested from all His work which He had created and made. It was Christ that blessed the seventh day. It was Christ that sanctified the seventh day; it was Christ that made the Sabbath; hence the institution was one of His own divine appointments; and, when He was here upon the earth, He declared that He was Lord of the Sabbath day. John, in Rev. 1:10, tells how he himself was in the Spirit on the

Lord's day, when he received the divine revelations which are recorded in that book. It was the Son of God who led Israel through the wilderness. "This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear. This is He, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us; to whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust Him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into-Egypt." Acts 7:37-39.

The angel here referred to is Michael, the Archangel, whom other scriptures show to be Christ. It was He that spake in thunder tones on Mt. Sinai, and delivered to Moses these precepts on tables of stone, to be placed in the ark, that they might be handed down from generation to generation, and be finally delivered unto us.

This closes the first seven days of the world's history. Some have supposed that these periods of seven days were indefinite as to their length of time; but God said, "The evening and the morning were the first day." Darkness and night were at first the surrounding state of this planet. But as it started on its revolution, the morning was produced as its surface was turned toward the light which God had made. Thus came the evening and the morning to be the first day. God made the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night, and stars also, on the fourth day. Were these indefinite periods, it would throw the whole universe of God's creation out of its regular order, and thus throw God's Word into confusion. It is not the object of the writer to enter into any argument on these questions. God's Word far surpasses all the sophistries of men. And, as we proceed to study the inspired history from the Word, the reasonableness of all its statements will be manifest to the seeker after truth.

Beginning with chapter two, verse four, the Lord introduces a rehearsal of the creation of the world, and in this rehearsal He brings out the details more fully than in the history just passed over. He introduces this in the following language, "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." In this scripture connection (verse 6) He also tells us that there was no rain, but the ground was watered with a mist that came up from the earth. He further states that, after He had created all things, "there was not a man to till the ground." He explains how man was made out of the dust of the ground, and how God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, man thus becoming a living soul, or living person. Now we are informed that there was a garden planted eastward in Eden. Eden was to be a resort for the whole world. He informs us how He made all the trees to grow, also the tree of life, and how man had the privilege of eating of all the trees, except of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and how there were four rivers made to water the different parts of that portion of the earth. In this rehearsal we are furthermore enlightened that it was not good that man should be left alone, but that he should have a companion, meet or suitable for him; and how God took one of Adam's ribs, and made Eve, thus instituting the marriage relation between man and wife, showing how they should be joined together, and, though twain, be one flesh. He tells us of the creation of the beasts, and how Adam named them. The second chapter, from the fourth verse to its close, is a review in detail of the history of creation.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE TEMPTATION AND THE FALL.

THE third chapter of Genesis tells the story of the temptation, fall, and loss of dominion that God had given to man. And in this chapter is the foundation laid of all truth pertaining to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and without a knowledge of the principle portrayed in this chapter, the plan of redemption must have been forever a mystery to the mind of the student, however anxious he might have been to know the truth.

“Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Gen. 3:1-5.

This scripture introduces a conversation between Adam’s companion and the serpent. The serpent was the most subtle (shrewd, intelligent, and cunning) of all the beasts of the field. Satan, who was at this time a fallen angel from the

heavenly world, tried to thwart God's purpose in creating this new planet. He appears to the one whom he could use to the best advantage. As to the manner of the conversation between these two, and the power of communication, it is not stated whether the animal was endued with the power of speech in the beginning, or whether he was used by another power, which enabled him to speak as did Balaam's animal when he spoke to his rider. This we do not know. But we do know that the serpent uttered the first falsehood ever told to man. God had told Adam that they should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; that the death penalty was attached to such a crime, and that they should surely die if they did. The death here spoken of is plainly stated, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die." And upon this falsehood Satan has practised deception throughout the world's history, by telling the world that death is only the gateway to eternal bliss, and that there is no such thing as real death, or cessation of existence. To lead the woman's mind away from the truth, Satan tells her that, instead of this taking place, "then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." In the last statement he did, however, tell the truth, and that was she should know good and evil. Prior to this man had never known evil, nor had he any evil tendencies.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." Verses 6-8.



Innocency is a garment the definition of which is given in the Bible as "the righteousness of saints." This righteousness was complete in the experience of the first man and woman, and during that experience they were clothed with a halo of light, with the glory of God resting upon them; but by their disobedience this was removed, and then they sought garments of their own making. Like all the disobedient, they were expecting condemnation, and were listening to hear when the Lord should approach.

"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And He said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Verses 8-13.

How this conversation between the Lord and the guilty pair reminds us of our personal experience! Instead of being frank and honest, and confessing our guilt, how natural it is to try to excuse ourselves by allowing some one else to bear the responsibility! Adam lays the blame on the Lord for giving him the woman, and when the question was put to the woman, "What is this that thou hast done?" she answered by saying, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." And, as a result of this transgression, the Lord pronounced the curse that should fall upon each. They were all guilty alike, each one responsible for his own actions, all endued with sufficient knowledge and wisdom to know their

duty to their Creator, and hence it was a voluntary act upon their part. God pronounced a curse affecting the whole work of creation, in the following language:—

“And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast harkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” Verses 14-21.

This curse is manifested to-day upon every hand, and, as sin increases, in whatever age of the world, it matters not, these curses will rest heavier on all things created by the hand of the Maker. Here is a principle that will be ever manifested in the world’s history.

The world no longer enjoys its Eden beauty. Thorns and thistles spring up from its soil. A spirit of alienation and rebellion enters the heart of man. A cruel nature enters all beasts; man earns his bread by the sweat of his face; the woman brings forth in sorrow; the serpent crawls upon his

belly; the enmity of all mankind is pronounced upon him; destroying insects are brought forth; poisonous vines and destructive weeds, which hinder man's progress and happiness, abound. All this is the result of disobedience. New provisions must now be made, and what plan must the Lord now devise?

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Verses 22-24.

Man had forfeited his right to the tree of life, that which was intended to perpetuate life in the world. He was driven away from the tree of life, taken out of the garden, and put out into the world to till the ground from whence he was taken. Angels, resplendent with glory like flaming swords, were placed to keep every way to the tree of life, so that man might not longer eat of it, and live forever. Had Adam still enjoyed the privilege of access to the tree of life, he would not have died, and sin would have been perpetuated in the world. Then we could have talked of immortal men. But God only having immortality, the connecting-link between man and immortal life being broken, he could but return to the dust from which he was taken, and be as though he had not been. And, had there been no further provision for man, death would have been an eternal sleep. But the hopeful and interesting part of the story of sinful man is still before us.

#### A SECOND TRIAL FOR LIFE.

Man is God's highest order of created beings. While he was created from the dust, and the Spirit of God was

breathed into his nostrils,—the same Spirit that animated or made alive all other beings (Gen. 7:21, 22, and Job 27:3),—his intellectual power and knowledge were far superior to theirs, and hence he was more responsible for his actions. God did not make man an inanimate creature, but a free moral agent, endued with the power and privilege of choosing his own course, which privilege will never be taken from him. How thankful we ought to be that such is the case! And upon this principle God acted when He put man in the garden, on trial for life. God designed that man should appreciate this great privilege, and profit by it. Had he proved true to God, by obedience, he would still have retained his home and dominion over all the workmanship of God's hand, and so saved a world from ruin, and his own soul from death.

Now a provision must be made whereby man could have another trial for life. But this time it must be by another plan, as the first one was lost. So we read, "But [the gospel, or plan of salvation] is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10. Adam was given a second trial for life as truly as he was given the first trial, but this time it is through the gospel of Jesus Christ. "For God so loved the world, that he gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. This verse tells the whole truth as to the feelings of the Creator toward the creatures He had made. Rather than have the whole world go to ruin, and man be forever lost in eternal death, He gave His own Son to die and pay the penalty, pass through the grave, and bring life and immortality to light through the resurrection of the dead. And man was given hope, which hope is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. And every man and woman in the world to-day is as literally on trial

for life as was Adam in the garden of Eden. They who have Christ have life; they who have not Christ shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon them. This promise of the Redeemer was made in the third chapter of Genesis, in the following language, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Verse 15. This enmity between the seed of the woman, which is Christ, and the serpent, here representing Satan, has existed from that time forward, and will continue to exist until the head of the serpent is finally bruised by his Conqueror, the Seed of the woman. Each one shall have his followers, until finally the great division will take place, when the controversy will be ended.

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief; when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied; by His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death; and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isa. 53:10-12.

Satan is a wily foe. We will learn more of his history later on. But it sufficeth us to say here that the world will never be converted to Christ, for the inspired historian has said, I will "divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong." There will be a vast multitude on both sides of this great question, but Christ will see the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. With these principles laid down, as introduced by the inspired penman, as related to the creation of the world, the fall of man, and

the institution of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we are now prepared to take up the history of man and the work of God as related thereto, as it is revealed in the Word of God, covering the history from generation to generation.

#### CAIN AND ABEL.

“And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.”  
Gen. 4:1, 2.

The birth of these two boys is recorded, as it chronicles the coming into existence of the first descendants of Adam, and from these two begins the history of man as related to the gospel of Christ. One of them, as we learn from the Scriptures, had faith in the gospel, and made his offering of the firstling of the flock, showing his faith in the promised Redeemer. The other made his offering from the fruits of the ground, showing his lack of faith in the promises made. When Cain was born, Eve supposed that he was the promised Seed. How little she realized what the history of the race would be, and the experiences they would pass through during the six thousand years before them!

When the Lord refused to accept Cain's offering, the spirit that was in him was made manifest. “But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.” Verses 5-7. This stirred Cain to wreak vengeance upon his innocent brother; not that Abel had wronged him, but that Abel had chosen to follow Christ, while Cain had chosen to follow Satan. We see from the following quo-

tation where the Saviour got His statement when He told the Pharisees during His ministry that Satan was "a murderer from the beginning":—

"And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And He said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from Thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch; and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch." Verses 8-17.

The division in the human family, which was to last throughout the world's history, began with these two boys. In the beginning of this history there are principles and statements made which are to govern these divisions throughout the world. God Himself designed that this separation should be very marked; and, while they were to live together in the world, they were to be separate and distinct from each other. As their leaders were separate

and distinct, with different principles of government, so must this separation ever be kept up; and in order to establish this division, God placed a mark upon Cain. As He gave Abraham, later on, the sign of circumcision, a circle cut in the flesh, to separate him from the world, so God here placed a mark upon Cain. Cain and his wife moved to the land of Nod, and there began the history of his descendants. Verses 17-24 give a history of Cain and his descendants, thus establishing this branch of Adam's house.

Then, referring to the closing verses of this chapter, the historian takes up the other line of the descendants of Adam, which represents those governed by a different principle, and who followed a different leader. "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth; for God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos; then began men to call upon the name of the Lord."

Adam lived to the age of nine hundred and thirty years, and then died. Seth lived nine hundred and twelve years. Enos, the son of Seth, lived nine hundred and five years. Canaan lived nine hundred and ten years. Mahalaleel lived eight hundred and ninety-five years. Jared, his son, lived nine hundred and sixty-two years. Enoch, the son of Jared, lived three hundred and sixty-five years, and was translated without seeing death. Methuselah, his son, lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years. Lamech lived seven hundred and seventy and seven years. And Noah, his son, when he was five hundred years old, begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth. This man, with his wife, his three sons, and their wives, were preserved in the ark during the flood, and from them, through their posterity, the world again starts to make its history, as it did from the descendants of Adam. This covers the history of the world for nearly twenty-four hundred years.







*THE FLOOD.*

There is one point just prior to the flood to which we now wish to call attention. The great difficulty has been to keep up the line of separation between those who would serve God and those who would not serve Him. We now read: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. . . . And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6:1-5.

It is the mingling of these classes that destroys spiritual life in the world, and as a result of this intermarriage relation between the sons of God and the daughters of men, the earth was filled with violence, and became so corrupt that God destroyed the world with a flood. "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Verses 11-13.

Men lived to a great age before the flood, and their stature far exceeded that of man in this age of the world. "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." Gen. 6:4.

The lives of Adam, Methuselah, and Shem fully spanned the world's history from Adam to Abraham. Shem, who was born before the flood, lived to see Abraham.

Two and two of all God's creation were carried by the ark to this side of the flood—by twos of all unclean beasts, and by sevens of the clean.

“And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.” Gen. 9:1, 2.

The dominion that was given to Adam in the beginning was now given to Noah, and God also made a promise that He would destroy the world no more by water. This promise was to be a perpetual covenant, and, as a token of this covenant, the bow of promise was placed in the heavens. “And I will establish My covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of My covenant, which I have established between Me and all flesh that is upon the earth.” Verses 11-17.

The three sons of Noah who left the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. “And of them was the whole earth overspread.” Gen. 9:19. This is a very important point

in the inspired history of the world; for the locations chosen by these men, and the names given their colonies or places settled by them, are important points in the study of the future history of the world. This is especially true of the grandsons of Noah.

“Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and unto them were sons born after the flood. The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah. And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.” Gen. 10:1-5.

The lands of the grandsons of Noah are mentioned throughout the world's history, and especially is this true of the lands of Magog, Meshech, and Tubal, as mentioned in the thirty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel. And in order to understand the inspired history or prophecy concerning the latter days, it is necessary to understand or know to what regions these grandsons of Noah emigrated.

The next in order in this chapter is to trace the descendants of Ham. One of his descendants was the mighty hunter, or persecutor of God's people, Nimrod, who became the founder of the Babylonian Empire, over two thousand years before Christ.

Shem was the next in order, and the location of his sons was as follows, “And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar a mount of the east.” Gen. 10:30.

Gomer, the son of Japheth, and the grandson of Noah, located both north and south of the Black Sea, the latter part being now the land of the Turks. Togarmah, another descendant of Noah, located east of Gomer, and southeast of the Black Sea, now the land of Armenia. Meshech settled between Togarmah and the Black Sea. Magog,

another grandson, settled in the land now called Russia. Ashkenaz, the great-grandson of Noah, located south and west of the Black Sea. This is a country lying east of Greece. Tubal was another grandson of Noah. His country was directly east of the Black Sea.

Ham's sons, Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan, located in northern Africa and also in Arabia. Nimrod, as before stated, was the founder of the Babylonian Empire.

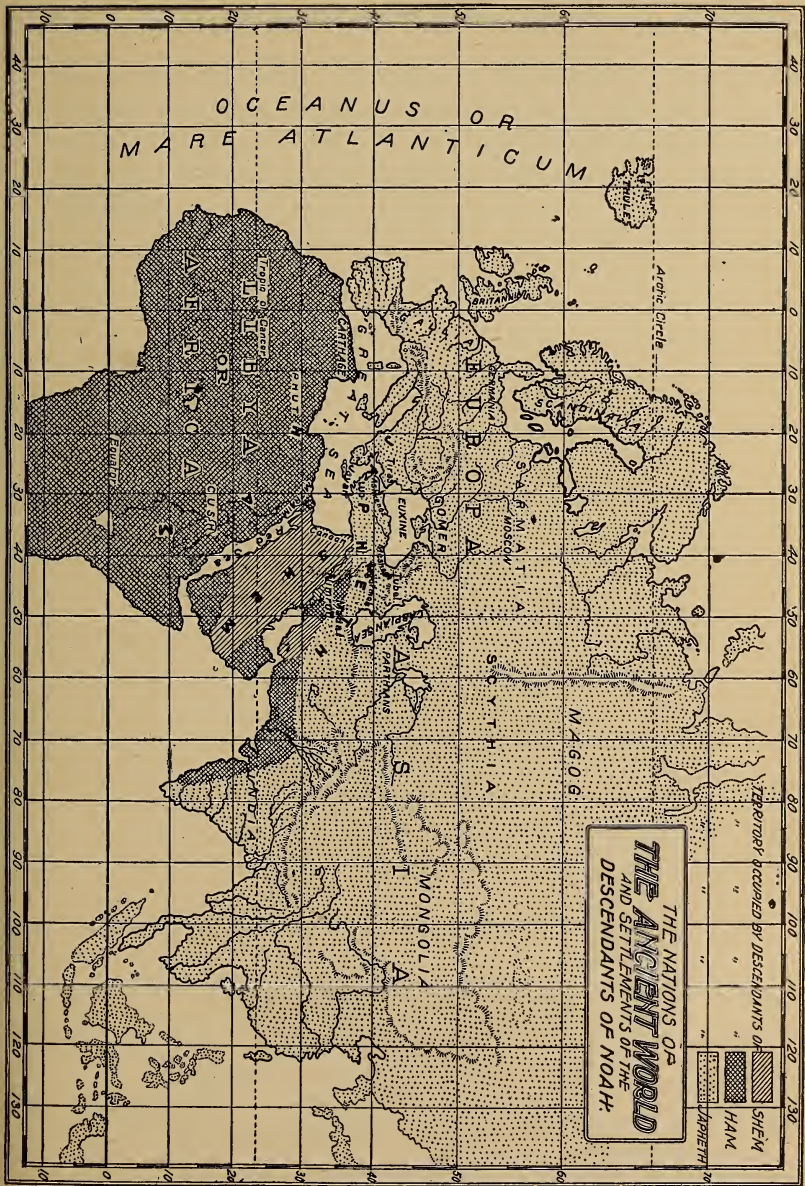
The sons of Shem were Elim, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. These settled in Arabia, adjoining the northern and eastern borders of Palestine.

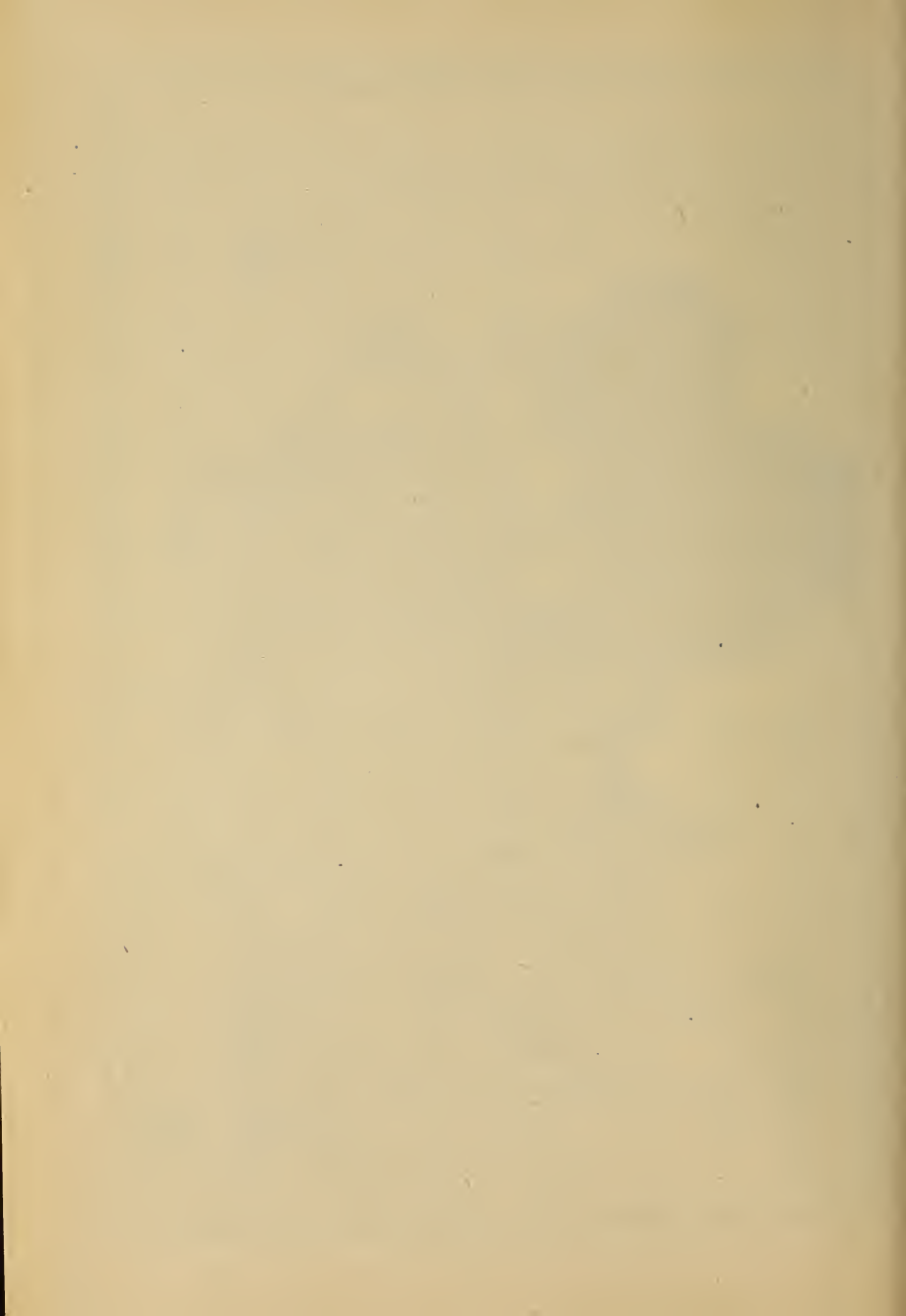
Let the reader study the attached map, and fix these locations in his mind. These names and the countries they represent will be spoken of relative to the closing events of the world's history, and it is for this reason that we give the ancient map representing these countries; for without it we would be left very much in the dark regarding the prophetic statements made in regard to them.

"These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations; and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood." Gen. 10:32.

At this time, says the Bible, the whole land was of one language and one speech. The event which scattered these descendants of Noah was the building of the tower of Babel. And, in order to prevent this foolish move, and to break up the idea the people had of preparing for another flood, the Lord scattered them to the countries mentioned. "So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." Gen. 11:8, 9.

Abram was a descendant of Shem, a grandson of Nahor,







and a son of Terah. Lot was a descendant of Abram's brother, and these two men emigrated from the land of Ur of the Chaldees. Thus we have the history of the world for two thousand years, from the creation to the time of Abraham.



### CHAPTER III.

#### ABRAHAMIC AND MOSAIC COVENANTS.

It will be necessary, in order to get a clear understanding of the theocracy of Israel, that we devote a brief time to a consideration of the covenants with Abraham and Israel. We will first notice the covenant the Lord made with Abraham. The days of Abraham, four hundred years after the flood, were days of evil. The world had again gone into idolatry, and the Lord called Abraham for the purpose of forming a nucleus around which He could again build up a barrier against the inroads of sin.

"Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." Gen. 12:1-5.

Abraham immediately started on the journey, having

perfect confidence in God, that He was able to perform what He had promised, and moved toward the land of Canaan. On his arrival in Canaan, the most favorable reception did not await him. "And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land." Gen. 12:10.

These circumstances would have caused many to have returned, but Abraham and his wife went down to Egypt, and there he met still a great danger, for it was with difficulty that he saved his wife to himself. But, after remaining three years, Abraham returned to Canaan. The Lord had prospered him while in Egypt, but he had not forgotten the Lord's promise, and returned to the land of Canaan. "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." Gen. 13:1, 2.

On returning to Canaan with Lot, his nephew, there was not sufficient sustenance for their herds. Lot pitched his tent towards Sodom, and Abraham remained on the plains. Three years later the Lord again appeared to Abraham, and the conversation took place between Abraham and the Lord as to the promised heir.

"After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed; and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; and He said unto

him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness. And He said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And He said unto him, Take Me a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto Him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years." Gen. 15:1-13.

The Lord now, in order to confirm Abram's faith, and to assure him that Eliezer was not the heir, confirmed the promise by an oath, and, according to the custom of the East, when a covenant was made and confirmed by an oath, the ceremonies here described were gone through. The apostle Paul, in speaking of this, gives the following comment:—

"For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might

have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." Heb. 6:13-19.

Several years had now passed, and the sixteenth chapter of Genesis records a mutual agreement between Sarah and Abram; how they took the matter into their own hands, believing it to be the mind of the Lord, as Sarah was barren; hence Hagar, the handmaid, was chosen to be the mother of the promised seed. But the Lord now appears to Abram, and informs him that Sarah should be the mother.

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect. And I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying, As for Me, behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations I have made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." Gen. 17:1-8.

Five years more have now passed, and yet the promised seed has not appeared. This was becoming a question with the servant of the Lord, and a sure trial of faith, as long years had passed since he left his father's land and settled in this strange country. The Lord talks further

with him upon the question, and assures him that His promises are sure.

“And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. But My covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.” Verses 15-21.

Abraham’s faith almost wavered, and doubts entered his mind, and the record says he laughed when the Lord made the promise, and said to the Lord, “Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!” Ishmael was the son of Hagar, but this did not meet the mind of the Lord. Later the Lord appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door; and He informed him again that Sarah should be the mother.

“And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And He said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind Him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh,

saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And He said, Nay; but thou didst laugh." Gen. 18:9-15.

Man reasons from circumstances and from the things with which he is acquainted. He does not always stop to think that He that made all things is greater than the thing that is made. So God, in trying this aged couple, lets the opportune time pass, according to all natural events. He now manifests His power, and fulfils the promise. After more careful consideration, this aged couple would not give up their faith in God, but believed that what the Lord had promised, He was able to perform. The apostle Paul comments on this as follows:—

“(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations), before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara’s womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.” Rom. 4:17-22.

Years passed by; the child grew to be a young man. The father had learned to love him as his only son by promise; but the Lord was not yet through with Abraham in the test of faith. He appears to him once more, to make the final test.

“And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham; and he said, Behold, here I am. And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father; and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering; so they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. And He said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son.” Gen. 22:1-13.





ABRAHAM JOURNEYING.



This is the record of Abraham's final test, as Paul states, he believed if he took his son's life, God, if necessary, would raise him from the dead. Abraham, without wavering, goes on a three days' journey, to carry out the instruction of the Lord. He had time for meditation. After the preparations were all made, and he raises his hand to make the final blow, then the command is: "Do the child no harm. Now I know thou fearest God." This embraced as much as thirty to forty years of the patriarch's life, from the time he left the land of his nativity till the time the final test was made. This made Abraham the father of the faithful, and through him all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. The seed had a twofold application,—first, to the literal descendants; second, to Christ. Gal. 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

The literal seed was to become a mighty nation in this world; but before they were to be established as a nation, they were to serve four hundred years in Egypt. "And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance." Gen. 15:13, 14.

This covenant made with Abraham was confirmed by an oath of God. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immu-

tability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." Heb. 6:13-19.

This covenant having been confirmed by the oath of God, was as firm and real as if the death of the testator had taken effect. The oath of God put this covenant in force at that time, otherwise it would not have been of force till the death of the promised seed. Gal. 3:16. It was later ratified by the blood of Christ. This covenant is called the everlasting covenant, and was first made with Adam, and consisted of the principles of the plan of salvation, by which every believer is saved. We all become children of God in the same manner as Abraham became a child of God (Gal. 3:11), namely, by faith.

"So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Gal. 3:9. This covenant was made with Abraham as an individual, and so all who enter into this covenant relation with God and are saved must do so as individuals. Abraham was a patriarch, which implies that he was the head of the family, including all who were adopted into his family, as well as his literal seed. Abraham was the head of the theocratic form of government. The condition of the membership of this government was circumcision. This was a circle cut in the flesh, a mark indicating that they had been cut out and separated from the world and joined to the family of Abraham, and that the seed should not henceforth mingle with the world. They were to be connected with God's kingdom on earth, with Melchisedec as king of peace and high priest. "For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the

kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually." Heb. 7:1-3. To this man Abraham paid tithes. Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tithe of the spoil, and thus supported the spiritual kingdom of God.

The territory of this nation in this life was to be in the land of Canaan, which was to be a type of the whole earth in the life, or world, to come. Isaac was the son of Abraham, and Jacob was the grandson. To him were born twelve sons; and these became the heads of twelve tribes. During their sojourn and bondage in Egypt, they lost, to a great extent, their knowledge of the worship of the true God and of His laws.

The time at last arrives for the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham. The psalmist David makes the historical connection from Abraham to Moses as follows: "O ye seed of Abraham His servant, ye children of Jacob His chosen. He is the Lord our God; His judgments are in all the earth. He hath remembered His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations; which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac; and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant; saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; when they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it." Ps. 105:6-12. This also shows that, whatever covenant the Lord may make with Israel as they are led out of Egyptian bondage, it must be in harmony and can not disannul the covenant made with Abraham.

They are led out of Egypt, and brought to the base of

Mount Sinai. The Lord now begins the instruction necessary to bring them back into a true relationship with Himself and to the Abrahamic covenant. Here the Lord made them the following proposition as a nation:—

“Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.” Ex. 19:5, 6.

To this the people agreed. “And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.” Ex. 19:7, 8.

God’s covenant, which they were required to obey, is explained by Moses in the book of Deuteronomy. “And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone.” Deut. 4:12, 13.

Bear in mind the ten commandments were God’s constitution or law of His government before any agreement or covenant is completed with Israel. But when an agreement is completed with Israel, that agreement will be a covenant between God and Israel. This is a point that should be well remembered by the reader, as some are teaching that the covenant made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah is the ten commandments, or God’s covenant. This teaching is as false and as far from the truth as it could possibly be.

To God’s proposition Israel consented. The twentieth

chapter of Exodus gives the law of the ten commandments as uttered by God's own voice on Sinai. In the twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third chapters of Exodus, are divers laws and ordinances, revealing principles and judgments, which grow out of this great law of truth, which were to govern Israel as the civil code of the nation. When these laws were thus given to Moses, He again comes to Israel, as revealed in the twenty-fourth chapter; in order that they might fully understand the agreement they were making, He again lays the whole matter before them.

“And He said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the Lord; but they shall not come nigh, neither shall the people go up with him.

“And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.” Ex. 24:1-8.

This closes the covenant with Israel, which was an outgrowth of the covenant made with Abraham. This covenant is different from the one made with Abraham. It is

made with the whole people; the other was made with an individual. This is a national covenant, with the covenant with Abraham as a basis. Abraham kept God's commandments: "Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." And so Israel are required to do the same. This is to be a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. During Abraham's time the government was administered by one priest and king.

Under the Mosaic covenant they promised to obey the law. To it belonged the Aaronic priesthood, with many priests. The Abrahamic covenant was made with one individual, the Mosaic with the whole nation. The Abrahamic was an everlasting covenant. The Mosaic lasted till the seed should come. The Abrahamic covenant was confirmed by an oath of God, the Mosaic with blood. "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all of the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do."

The next instruction to Israel was "that they bring Me an offering; of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take My offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Ex. 25:2-8.

Thus the Lord introduces, from Exodus 25 to the close of the thirty-first chapter, the remedial typical system for sin,—the sanctuary service, the institution of the priesthood, the erection of the tabernacle, and all the offerings connected with it. As the theocracy was both civil and



religious, both systems became a part of the Jewish economy, and it requires all to make up and compose the covenant with Israel. The covenant was first civil in its nature, but a government ruled by God needed the remedial system for sin as well.

Under the Abrahamic covenant the law was written in the heart. Under the Mosaic the law was written on tables of stone, and the laws, ceremonial, civil, and sanitary, governing the nation, in a book. The former was ratified by the blood of Christ, the latter by the blood of bulls and goats. Other points of distinction might be made, but these are sufficient to show the reader a marked difference between the two. Moses was in the mount on the last occasion forty days and forty nights. And as he came down from the mount, the Lord gave him the ten commandments, which was His covenant (not the agreement made between Him and His people), written on two tables of stone. "And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." Ex. 31:18.

During this forty days' communion in the mount, the people began to reason among themselves, saying, "Moses will never return;" and their minds were at once drawn back to Egypt, and to the gods they had served there, and, as recorded in the thirty-second chapter of Exodus, they made a calf to represent their former god, and bowed themselves down to worship it, and said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." They had now broken their covenant with the Lord and turned their hearts back from Him to Egypt.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people; now therefore let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great

nation. And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth Thy wrath wax hot against Thy people, which Thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did He bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from Thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Thy servants, to whom Thou swarest by Thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever. And the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people. And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand; the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables." Ex. 32:9-16.

Moses turned at once to go down to the people. "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing; and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it." Verses 19, 20.

Moses next inquires into the matter of his brother Aaron, asking why they had done this terrible thing. Aaron excused himself by trying to make it appear that it was an accident that the calf came out of the fire as a result of the melting of the gold cast in.

"And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin; and now I will



*MOSES BREAKING THE TABLES OF STONE.*



go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold! Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place which I have spoken unto thee; behold, Mine Angel shall go before thee; nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf which Aaron made.” Verses 30-35.

Moses in this instance was a representative of Christ as a mediator. He stands between the Father and the people, and pleads their cause. As a result of this pleading, the Lord told him to go and lead the people into the land He had promised to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, “unto a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people; lest I consume thee in the way.” Ex. 33:3.

This did not fully satisfy Moses. He was not willing to go unless the breach that had been made upon the part of the people was fully restored, and God’s presence should be with him.

“And Moses said unto the Lord, See, Thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people; and Thou hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me; yet Thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in My sight. Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thy way, that I may know Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight; and consider that this nation is Thy people. And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto Him, If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.

For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in My sight, and I know thee by name." Verses 12-17.

Moses, as a representative of the people, is now fully restored to the favor of the Lord. He makes one more plea to the Lord, by saying, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." The Lord answered and said, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee."

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first; and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai, and present thyself there to Me in the top of the mount. And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount." Ex. 34:1-3.

Moses went into the mount, as he had been instructed, and took the two tables of stone with him. "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. And he said, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us; for it is a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Thine inheritance. And He said, Behold, I make a covenant; before all thy people I

will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the Lord; for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee. Observe thou that which I command thee this day; behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.” “And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And He wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (with the two tables of testimony in Moses’ hand, when he came down from the mount), that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him; and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh; and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face shone; and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.” Ex. 34:6-11, 28-35.

Reconciliation now being complete, and the breach being fully healed, the Lord begins again with the thirty-fifth chapter of Exodus, and continues till the close of the book, giving further instructions concerning the sanctuary service, the priesthood, and the remedial system. Thus we have a complete history of the covenant made with Israel as a nation, as recorded in the book of Exodus.

Now the question may arise, Why was the Mosaic covenant made with Israel at this time?

The answer is clear: The Mosaic covenant was for the purpose of educating Israel and bringing them back to the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. Paul clearly states that this covenant could not disannul the covenant made with Abraham. "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise." Gal. 3:15-18.

Then, if it could not disannul the former, it must have been for the purpose of bringing them back to it. It could in no sense be opposed or contrary to it, but merely to establish the former. Remember, then, that the Mosaic covenant was to take the place of a teacher, to bring Israel to the Abrahamic covenant, where they would accept of God by faith, as did Abraham.

The giving of the ten commandments on Sinai did not change the nature of the law as it previously existed, but it did serve to make a deep impression on Israel concerning the true God. The tabernacle service, the Aaronic priesthood, and the law governing the sacrifices, in all the various forms; did impress them with a wonderful lesson regarding the priesthood of Melchisedec, to which the true tabernacle service pertained.

There was a special purpose why the law was spoken in such grandeur, and why it was written on tables of stone. This purpose is plainly stated by the inspired penman:



“And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee forever. . And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord.” Ex. 19:9.

Then, after the Lord had spoken to the people, it made such a wonderful impression on their minds that “they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.” Ex. 20:19, 20.

The apostle Paul takes up this matter, and gives us the real purpose of the Mosaic covenant as it existed, and why it was instituted. No new feature in the plan of salvation was instituted, and no change had been made from the principles involved in the Abrahamic covenant; but the lessons involved in the Abrahamic covenant were all illustrated and drawn out in actual service before the people.

“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this Man have somewhat also to offer. For if He were on earth He should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law; who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle; for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.” Heb. 8:1-5.

The national laws served as an important lesson for Israel in regard to that government, which was the kingdom of God. Hence, this covenant, and especially the law in

the book of the covenant, and the divine service connected therewith, were designed to serve as a teacher, to bring them to a knowledge of faith in the Abrahamic covenant. So Paul says in Galatians:—

“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” Gal. 3:19-24.

This covenant was made, in addition to the Abrahamic covenant, to instruct Israel in the way of God. That is, it served to impress upon their minds not only their need of a Saviour, but also the gracious promise of the Lord in the Abrahamic covenant to provide for them a Redeemer, and so served to bring them to Christ.

By following Israel in their deliverance, and considering the circumstances which they were in, it will lead us to the true principles involved in the formation of the Mosaic covenant. They had seen God's power in the preservation of the first-born of all their children, the miracles of the ten plagues poured upon the Egyptians, their deliverance at the Red Sea, and the destruction of the Egyptian host. This taught them lessons of love and confidence in the God of Israel. Now, as they came to Sinai, they were not hypocritical in their acceptance of God's propositions, but, as a new believer now comes to the Lord, they, in all

sincerity, agreed to keep God's commandments; but they were not aware of their human weakness. When they made this agreement with the Lord, they did what was right, and the only thing in justice they could do; hence their education must be step by step. After they failed to carry out their promise, they were sad, and could not hope for God's favor. Now was the Lord's opportunity to reveal to them the Mediator for sin. This He did in the introduction of the typical remedial system, having it all illustrated as a picture, or object-lesson, as shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings and sanctuary service and Aaronic priesthood, all of which represented Christ and His work in the heavenly temple above. These thoughts are so clearly expressed by the author of the book "Patriarchs and Prophets" that we here take the liberty to quote:—

"But if the Abrahamic covenant contained the promise of redemption, why was another covenant formed at Sinai? In their bondage the people had to a great extent lost the knowledge of God and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. In delivering them from Egypt, God sought to reveal to them His power and His mercy, that they might be led to love and trust Him. He brought them down to the Red Sea, where, pursued by the Egyptians, escape seemed impossible, that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then He wrought deliverance for them. Thus they were filled with love and gratitude to God, and with confidence in His power to help. He had bound them to Himself as their deliverer from temporal bondage.

"But there is a still greater truth to be impressed upon their minds. Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law, and their need of a Saviour. *All this they must be taught.*

“God brought them to Sinai; He manifested His glory; He gave them His law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience. ‘If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then . . . ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.’ The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law, and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, ‘All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.’ They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now, by faith and love, they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.”—*Pages 371, 372.*

The condition of this people in the wilderness was far different from that of the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees in the days of Christ, they believing that all light and wisdom were hid with them. But Israel in the days of Moses, as learners, and loving the Lord, were desirous of doing His will, and were being taught lessons of trust and acceptance of Jesus Christ by faith, as revealed in the Abrahamic covenant. The doing away with this covenant or system of education, in all its kindergarten illustrations, as pertaining to the ark, the sanctuary service, and its priesthood, no more does away with the underlying principles it represented than does the breaking of a picture do away with the substance it represents.

The Abrahamic covenant was there, ready for all, as soon as they saw their need and accepted the Lord by faith. Many, no doubt, had enjoyed these blessings since the days of Abraham, and still were enjoying them, but the multitude were not. Circumcision was still retained for the same purpose for which it was given. This was the outward mark or token. The Sabbath was the spiritual sign of the covenant of grace.

“Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” “And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God. Notwithstanding, the children rebelled against Me; they walked not in My statutes, neither kept My judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted My Sabbaths; then I said, I would pour out My fury upon them, to accomplish My anger against them in the wilderness.” Eze. 20:12, 20, 21.

Both are required to be observed by all. Circumcision was of the heart and the spirit, under the Abrahamic covenant, as well as outward in the flesh. All these entered into the spiritual rest of the Sabbath, as well as its outward observance. The Abrahamic covenant was ratified at the cross. Thus far it would seem to the reader that the Abrahamic covenant was before the first, or the Mosaic, covenant. In the comparison which I have just made, it is. We must not therefore confound it with what is called the first or old covenant in the Bible. The covenant made with Abraham, or the everlasting covenant, first made with Adam, then with Abraham, is never spoken of as the first or old covenant. The expressions used by Paul,—the old and new covenants,—are used from different standpoints entirely. Let the reader first fix in his mind whom Paul is talking about. It is Israel, as they come out of Egypt.

The first or old covenant was made with them as a people. Now that ended or vanished away. He taketh away the first made with them,—the Mosaic,—that He may establish the second,—another or subsequent covenant made with them. When the Mosaic covenant had filled its purpose as a teacher, with its sacrificial offerings, which pointed to Christ, it ended. But the Abrahamic covenant still remained, and was incorporated into and constituted the real body or essence of what is called the new covenant, and might therefore properly be considered as the new covenant, constituting, as it did, its very essence, and being with it and in it ratified by the blood of Christ, the blood of the new testament or covenant. Christ, under it, is our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. Israel and Judah, with all mankind, are now to be connected by faith with the Abrahamic covenant. It was ruled by priest and king, and Christ is our Priest and King. We now pay our tithe to the support of the Melchisedec kingdom.

“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For He of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident; for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For He testifieth, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. And inasmuch as not without an oath He was made priest (for those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by Him that said

unto Him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec); by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated forevermore." Heb. 7:12-28.

The question may be further asked: If the Mosaic covenant was to act as a schoolmaster to bring Israel to Christ, and to show them the need of Christ, why is it not needed now? Why would its observance now gender to bondage? We will answer, It is plainly stated in Jeremiah 17 that, if they would obey God, Jerusalem would stand forever. It was disobedience on the part of Israel that broke up the theocracy and the relationship between God and Israel. The time of the crucifixion was never set till after the theocracy had been destroyed. Dan. 9:27. God saw this would be the time when Israel, as a nation, would have filled up the cup of their iniquity. There is not the least doubt but that, had Israel continued true to God, the Mosaic covenant, with its divine services, would have continued as a schoolmaster till the close of probation, and the death of Christ, by His laying down His own life, would have happened at that age of the world's history. "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might

take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father." John 10:17, 18. But that nation being broken up, and Christ having come, the covenant had already been rendered null and void, and to return to its observance now would be a virtual denial of Christ, and hence would gender to bondage.

Now, what relation do we sustain to the Mosaic covenant? We answer, The law, or legal part of its divine services governing the Levitical priesthood, pointing to the death of Christ, is abolished, but we still have the benefit of its typical lessons, as illustrating or instructing us in the grand truths of the gospel system of faith in Christ. But since then we do not need that schoolmaster. We now have the gospel preached to us no longer in type, or promise, but in substance and reality.

Now, in the study of the Mosaic covenant and its service, we learn how they were taught to exercise faith in the Melchisedec priesthood and the tabernacle service. The law and prophets were preached until John; since then the kingdom of heaven is preached. We still teach the lessons taught in the Mosaic covenant, and, in addition, the kingdom of heaven. We do not now teach that the Mosaic law should be practised in the offering of beasts, but only to show why it was observed. These things serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, and so we now teach it. The moral law, which was not abolished, teaches us the need of Christ to wash away our transgression, by showing us a knowledge of our sins and instructing us in the righteousness of Christ.

So, taken as a whole, the Mosaic covenant was but an educational system; so says Paul. The Scriptures were written for our learning. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our



admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Cor. 10:11. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15:4.

There is a vast difference between the covenant which was abolished and the Old Testament Scriptures. The latter are not abolished, and we hope that no one will make the mistake of thinking they are. The everlasting covenant is called the covenant of peace. "Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore." Eze. 37:26. "And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the Man whose name is The BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between Them both." Zach. 6:12, 13. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." Heb. 13:20.

The other scriptures show clearly that the everlasting covenant made with Abraham, with Melchisedec as high priest, is the same covenant, in principle and essence, that was made with Abraham by Jesus Christ, and is here called the new covenant. "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Heb. 12:24. This

counsel between the Father and Son was held immediately after the fall. This covenant is ever called the everlasting covenant, confirmed by an oath of God to Abraham, and was ratified by the blood of Christ.

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Matt. 26:26-28.

Thus we see that the whole system of the Mosaic covenant was a system of education, to bring Israel to a knowledge of God and to the plan of salvation through Christ, as revealed in the Abrahamic or everlasting covenant. The ten commandments, as engraven in stone, showed them their need of divine power in order that they might be able to live out in their lives that which they could not do in their own strength. It revealed to them their imperfect characters, and showed them that they were sinners before God. The sacrificial system, with its Aaronic priesthood, was a typical remedial system for sin. The real remedy for sin is found alone in the Melchisedec priesthood. These divine services served as a schoolmaster, or teacher, to bring them to Christ. And, while these legal services of the Aaronic priesthood are abolished, we still have the lesson recorded in the written Word, to be used for our instruction and learning, thus leading our minds to the same high priest and the heavenly sanctuary above.

This thought can not be too well understood, namely, that the Mosaic economy, as developed under the covenant made at Sinai, was a thorough educational system. It was not all a type or shadow, in the sense that the law governing the priesthood, and especially the sacrificial offerings, were; but the whole system, however, as a picture, represents the true substance, representing the Melchisedec

priesthood, the sanctuary, the antitypical judgment, the ark of God, as they all exist in heaven above. With this thought, we are prepared to study the question from a New Testament standpoint.

“But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.” Heb. 8:6-13.

The above is a comment of the apostle Paul on a prophecy uttered by Jeremiah six hundred years before Christ. Jeremiah lived at the time of the captivity, at which period of the world the time was set by the prophet Daniel when Jerusalem would be destroyed and the crucifixion would take place; hence he contrasts the new covenant and the theocracy under which they then lived, and which established them as a nation. When the nation would

break up, the only change would be that they would be subject to the Abrahamic covenant alone. First, he says the new covenant would be established upon better promises. Second, it would be made with the same people. He then states in what particular the difference would be: "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest."

All that are in the new covenant shall know the Lord. That was true in Abraham's day, as before shown. The Abrahamic covenant was made with individuals, and a man must know the Lord before he could be in that covenant; but that was not true in the Mosaic covenant. By the system of teaching then introduced, they were led to know the Lord, for its purpose was to both govern them civilly and to teach them, through the typical remedial system, how to come to Christ. Hence the new covenant is upon better promises. First, in the old, the law of ten commandments was written upon stone. In the new, it is written in the heart. In the old, the priesthood was subject to death; in the new, He ever liveth to make intercession for us. In the old, the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin; in the new, the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanseth from all sin. Under the old, there was no pardon from sin, only through the new. In the new alone is found pardon. In the old was the earthly tabernacle; in the new is the heavenly sanctuary. In the old was the ark of the covenant; in the new is the real ark. In the new is the true ark in the most holy place. Rev. 11:19. In the old, the day of atonement occurred once a year; in the new, once in the end of the world for all. Thus the new was as much better as the substance than the picture which represents it. In the old, the man that doeth them shall live in them. In the new, not the hearers of the law shall be just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justi-

fied. Under the old, the condemnation of the law is over the heads of the guilty. Under the new, pardon is granted. This contrast is taken up by the apostle Paul, as a contrast between the two ministrations or the services attending them—each one of these covenants as ministered by the ministry. The church at Corinth, which the apostle had raised up, had been greatly troubled by Judaizing teachers, who opposed the doctrine of the new covenant, and tried to persuade the Corinthian brethren to trust in the ceremonies of the Mosaic covenant as a means of salvation. It never had been a means of salvation, except as an educator, but their minds had become so darkened as to the real object that they could see nothing but salvation in the mere ceremony, and hence it only became more of a bondage than liberty to them. They had been so influenced as to doubt Paul as to whether he was really a true minister or not. Paul thus introduces the question:—

“Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men; forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward; not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” 2 Cor. 3:1-6.

Paul at once appeals to the Corinthian brethren themselves as the evidence of his true apostleship. Their own experience would tell them as to the work performed. They were living epistles, written not with ink, as Moses wrote the book of the covenant, but with the Spirit of the

living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. Under the old covenant the demonstration was outwardly written upon material which the people could see; but the ministration of the new covenant had written the divine principles not in letters, on material, but with the Spirit of God in the fleshy tables of the heart. This was a personal appeal from which there was no escape. The apostle made no claim as to his own sufficiency or power to do this work, but gave God the glory, who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament (covenant), not of the letter (of the old covenant), but of the spirit (of the new covenant); for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

“But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.” 2 Cor. 3:7-9.

The apostle in the above verses continues the contrast between these two ministrations and the glory attending each service. The ministration of the old covenant, with just the simple letter, was death and condemnation to the hearer; for, as Paul says in Romans the third chapter, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” Rom. 3:19. Notwithstanding the fact that it condemned all who heard its ministration on Mount Sinai, as all were guilty, yet Moses saw in it the justice and righteousness of the law, until the righteousness of Christ was reflected, until the shekina rested upon his face. This manifestation the Jews had taken as an evidence that sal-

vation was in the law. They did not see Christ, the author of the law. We will see presently that there is another glory witnessing to the other ministrations, that will even excel that which attended the ministration of God's covenant, which glory rested on the face of Moses. So Paul says: "If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelte. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." 2 Cor. 3:9-11.

Some have supposed that that which was done away was the law which was written in stone, but that could not be the case, for the apostle says it was not written on stone in the new covenant; but it was in the tables of the heart, and written there by the Spirit of God. No, it was not the law, but it was the ministration of the old covenant, with the glory that attended that service; and it was only done away to be excelled by better ministration, and of a glory that would far exceed the ministration of the old covenant. Says the apostle, "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech." 2 Cor. 3:12.

It was the ministration that was abolished, and the Jews were blinded. "But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." Verses 14, 15. This blindness was not only upon the eyes of the Jews in the days of Moses. Paul says that even unto this day their eyes are blinded; and we might safely add that, even unto this our day, not only the Jews, but the Gentiles, are blinded unto this our day, in the reading of the Old Testament. They do not see that the old covenant was an educational system, to lead them to Christ and the writing of the law, which was

upon tables of stone, to be written now in the fleshy tables of the heart by the Spirit of God.

He proceeds to give the remedy: "Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. 3:16, 17. Paul says when it shall turn to the Lord (that is, the heart, mentioned in verse fifteen), then the veil shall be taken away. It is only those that hunger and thirst after righteousness that shall be filled. The natural heart does not desire the truth. That individual will remain in darkness. But if the Spirit of the Lord writes the law in the heart, the condemnation of death is removed, and there is liberty.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Verse 18. Paul says, But we (those who accept Christ) with open face (the heart turns to the Lord) see the object and the lesson taught by the glory attending the ministration of the old covenant. We are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus we have the contrast in clear, unmistakable words, as written by the inspired penman, representing the ministration and glory attending the two covenants. The latter glory was especially manifested on the day of Pentecost, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, where three thousand souls were converted and brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, under the ministration of the Abrahamic covenant. We have the writings of another that so clearly teach the lesson taught by the apostle in this chapter that we take the liberty to quote:—

#### THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST IN THE LAW.

"The greatest difficulty Paul had to meet arose from the influence of Judaizing teachers. *These made him*



much trouble, by causing dissension in the church at Corinth. They were continually presenting the virtues of the ceremonies of the law, exalting these ceremonies above the gospel of Christ, and condemning Paul because he did not urge them upon the new converts.

“Paul met them on their own ground. ‘If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious,’ he said, ‘so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.’

“The law of God, spoken in awful grandeur from Sinai, is the utterance of condemnation to the sinner. It is the province of the law to condemn, but there is in it no power to pardon or to redeem. It is ordained to life; those who walk in harmony with its precepts will receive the reward of obedience. But it brings bondage and death to those who remain under its condemnation.

“So sacred and so glorious is the law that, when Moses returned from the holy mount, where he had been with God, receiving from His hand the tables of stone, his face reflected a glory upon which the people could not look without pain, and Moses was obliged to cover his face with a veil.

“The glory that shone on the face of Moses was a reflection of the righteousness of Christ in the law. *The law itself would have no glory, only that in it Christ is embodied.* It has no power to save. *It is lusterless only as in it Christ is represented as full of righteousness and truth.*

“The types and shadows of the sacrificial service, with the prophecies, gave the Israelites a veiled, indistinct view of the mercy and grace to be brought to the world by the revelation of Christ. To Moses was unfolded the signifi-

cance of the types and shadows pointing to Christ. He saw to the end of that which was to be done away when, at the death of Christ, type met antitype. He saw that only through Christ can man keep the moral law. By transgression of this law, man brought sin into the world, and with sin came death. Christ became the propitiation for man's sin. He proffered His perfection of character in the place of man's sinfulness. *He took upon Himself the curse of disobedience.* The sacrifices and offerings pointed forward to the sacrifice He was to make. The slain lamb typified the Lamb that was to take away the sin of the world.

"It was seeing the object of that which was to be done away, seeing Christ as revealed in the law, that illumined the face of Moses. *The ministration of the law, written and engraved in stone, was a ministration of death.* Without Christ, the transgressor was left under its curse, with no hope of pardon. *The ministration had of itself no glory, but the promised Saviour, revealed in the types and shadows of the ceremonial law, made the moral law glorious.*

#### THE JEWISH ECONOMY REVEALED CHRIST.

"Paul desires his brethren to see that the great glory of a sin-pardoning Saviour gave significance to the entire Jewish economy. He desired them to see also that, when Christ came to the world, and died as man's sacrifice, type met antitype.

*"After Christ died on the cross as a sin-offering, the ceremonial law could have no force. Yet it was connected with the moral law, and was glorious.* The whole bore the stamp of divinity, and expressed the holiness, justice, and righteousness of God. And if the ministration of the dispensation to be done away was glorious, how much more must the *reality* be glorious, when Christ was revealed, giving His life-giving, sanctifying Spirit to all who believe?

“Paul declared: ‘Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech; and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished; but their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.’

“The Jews refused to accept Christ as the Messiah, and they can not see that their ceremonies are meaningless, that the sacrifices and offerings have lost their significance. The veil drawn by themselves in stubborn unbelief is still before their minds. It would be removed if they would accept Christ, the righteousness of the law.

“Many in the Christian world also have a veil before their eyes and heart. They do not see to the end of that which was done away. They do not see that it was only the ceremonial law which was abrogated at the death of Christ. They claim that the moral law was nailed to the cross. Heavy is the veil that darkens their understanding. The hearts of many are at war with God. They are not subject to His law. Only as they shall come into harmony with the rule of His government can Christ be of any avail to them. They may talk of Christ as their Saviour; but He will finally say to them, I know you not. You have not exercised genuine repentance toward God for the transgression of His holy law, and you can not have genuine faith in Me, for it was My mission to exalt God’s law.

#### THE MORAL LAW A TRANSCRIPT OF CHRIST’S CHARACTER.

“The moral law was never a type or a shadow. It existed before man’s creation, and will endure as long as God’s throne remains. God could not change nor alter

one precept of His law in order to save man; for the law is the foundation of His government. It is unchangeable, unalterable, infinite, and eternal. In order for man to be saved, and for the honor of the law to be maintained, it was necessary for the Son of God to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin. He who knew no sin became sin for us. He died for us on Calvary. His death shows the wonderful love of God for man, and the immutability of His law.

“The law and the gospel are in perfect harmony. Each upholds the other. In all its majesty the law confronts the conscience, causing the sinner to feel His need of Christ as the propitiation for sin. The gospel recognizes the power and immutability of the law. ‘I had not known sin, but by the law,’ Paul declares. The sense of sin, urged home by the law, drives the sinner to the Saviour. In his need, man may present the mighty arguments furnished by the cross of Calvary. He may claim the righteousness of Christ; for it is imparted to every repentant sinner. God declares, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in nowise cast out.’ ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’”

There is still another epistle that Paul wrote, namely, the epistle to the Galatians. This is written under similar circumstances to the one written to the Corinthians. The Judaizing teachers followed the apostle to all these Gentile churches, and, with a zeal that would have been commendable in a better work, they endeavored to overthrow the gospel in every place it had been planted. These teachers came and taught the Galatian church that they could not be justified through Christ, but that they were justified by the works of the law, and, except they were circumcised and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved. Paul replied in the following language, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into

the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." Gal. 1:6, 7.

Paul introduces the question of justification by faith in the following manner, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. 2:16.

A violated law never justifies any one. Its province is only to condemn and to show man his need of justification. So Paul continues: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for, The just shall live by faith. And the law

is not of faith; but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. 3:1-14.

Jesus, as a sin-pardoning and a sin-offering Saviour, had been clearly set before this church by the apostle. The plan of salvation had all been explained; but they had become bewitched, and Satan had blinded their eyes, and, like many to-day, they could not discern the province that the righteous law held as regarding its violators. Who could ever think for a moment, unless he was bewitched, that a just law could justify a transgressor? We repeat, It is the province of law to condemn and bring men under its condemnation. It is the province of Jesus Christ to die, and pay the penalty, and to offer pardon to all transgressors, so they can be justified through Jesus Christ. "The just shall live by faith." They had begun right, by the Spirit of God writing the law in their hearts. He asks them some hard questions, whether they received the Spirit by the works of the law or the hearing of faith.

Paul next calls their attention to God's dealings with Abraham, and to the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham;" and in him, says the apostle, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; "for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse;" and "that no man is justified by the law . . . is evident; for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles," "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

After making this argument, the apostle continues, by showing them that the Mosaic covenant was simply given, in addition to the Abrahamic covenant, as a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. The law referred to in the following scriptures was the law system drawn out in characters, forming in one whole the Jewish economy, constituting the covenant made at Sinai, and carried out in its illustrative services; the whole was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ; but when faith is come, they are no longer under the schoolmaster. This, we will show, is fully brought out, and is the sense of the following scripture:—

“Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that

faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:15-29.

This language needs but little comment. As elsewhere shown, the Mosaic covenant was given in addition, not added, to the Abrahamic, but added as a means of enabling them to come and enjoy the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. This system of education the apostle continues to show, by stating how long it should continue, in the following chapter. "Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world; but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Gal. 4:1-7.

The time appointed in verse 2 is the time of the crucifixion. This was appointed by Daniel in connection with the long prophetic period of two thousand three hundred days; hence they were servants of that system, till the time appointed. But when the fulness of the time was come, Christ came and redeemed them from it. Hence they are no more servants, but sons, and heirs of God through faith.



The apostle in this chapter draws another illustration to represent these two covenants, that of the son of a bondmaid, which was Hagar, the other the son of a free woman, which was Sarah. The latter was Abraham's wife, and the former her handmaid. Hagar's son was born after the flesh; Sarah's son, Isaac, was a child of Providence and promise. These two women are taken as a figure, representing the two covenants—Hagar to represent Sinai, Sarah to represent Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all. The covenant at Sinai gendereth to bondage. The ministration of condemnation brought under bondage those that heard it. The ministration of the new covenant gives life to those that accept it; hence one is free; the other is bond. And especially did the Sinaitic covenant gender to bondage in Paul's day, for they trusted in its ceremonies and justification by the works of the law, and, failing to see Christ as the object of it all, it, in the fullest sense of the word, gendered to bondage. Thus we see in every New Testament comment upon this question the same principle is brought out.

But the opposers of God's law will say, "Were not the tables of the covenant a part and parcel of the Mosaic covenant?" We answer, In the sense which the apostle speaks of them in Hebrews the ninth chapter, they were, but not in the sense that the law that they represent was done away. "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant." Heb. 9:1-4.

That the ordinances of the Mosaic covenant were divine, there was no question. Every feature of that covenant had the stamp of divinity, for every feature represented the real substance of that which is divine. Yet, says the apostle, in the eighth chapter of Hebrews, if that covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. It represented the perfect, but it was not "the essence of the things itself." The sanctuary was not the true sanctuary, but simply a pattern. The priesthood, says the apostle, "served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." The ark was a representative of the ark in heaven; the tables of the covenant were simply a copy, and represented that which must be in the heart and become a part of the being of one's self and a representative of the law in the heavenly temple. The loss of the ark and the tables six hundred years before Christ came was no greater loss than if a person should lose a special copy of the Scriptures, which are given to teach us the way to God. No one believes that the tables of stone or the character of the letters written on it will save any one, unless the thing expressed on those stones becomes part and parcel of one's self, and that can only be by the writing of those divine principles, by the Spirit of God, on the heart of the individual. The sacrificial law, pointing forward to Christ, met its antitype at the cross in the body of Christ. But the moral law, as it was engraven on stone, can never meet its object or design until it is written in the heart of the believer, and points him to the rule of God's government as deposited in the heavenly temple above.

We would call attention to a thought regarding the manner in which the Mosaic covenant passed away. Says the apostle Paul, "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." The expression conveys the thought of a period of time, not instantaneous action. He gives us the reason why this is so in the eighth chapter of Hebrews, "For finding fault with them."

Through the many rebellions and transgressions, Israel was finally taken captive to Babylon, six hundred years before Christ. The fault was with Israel. Their rebellions caused the breaking up of the Jewish economy. When they went into captivity, the civil law of the theocracy ended; they became subjects to earthly governments, and were governed by the laws of the same. The ark also disappeared. The spirit of prophecy largely departed from the church. Decay set in, as expressed by the apostle. As time rolled on, it waxed old. The sacrificial law met its antitype in the crucifixion of Christ. The sanctuary service ceased. The Jews rejected the gospel. The apostles turned to the Gentiles. Says Paul, "It vanished away." Thus ended the educational system; but, as before stated, we have it now in the written Word, and the lessons are as profitable to us as they ever were in the days of Israel. Paul's argument to the Jewish people in the book of Hebrews is largely based on the sanctuary service and the change of priesthoods. In the book of Galatians he met the argument that they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. It seems that the church of Galatia had imbibed the doctrine, through the Judaizing teachers, that the whole law system was to be observed in its ceremonies; but when we come to the book of Romans, there the question is discussed whether a man can be justified by the ten commandments, or whether he must be justified through Christ. This is clearly shown by various expressions in the book, as the apostle quotes certain precepts of the ten commandment law to show what law he is speaking of. This is brought out especially in the second and seventh chapters. Paul speaks to the Jews thus:—

"(For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves. Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience

also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another); in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest His will, and approvest the things which are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?" Rom. 2:14-22.

The apostle in this argument shows that a Gentile who has the law in his heart, and keeps it, is more acceptable with God than the Jew who has it in outward form (even on tables of stone), and does not keep it, though he may know the will of God as revealed in the law, and may boast of his great blessings. He then quotes the seventh and the eighth commandments of the decalogue, to show to what law he refers. The Jews were great sticklers for the outward form, but obedience to its precepts was not manifested. He continues his argument thus:—

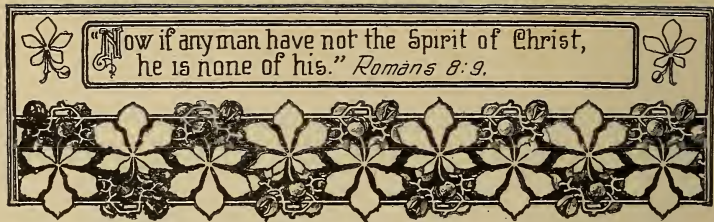
“For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written. For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew,

which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. 2:24-29.

By this we see that a man that is justified by faith, whether he be Jew or Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, is a keeper of the divine precepts of the decalogue. In the apostle's closing argument in the third chapter of Romans we read, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Verse 31.

The apostle is now prepared to refer to the Abrahamic covenant. "What shall we say then that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." Rom. 4:1-5, 11.

This sets the whole matter of the covenants clearly before us, and we feel that he who studies these scriptures, as given, bearing upon this question, will have no difficulty in discerning the relation that each covenant sustained to the other. There are many more texts that might be used, but we believe sufficient has been presented to make the question plain to the mind of the student.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE THEOCRACY OF ISRAEL.

THE practical definition of a theocracy is a government ruled by God. There is a period of about nine hundred years, beginning with Moses, and ending with the Babylonish captivity, six hundred years before Christ, in which such a government existed. During this time God was the direct ruler of His people, both in civil and religious affairs.

The establishment of such a government was contemplated in the call of Abraham, and was also foreshadowed in the following promise: "And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance." Gen. 15:13, 14.

Moses was called of God to fulfil this promise, by delivering Israel from Egyptian bondage, preparatory to establishing them as a nation unto themselves, separate from all other people; and God was to be their direct ruler. Forty years before the appointed time of their deliverance, Moses, understanding that God had chosen him for that purpose, and believing that the time had already come, in his own strength undertook to bring it to pass. But, after slaying an Egyptian for oppressing a Hebrew, he was compelled

*MOSES IN THE ARK.*







to flee for his life, and as a result went into seclusion in the wilderness, and there served forty years as a shepherd.

Moses had not yet comprehended the magnitude and greatness of the work. He undertook it in his own strength, relying upon the power of man. The effort was a failure. He must be taught a lesson of dependence upon God, and this was accomplished during his forty years of nomadic life. At the end of this time, the Lord appeared to Moses, as he was watching his father-in-law's sheep. "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And He said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto Me; and I have also seen the oppression where-

with the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt."

Let the reader mark the change that has come over Moses during his forty years' sojourn in the wilderness. "And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And He said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is His name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Ex. 3:11-14.

In the remaining portion of this and the first part of the next chapter, the Lord gives him yet additional evidences, with instructions as to how he must approach the children of Israel. Exodus 4 opens thus: "And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor harken unto my voice; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee. And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And He said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand; that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee. And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his





*MOSES ASKED TO LEAVE EGYPT.*

bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And He said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh." "And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee; and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart." "And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace." Ex. 4:1-7, 10-14, 18.

Thus we have a history of Moses' preparation by the Lord to be the first ruler in the theocracy of Israel. Moses now undertakes the task, not in his own strength, as he did forty years prior to this time, but depending solely upon God and His power to deliver his brethren and to establish His government.

Moses approached Pharaoh as the Lord had directed, showing him by miracles wrought that there was a God of power in the movement. "And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?" The evidences were accumulated, and the plagues increased in severity, until Pharaoh was glad to let them go. Several hundred thousand souls followed Moses as

their leader, and left Egypt. God does work systematically, and never fails regarding the time in which the events are to take place, as we will see. "And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." Ex. 12:41. God had now set His hand to the work. He worketh not as man works. He made manifest His miraculous power, and taught Pharaoh what he might expect if he still refused to let Israel go. God is now the ruler of Israel. Moses and Aaron, and Miriam their sister, are God's mouthpieces. The march is begun. The Red Sea is crossed, and Pharaoh's hosts are drowned. The story of Israel's deliverance and the destruction of Pharaoh's army had gone to the nations of the world, and as other nations came in contact with the Israelites, they realized that there was a power attending this people, and a God leading them that was different from the gods of other nations. The eyes of the world were at that time turned toward them. The Lord now leads the host of Israel to the base of Mount Sinai, and, after instructing the camp to wash their clothes, preparatory to meeting the events before them, the Lord calls Moses up into the mount. This vast multitude must now be instructed in the principles of both moral and civil government. Their minds must be directed to the true God and to the remedy provided by Him for sin. Laws must be given and taught the people. This would naturally necessitate different classifications of laws, which would be varied according to circumstances.

The Lord first declares in His own voice, and writes with His own finger on tables of stone, the ten commandments. The apostle James calls this the royal law (James 2:8), which signifies the kingly, the superior, or higher law of the universe. This law was placed in the ark, which was made especially as a receptacle for it, and is variously

called His name, God's covenant, the constitution of His government, etc., being the basis of all laws which might grow out of the principles therein contained. There was another law given at the same time, but not in the same manner,—a law governing the spiritual services of the people; it pertained to the remedial system provided in case of the transgression of the royal law. This law was written by Moses, as recorded in Ex. 24:4-8, and in Leviticus, and was called "the law of Moses." This remedial law was to govern the services of the sanctuary and the sacrificial offerings, which pointed forward to Christ. It continued in force only till Christ came. It was then taken out of the way and nailed to the cross, as is shown in the New Testament. The royal law of ten commandments still continues in force. There were also given to Israel sanitary laws, governing their mode of living, and setting forth health principles. See Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. These regulated the diet pertaining to clean and unclean beasts, and are the best laws on that question to-day; and those who obey them can testify to their value. God desired His people to enjoy good health. The next division of laws, under the theocracy, was that of the civil laws governing the actions of men in their relations one to another. These laws were for the regulation and punishment of evil-doers in this life, and did not so much concern their duty to God as to each other. In this mixed multitude were people who feared neither God nor man, and therefore laws must be given, with penalties attached, by which to govern such. Hence this code of civil laws. The Lord also provided cities of refuge for violators of the civil law, whither they could flee or be taken for protection until they might have a trial, when, if, for instance, they were found guilty of murder, the penalty was stoning to death. The same was true of adultery, theft, Sabbath-breaking, etc. The principle involved in this code was

“an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.” The theocracy of Israel, with God as a direct ruler, continued nine hundred years, Zedekiah being the last king, nearly six hundred years before Christ. There the civil law, with its penalties, ended; for Israel was taken captive by Babylon, the theocracy was broken up, and the people became subjects of other governments. From that day to this they have been subjected to the civil laws and penalties of the governments under which they have resided.

There was still another law laid down to Israel that would always be manifested with them throughout their history, to wit, the law of blessings and cursings. This law was also on stone, as we read in Deut. 27:1-14: “And Moses with the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day. And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set up great stones, and plaster them with plaster; and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey; as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee. Therefore it shall be when ye be gone over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in Mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster. . . . And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly. And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and harken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do His commandments and His statutes, which I command thee this day. And Moses charged the people the same day, saying, These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan; . . . and



these shall stand upon Mount Ebal to curse. . . . And the Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice, Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord." Then various curses are pronounced in case of violation of any one of the principles laid down in this law.

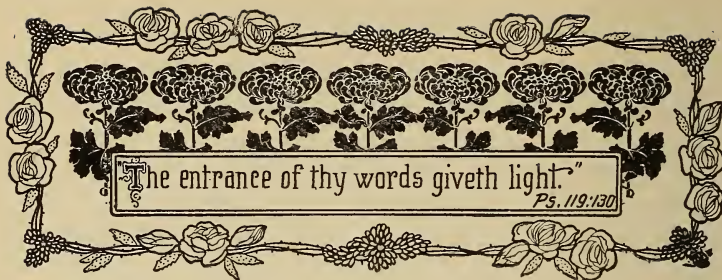
He then continues, in the twenty-eighth chapter, as follows: "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt harken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth; and all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt harken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face; they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways." "The Lord shall establish thee a holy people unto Himself, as He hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee." "And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou harken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God,

which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them.” “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not harken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that” “the Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings whereby thou hast forsaken Me. The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until He have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it. The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed. The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them; and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.” This was fulfilled at the time of the Babylonish captivity. “And thy carcass shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.” This will be fulfilled at the great supper mentioned in Revelation 19. “The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.” This will be fulfilled, with the predictions of Revelation 16, during the seven last plagues. “The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart; and thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways; and thou shalt be oppressed and

spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee." This will be fulfilled in the great battle of Armageddon. Compare Rev. 16:14-16 with Zech. 12:4.

We continue, in Deut. 28:49: "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young." This also applies to the time of trouble. The same power is mentioned in Jeremiah 5. "And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed forever." Deut. 28:46. "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." Deut. 31:24-26.

Thus the blessings and curses are recorded, and their fulfilment will attend Israel throughout the world's history. This law was put in the side of the ark for a witness, as we have just seen from the last text quoted. This law was also written upon stone, but written by man. However, its continuance is parallel in this life with the ten commandments engraven upon the tables of stone. Such is the establishment of the theocracy of Israel. God, through His prophets, was their direct ruler. They were taken out of Egypt. This means not only out of literal Egypt, but out of spiritual bondage as well. They were to be instructed in the principles of right government, and to be given a knowledge of redemption through Christ, and of the true God.

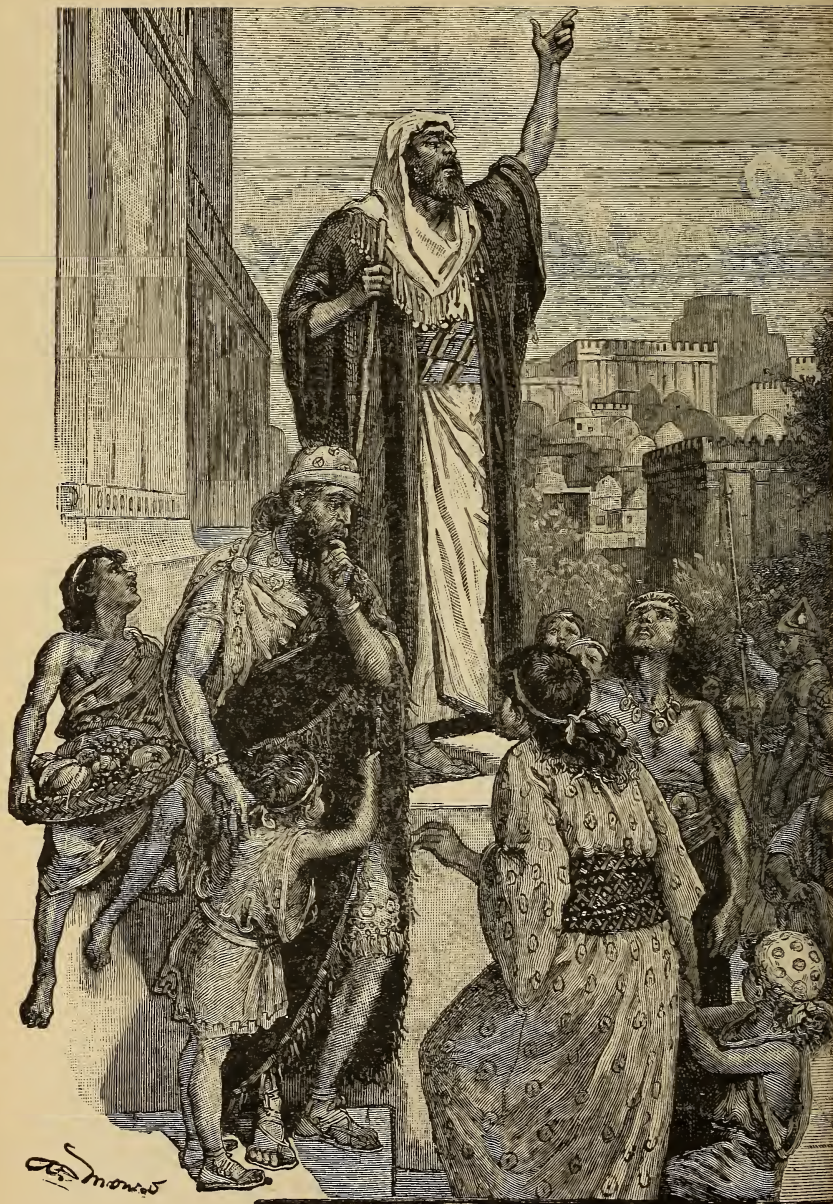


## CHAPTER V.

### PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT.

WE will now notice briefly God's dealing with, and the manifestation of His power in, the government of this mighty nation for the nine hundred years He ruled, especially in regard to the principles laid down in the law of blessings and cursings, noticed in the preceding chapter. The principles here involved will be a marked feature in the closing events of the world's history. In order to understand these events, which are to come to pass near the close of time, the history of Israel must be carefully studied. Paul says that these things were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come, and that they were ensamples unto us. There are two marked features in the government of Israel to which we would call special attention. These, in addition to the law of blessings and cursings, will also be marked features in the closing work of God on earth. One is the ark of God, in which was the law of the ten commandments; the other, the prophetic office. The prophet was the highest officer in authority in the theocratic form of government. In fact, the theocracy upon earth could not exist without the prophet, for the prophet was the mouthpiece of God. In





"THE PROPHET WAS THE ONE LOOKED TO AS AUTHORITY."

all cases of war, or whenever other important instruction was to be given, the prophet was the one looked to as authority. We find, by reading the history of the kings, that even they were entirely subject to the prophet. Parallel in importance with this was the ark, being another essential feature, for in it was the royal law, which was to govern Israel. A cloud covered it by day, and a pillar of fire by night. The moving of the cloud or fire was an indication that the camp was to move. These two features will ever be in the midst of true Israel when they so relate themselves to God that He can be their ruler and guide. The last two features, those of the prophet and of the law in the ark, are pointed out in Rev. 12:17 as the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev. 19:10. These two combined constituted the ensign of Israel, and will ever be manifested as the standard whereby God especially leads and identifies His people.

The true relation of a civil and moral government, as compared with a civil government only, should be well fixed in the mind of the student of God's Word. The latter legislates on the duty of man to his fellow-man alone; the other governs man in both his duty to man and to his Maker. A civil government is ruled by erring man; the theocracy was governed by an infallible God. The latter governs the thoughts of the heart, as well as the act; the other, by outward acts only. The one is a civil kingdom; the other, spiritual and civil. One forgives transgression through a remedial system in the government, and at the same time punishes the transgressor by death under the civil law. The United States Government illustrates the correct idea of a civil government. It was founded strictly as God would have it, a civil government only. The Constitution of the United States says, "Congress shall make

no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The theocracy of God was broken up six hundred years before Christ.

Let it not be forgotten that the civil regulations of God's government ended when the theocracy ended, and the crown and diadem were removed, B. C. 588. Eze. 21:25. The ceremonial laws relating to the remedial system for sin, and pointing forward to Christ, ended at the cross. The sanitary laws given to Israel under this form of government are still good. The moral law, the ten commandments, remains unchanged, and is the basis of the whole government of God. The various laws governing the civil relations and obligations of this government are recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, under the running titles at the top of the pages, "Divers laws and ordinances." The reader should turn and study these, that he may better understand their nature and purpose. This theocracy was not broken up because it was not a good government, nor a true form, but because of the utter refusal of those in office to listen to the voice of the prophet. In Deut. 13 and 18:22 we find the rule by which they were to judge between the true and the false prophet, so that there was no excuse for the course they took. Moses, in his day, was the head of that government, but there were others associated with him. God is a God of order and thorough organization, and as the circumstances demanded, the organization was enlarged and completed.

The advice given to Moses by his father-in-law, Jethro, was incorporated into and formed an important factor in that organization. On learning of the deliverance of the children of Israel, and of their being in the wilderness, Jethro visited the camp. "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people,



he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God; when they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and His laws. And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee; for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Harken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to Godward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God; and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens; and let them judge the people at all seasons; and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge; so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people." Ex. 18:13-25.

Later on in their experience, as the children of Israel murmured against Moses, he complained to God that the burden was more than he could bear, and said to the Lord: "And if Thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray Thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in Thy sight; and let me not

see my wretchedness. And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there; and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone." Num. 11:15-17.

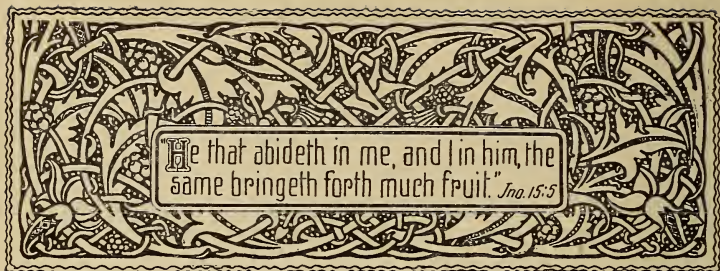
Here is a class of men authorized by the Spirit of God, called by the Lord Himself, and qualified by Him to bear burdens in the government of Israel. Moses gave instruction to those who were first called, as to how they should judge, or bear rule. "Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's; and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it." Deut. 1:16, 17. "Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes; and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Deut. 16:18-20. This completes the organization of the theocracy of Israel, as pertaining to the principles governing the people both civilly and spiritually.

We will now trace their history nine hundred years, till the Babylonian captivity and the breaking up of this form of government. Moses was the leader of Israel forty years

in the wilderness. He subdues the Amalekites; Sihon, king of Heshbon; and Og, king of Bashan, and completes the work of subduing the nations on this side of Jordan. Moses' work is now completed. He rehearses his history before Israel, and gives a review of all their experiences in the wilderness, and lays before them the evidences of God's power during their entire history. Moses also records how he instructed Joshua: "And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto these two kings; so shall the Lord do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest. Ye shall not fear them; for the Lord your God He shall fight for you." Deut. 3:21, 22. He also refers to his experience with the Lord. Moses had taken the glory to himself in smiting the rock, and for that reason the Lord had said he should not go over into the promised land. He relates how he requested of the Lord that he might be permitted to pass over. "I pray Thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon. But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me; and the Lord said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto Me of this matter. Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes; for thou shalt not go over this Jordan. But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see." Verses 25-28. "Now therefore harken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I

command you. Your eyes have seen what the Lord did because of Baal-peor; for all the men that followed Baal-peor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from among you. But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day. Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" "When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of anything, and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God, to provoke Him to anger; I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you." "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, *even in the latter days*, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto His voice; . . . He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which He sware unto them, . . . to drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day." Deuteronomy 4.

“When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, . . . and when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them; neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods.” “Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye harken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which He sware unto thy fathers; and He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee; He will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which He sware unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people; there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.” Deut. 7:1-4, 12-15. These are the judgments, the blessings and cursings, that Moses set before the children of Israel in his last charge, as recorded in the book of Deuteronomy. “And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, Be strong and of a good courage; for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I sware unto them; and I will be with thee.” Deut. 31:23. Thus closes the history of this servant of God, and the burden of God’s government falls upon Joshua, who was chosen in his stead to lead Israel across Jordan into the promised land.



## CHAPTER VI.

### JOSHUA.

JOSHUA was one of the twelve spies, rulers among the people, sent from the wilderness of Paran to search out the land of Canaan. It was he who united with Caleb in the encouraging report, saying of the land, "We are well able to overcome it." Num. 13:30. They stated that it was a good country, and as evidence of its productiveness brought back samples of its grapes and other fruits. "And they came unto the brook of Eschol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs." Num. 13:23. The other spies said that the people who inhabited the land were giants, "and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

Joshua now has an opportunity to show his faith in the report by undertaking the task of leading Israel into the promised land. His policy of government was exactly as that laid down by Moses; in fact, he rehearsed the blessings and cursings that would follow them. He ruled Israel twenty-six years, and by him Israel was led across Jordan into the promised land.

The first thing that Joshua does preparatory to entering the land is to send two spies over to learn the situation. "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; 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." Joshua 2:23, 24. "And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host; and they commanded the people, saying, 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. 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. And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves; for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you. 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. 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. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan; ye shall stand still in Jordan." "Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan. Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man. And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of 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." "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), that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam; . . . and the people passed over right against Jericho. 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." Joshua 3.

Joshua then ordered twelve men chosen from the people to take from the midst of Jordan every man a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, "that this may be a sign among you, that when 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, . . . and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever." "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." "About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the Lord unto battle, to the plains of Jericho. 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." "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, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before." Joshua 4. The Canaanites by this time had become much frightened, so much so "that their heart melted, neither was



there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel." Joshua 5:1.

In passing through the wilderness, the rite of circumcision had been omitted, and all the men of war died who came out of Egypt. They "were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord;" and the Lord had sworn that He would not show them the land. "And their children, whom He raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way." "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 did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day. 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.

"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? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the 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, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." Joshua 5. "And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. 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. 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 the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him." Joshua 6:2-5.

This instruction given by the Lord to Joshua was faithfully carried out; and on the seventh day they encompassed the city seven times. And when they had compassed the city seven times, the priests blew with the trumpets, and down came the wall flat to the ground, so that every man went straight forward from where he was standing, and captured the city and slew the inhabitants. This is a sample of God's manner of warfare. He had promised to fight their battles, and He fights not as man would fight.

"So the Lord was with Joshua; and his fame was noised throughout all the country."

Thus far we have a history of Israel as recorded in the first six chapters of the book of Joshua. Hitherto victory had attended them; but a change comes over the scene. Another city is to be taken, but it is not taken as easily as the first one. For "the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing; for Achan, . . . 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. . . . And the men went up and viewed Ai. And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labor thither; for they are but few. So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men; and they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men; for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim; . . . wherefore the hearts of the people





*JOSHUA BURNING AI.*

melted, and became as water. And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. 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 to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan! O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! 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 wilt Thou do unto Thy great name? And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? 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." Joshua 7:1-11.

Joshua now follows the instruction of the Lord in seeking out the thief. Achan is found. He confesses his sin, and says, "When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it." Verse 21. Achan was punished by death, his effects were all burned by fire, and the camp was cleansed. The eighth chapter continues, "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."

Joshua now has no trouble in capturing Ai. The city is taken and destroyed, and twelve thousand of the men of

Ai were slain. "For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai." Verse 26. "And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them." Verses 34, 35.

Joshua 9: "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 over against Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard thereof; that they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord. And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, they did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. 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. And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a league with you? And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye? 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." "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."

Now it was the duty of Israel to inquire of the Lord concerning this proposition before they made any contract. The gift of prophecy was not only for the purpose of foretelling future events, but to direct them under present circumstances pertaining to the Lord's people. "And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord. 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. And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbors, and that they dwelt among them." Joshua, seeing his mistake, kept his word, and made the best of it, and the Gibeonites were made their servants; but they proved a snare to Israel, as appeared later on in their history.

Five other kings of Canaan, learning of the Gibeonites' league, declared war against the Gibeonites. The latter now called for Joshua's help, as we read in Joshua 10:6, and following: "And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua 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. So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not; for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee. Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night. And the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon. . . . And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon,

that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died; they were more which died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword. Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered 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. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. 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. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord harkened unto the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel."

These kings fled, and took refuge in a cave. The men of Israel stopped the mouth of the cave with huge stones, till after the battle was ended, when they returned and slew the kings. Thus we have another record of how the Lord fights in battle. The greatness of His power is unlimited. For the same God who governed Israel governs the worlds, and He could even command that the sun and the moon stand still in their course until His work is accomplished.

"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 commanded." Joshua 10:40. "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war." Joshua 11:23.

"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 the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant



of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord my God. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's forever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God. 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. 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. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced; if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said. And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance." Joshua 14:6-13.

Here we have a wonderful example of faith brought to view, that of Caleb and Joshua. They had brought back the report that the Anakims were a mighty nation, and powerful in stature and strength, but that, if the Lord was with them, they could go up and possess the land. Caleb, at the age of eighty-five, comes forward and asks that that portion be given him, saying that his strength was as it was forty-five years ago, and that, if the Lord be with him, he could drive them out. The record says that he did drive them out. These principles thus far studied in the history of Moses and Joshua will ever govern God's people, and no system of Christianizing any nation or people can ever be carried on under any other principle than that of right-

eousness and faith. It is very important that all professed Christian people in this age of the world should understand this.

“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; according to the word of the Lord they gave him the city which he asked, even Timnath-serah in Mount Ephraim; and he built the city, and dwelt therein.” Joshua 19:49, 50.

The priests were also provided for with cities and their suburbs. “All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen cities with their suburbs.” Joshua 21:19. “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. 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; 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.” “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; 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; but cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day. 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. 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. Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God. Else if ye

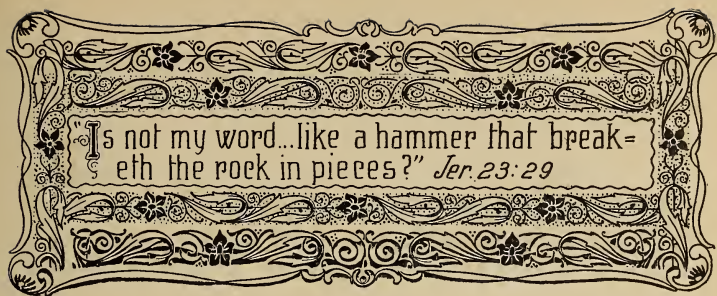
do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you; know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be 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. 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. 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. 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.” *Joshua 23.*

“Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. 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. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods.” “And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord, to serve Him.

And they said, We are witnesses." Joshua 24:14-16, 22.

"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. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which He spake unto us; it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God." "And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in Mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that He had done for Israel." Joshua 24:26, 27, 29-31.

Thus we have the history of Joshua as recorded by the pen of inspiration. He had been with Israel in all their experiences, from the time they left Egypt to his death. His equal in character and faith is seldom found. He thoroughly understood the hidden source of power. God is unchangeable, and the same principles which governed Israel must govern His followers to-day. And as the movements of nations are one of the important features of the last days, let us study the principles here laid down, that we be not deceived in matters claimed to pertain to the things of God, but which in reality do not. By comparing the present movements of nations with these principles, we will soon be able to discern whether the providence of God is in this method of Christianizing or not.



## CHAPTER VII.

### JUDGES.

“Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them? And the Lord said, Judah shall go up; behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.” Judges 1:1, 2. Judah was now chosen to be the foremost tribe of Israel. Verse 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.” Verses 28 and following: “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, Asher, nor Naphtali drive out the inhabitants that were among them, though they became tributary. And the angel of the Lord appeared and upbraided them, reminding them that God had charged them strictly, saying: “Ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars; but ye have not obeyed My voice; why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said,

I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept." Judges 2:1-4.

After the death of Joshua there was a change in the experience of Israel. Verses 11, 12: "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim; 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." Verses 14-22: "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, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. 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. And yet they would not harken 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. . . . 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 unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and He said, Because that this people hath transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not harkened unto My voice; I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died; that through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep

the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not." Judges 3:4-7: "And they were to prove Israel by them [the heathen left among them], to know whether they would harken unto the commandments of the Lord, which He commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites; and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves."

Here we have a vivid description of this important point in Israel's history. The Lord now makes use of these nations to prove Israel's true character. They had been told not to mingle or intermarry with these nations. But they violated this instruction so far that their sons and their daughters were joined in marriage to the heathen; thus the power of heathen influence was too strong; they yielded, and, as a result, they departed from God and forgot His commandments. Here is another point that ought to be equally understood to-day by all Christian people: promiscuous marriages and associations with the world at this time are as sure to lead from God and His truth, as they did in the days of Israel of old. Let all these points be considered by the Lord's people in the study of this important history.

Judges 3:8: "Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years." They again cried to the Lord for deliverance, and the Lord raised up Othniel, a son of Caleb's younger brother. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel, and declared war against the above-named king, and prevailed

against him. And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel died. Israel again repeats its history, and does evil in the sight of the Lord, and (verses 12-14) "the Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, 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 the city of palm trees. So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years."

They again turned to the Lord with repentance, and Ehud, a Benjamite, a left-handed man, is now raised up to deliver Israel. He slays king Eglon with a dagger, which he had especially prepared for the purpose, and then, raising an army, he slew about ten thousand men of the Moabites, and this time the land of Israel had rest eighty years.

"And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad; and he also delivered Israel." Chapter 4: "And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, when Ehud was dead. And the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord; for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel." This time the Lord raised up a woman, and used her as a deliverer. "And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time."

"She sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward Mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the cap-







*DEBORAH PROPHECYING.*

tain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand. And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go. And she said, I will surely go with thee; notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honor; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kēdesh." Verses 6-9. "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. And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand. . . . 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." Verses 13-15.

He flees to the house of Heber, and Heber's wife, Jael, invites him in, and opened a bottle of milk and gave him drink. He lay down upon the floor, and she covered him, and, when he had gone to sleep, "then Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died." Verse 21. As Barak follows in pursuit, Jael met him, and said, "Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples. So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan."

The fifth chapter of Judges records the song of deliverance sung by Deborah and Barak, which closes with these

words: "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 rest forty years."

We have now followed the history of Israel from 1491 to 1256 B. C., and have learned, thus far, that, whenever Israel departed from God, they were invariably delivered into the hands of other nations. But, upon their repentance, the Lord would again restore them to their own lands. The last deliverer was a female, being both a ruler and a prophetess. God is not dependent upon any class or sex. This woman was the head of the government for forty years, and a mighty reformer in Israel.

Passing to chapter six and onward, we notice their history still farther. "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. 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 strongholds. 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; 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." "And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord. And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord because of the Midianites, 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." "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, to hide it from the

Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor. And Gideon said unto him, O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and 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. And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites; have not I sent thee? And he said unto Him, O my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man."

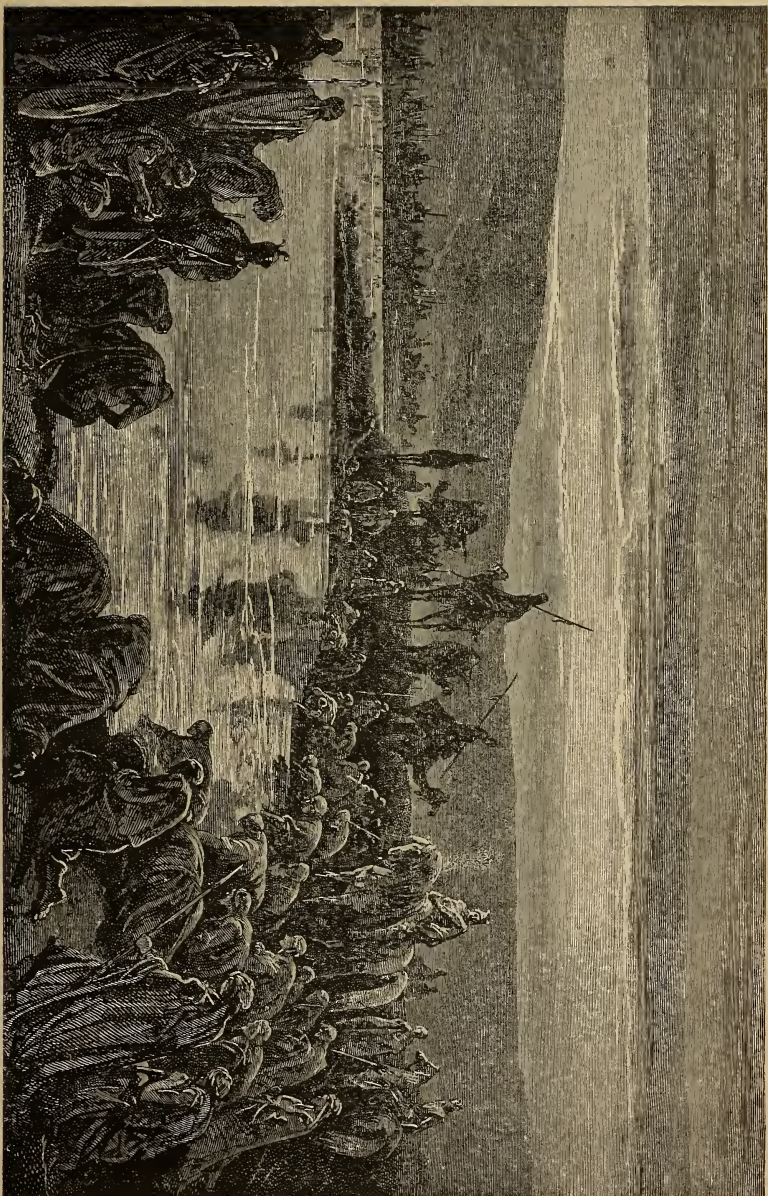
Gideon now made ready a kid and unleavened cakes, and brought it out to the angel under the oak. "And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff 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." Gideon had asked for a sign, and when he had seen this, he realized that he had been talking to an angel; and he was afraid. "And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not; thou shalt not die."

The Lord then instructs him to tear down the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove, and commence his work of reform in Israel. The first work was begun at his father's house. He went in the night, tore down the altar, and cut down the grove. And when the worshipers of Baal saw it the next morning, they inquired diligently who had done this. They were informed that Gideon, the son of Joash, had done this thing. The men of the city then came, and

demanded of Joash that he bring out his son, that he might die. And Joash said unto all that stood against him: Will ye plead for Baal? He that will plead for him, let him be put to death. If he be a god, let him plead for himself.

“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. 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. And Gideon said unto God, If Thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as Thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on 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.” The Lord fulfilled this sign for Gideon. The ground was dry all about the fleece, but he wrung a bowl of water out of the fleece. “And Gideon said unto God, Let not Thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once; let me prove, I pray Thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.” This also proved as Gideon had requested. The next morning the ground was wet, but the fleece was dry.

Gideon now marched his army in the direction of the enemy. But the Lord said to Gideon: “The people that are with thee are too many. . . . lest [if I give the Midianites into their hands] Israel vaunt themselves against Me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. 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 thou-



*GIDEON CHOOSING HIS ARMY.*





sand." This must have looked discouraging to Gideon, for over two-thirds of his army returned home. "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 upon his knees to drink. And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men. . . . And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand; and let all the other people go every man unto his place." So he sent all the rest home.

The Lord gave to one of the Midianites a night dream, and he told his partner: "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." Gideon had gone down with his servants to spy out and learn all he could of the camp of Midian. He overheard them relating this dream, also the interpretation, and he knew that this was a sign that God had given them into his hand. "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." Then he said: Now look at me, and do as I do. And when I come to the outside of the camp, watch me, and do as I show you. When I

and those with me blow the trumpet, then blow ye the trumpets on every side of the camp, and say, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." At the middle watch of that night the camp was surrounded; they blew the trumpets, and broke the pitchers, and held the lamps in their hands, and cried, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." And all the hosts ran and fled. And the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the hosts. And Israel gathered against the hosts of the Midianites, and pursued Midian, and a great slaughter followed. Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon.

"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. And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you." Judges 8:22, 23. This man understood the source of all strength and wisdom. He knew it was a government of God, and that God was the rightful ruler, and His representative here on the earth was simply His servant, and the prophet His mouthpiece. "And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulcher of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites." Verse 32.

#### JEPHTHAH.

"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. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the

*GIDEON SLAYING MIDIANITES.*





hands of the children of Ammon. 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. 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.

“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 Baalim.” Judges 10:6-10.

As Israel now cries to the Lord, the Lord answers: “Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation. 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. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord; and His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.” “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.” Judges 10:14-16, 18.

“Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, and he was the son of an harlot; and Gilead begat Jephthah.” Judges 11:1. This man was now chosen as the leader of Israel for their deliverance from the Ammonites. “Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon. And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If Thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, 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, shall surely be the Lord’s, and I will offer

it up for a burnt-offering." Judges 11:29-31. This vow reveals the earnestness and great desire this man had in the deliverance of Israel. His war with the Ammonites was a success, but the most trying hour was before this servant of God on his return home.

"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; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. 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 can not go back. And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, 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. 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. And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months; and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. 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, that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year." Judges 11:34-40.

Many have supposed by the reading of this scripture that Jephthah took the life of his only child in the carrying out of this vow. Other renderings of these scriptures show that this was not the case. The marginal reading shows that the daughters of Israel went yearly to talk to the daughter of Jephthah. "She knew no man;" that is,



JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER COMING TO MEET HER FATHER.





she separated herself, to devote her life exclusively to the service of God. In these days of Israel's history there was a cherished hope among the daughters of Israel, like that cherished by Eve, that one of them might be the mother of the promised Seed, and to separate from this hope was a great cross, and, further, this cut off all hope of Jephthah for future posterity of his family, as she was the only child. The consecration was so great on the part of both father and daughter that the daughters of Israel went yearly to celebrate and talk with Jephthah's daughter.

## SAMSON.

Another one of the noted characters among the judges of Israel was Samson. Israel had again departed from the Lord, as we read in chapter thirteen of the Judges. "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. 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."

The Lord, foreseeing the situation, begins the preparation to meet the emergency; and so the angel of the Lord appeared to the wife of Manoah, and informs her that she should bear a son, then gives the divine instruction to the mother concerning her manner of life, that the son might be such an individual as He could use. "Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing; 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." This was heaven-born instruction, and if all mothers would follow the instruction here given, the world would not have been filled with the sorrow it is now. There would not be the drunkenness, the sickness, the enfeebled minds that exist to-day. Christian education and Christian temperance begin with the parents. It is hard to extinguish the flames of a burning building, so there are few reformations, comparatively speaking, of persons that have inherited the vices of which the human race is so made up in this age of the world.

The woman informed her husband of the conversation. "Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which Thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. And God harkened 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. And the woman made haste, and ran, and showed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day. 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. And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him? And the angel of the Lord said, . . . She may not eat of anything 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." The instructions were carried out by the mother.

"And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol."

When Samson grew up to manhood, he visited the

Philistines, and found there a girl of the daughters of the Philistines whom he desired for a wife. He made this known to his parents, and asked them if they would not secure her for him. "Then his father and his mother said unto him, Is there never 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. 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." Judges 14:3, 4.

The father and mother consent to go with the boy, to visit the Philistines and become acquainted with the woman. On their way to that country, Samson met a lion, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him; he had nothing in his hand, but he rent the lion as if it were a kid; but he did not tell his parents. They found the girl pleased Samson well. On his second trip, when he went after the girl, to take her as his wife, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and, behold, a swarm of bees had made their hive in the carcass, and filled it with honey. He took what he wished to eat, and carried some to his father and mother. On their second trip, Samson made a feast, and at the time of that feast the record states thus: "And Samson said unto them, I will put forth a riddle unto you; if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty change of garments; but if ye can not 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. 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. And it came to pass on the seventh day,

that they said unto Samson's wife, Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire; have ye called us to take that we have? is it not so? And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, 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? And she wept before him the seven 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. 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." This gave occasion to Samson for the difficulties to arise between him and the Philistines. "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil, 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. But Samson's wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend." Judges 14:19, 20.

"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. 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 then she? take her, I pray thee, instead of her. And Samson said concerning them, Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure. And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands. and turned tail to tail, and put

a firebrand in the midst between two tails. 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 olives. Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? And they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire. And Samson said unto them, Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that will cease. And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter; and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam." Judges 15:1-8.

This enraged the Philistines, and they made war against Judah. Judah at this time were tributaries to the Philistines, and they were not pleased with the course that Samson had taken, for fear it would only increase their hardships; so they came to Samson, to bind him and deliver him to the Philistines. Samson made them swear that they would not fall upon him themselves, except upon these conditions, and on conditions of their promise he suffered them to bind him with two new cords. "And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands. And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men. 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. And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, 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? But God clave a hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived; wherefore he called the name thereof En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day."

Later on in Samson's history he loved one Delilah, and through this woman Samson was enticed, and on one occasion the lords of the Philistines offered her large sums of money if she would devise a plan that he might be turned over to them. "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. Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. Now there were many 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." Judges 16:7-9.

Delilah now accuses Samson of mocking her, and she again besought him that he would tell her the source of his strength. "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. 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."

She now accuses him of telling her lies, and she besought him earnestly to tell her where his strength was. "And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web. 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."

She now accuses him of fooling her three times. "And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death; that he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb; if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man. And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath showed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him." This was the fatal step for Samson. He now passes the boundary line. God had given the instruction that a razor should not come upon his head, and that he should be a Nazarite from his youth. The power was not in Samson's hair, as the Philistines supposed, but it was in obedience to God. It was not in the peculiarities of the waters of Jordan that caused Naman, the Assyrian, to be healed, but it is ever in obedience. Samson was now no more powerful than other ordinary men. It was a sad mistake for Samson. "But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house."

In the course of time Samson's hair again grew. He saw his mistake, and he again called upon the Lord. The Philistines made a great feast to their god Dagon, and, when they were in the midst of their merriment, they took

Samson out of his prison house to make sport for them, and they set him in 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. 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 was made sport. 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. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and 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."

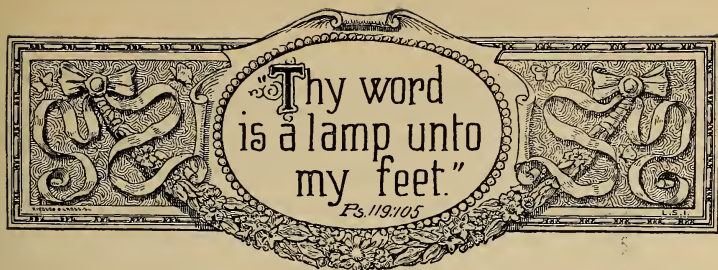
Samson judged Israel twenty years. Had he proven true to God, the yoke of the Philistines would have been broken. His repentance for his mistake in having his hair cut, and thus disobeying God, was no doubt complete, as his strength was again restored to him, as shown on the day of his death.



SAMSON CARRYING THE GATES.







## CHAPTER VIII.

### SAMUEL.

WE now turn to the book of Samuel. Going back to 1171 B. C., where the history of this man begins, we read some statements regarding his birth and childhood. Samuel was a child born in answer to prayer. His mother had made a solemn vow to the Lord that, if God would grant her request, she would give the child to the Lord. "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of Him; therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshiped the Lord there." 1 Sam. 1:27, 28.

Eli was high priest at this time, but was a man that failed to govern his children and bring them up in the fear of God. "Now the sons of Eli were the sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord." 1 Sam. 2:12. Eli permitted them to take part in the services of the sanctuary, which was very unsatisfactory to the people. And they used their position for mercenary purposes. "Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord; for men abhorred the offering of the Lord. But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod." Verses 17, 18. "Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel. . . . And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all

this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear; ye make the Lord's people to transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they harkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them." Verses 22-25. Their course was so wicked that it was only a question of time till God would take the matter into His own hands and punish them. A prophet soon appears before Eli, and informs him of what he might expect. "Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before Me forever; but now the Lord saith, Be it far from Me; for them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house." "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. . . . And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thine house shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread." Verses 30, 31, 33-36. "And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision." In these scriptures we again have the truth plainly revealed that God will not regard iniquity, but in every instance will surely punish the transgressor, and also that as iniquity abounds the Lord withdraws His Spirit from His prophets. Hence at this time there was no open vision.

At this time Samuel was a mere lad, being trained in the priests' office. The Lord appears to him, and speaks his name, *Samuel*, as he is lying in his bed. The boy, supposing that Eli was calling him, arose and inquired of him what he wanted. Eli said he had not called him, and told him to lie down. This was done three times. Each time the boy answered to the call. Eli now perceiving that it was the voice of God calling to Samuel, instructed him to answer when he heard the voice again, for it was the Lord speaking to him. "And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for Thy servant heareth. And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. 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. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever." 1 Sam. 3:10-14. Now Samuel did not want to tell Eli what the Lord had told him, but Eli said to the boy: "God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide anything from me of all the things that He said unto thee. And Samuel told him every whit." Eli answered and said, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good." "And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord."

This condition of affairs, as we have previously learned, would naturally bring the judgments of God. So we read that Israel was again engaged in a war with the Philistines. The first fight resulted in the slaying of about four thousand of the children of Israel. In the second battle "there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. . . . And the two

sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain." 1 Sam. 4:10, 11. The ark of God was also taken by the Philistines. The messengers ran to inform Eli of the death of his two sons and the capture of the ark. When Eli heard the report, "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." Verse 18. This shows how accurate God is in carrying out the punishment laid down in the law of blessings and cursings which He had given to His servant Moses. These things were only a sign which was to follow Israel throughout their history.

The ark became a burdensome thing to the Philistines. They put it into the house with their god Dagon, but, on returning to the house, they found their god overturned. They set him up again, but, on coming back, they again found him overturned and his head broken off. Next the men were smitten with disease, and many of them died. On another occasion they opened the ark and looked into it, and fifty thousand of them were slain. By this time they were glad to return it to the camp of Israel. And they "brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord." It remained there for 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 Ashtaroth 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." 1 Sam. 7:2, 3. Israel now related themselves to the Lord in such a manner that He could work for them; consequently a change comes over the scene. "And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel; but the Lord thundered with

a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel." "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." "And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life." Chapter 8 tells of another change. "And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel." "And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." Verses 1, 3.

We have now traced the history of the children of Israel upward of four hundred years, from the time they left Egypt. We would call the attention of the reader to one point especially in this history, viz., God has never sanctioned sin, either in His people or in their leaders, but in every transgression the judgments of God have fallen upon the transgressor. The ark of God and the prophets have also been the two important factors in their history. The law of blessings and cursings, which was first written by Moses in a book and placed in the side of the ark, that it might be there as a witness to Israel that these judgments would ever follow them, was afterward written upon stones on Mt. Ebal. They were written upon stone, showing their durability, also showing that that law would continue parallel with the law of ten commandments through their entire history in this world. We have now seen how carefully it was carried out for over four hundred years.

#### TO THE READER.

Knowing the reluctance with which the Bible history of the various rulers of Israel is read, we would speak a word of courage to the reader before he begins the task. The Lord in His wisdom had every word of this history written, and it was not written to benefit the ones about whom it was spoken, for they were nearly all dead when this

was given. So there must be lessons for us in it; and when we once see the lesson for us, our interest is quickened, and the dullness passes away. This history is all written for us who are alive in this day and age of the world, and if we understand the situation in times past, we will understand the things of to-day.

There is a principle involved in the record of the life of every ruler, which still exists, and it requires a record of them all to show the principle, or the great God would not have had them all recorded. God writes nothing for past-time, neither for money. It is all for our good. All we need is to see the lesson in it for us.

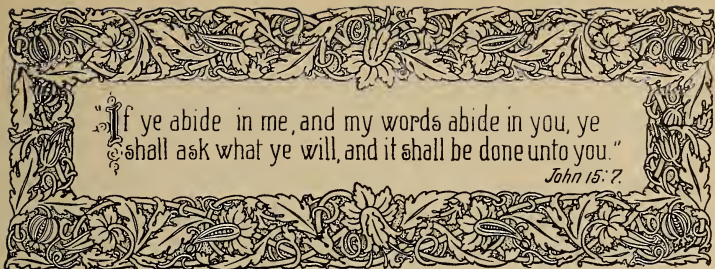
Examples in mathematics are not hard when the rules governing them are well fixed in the mind. So God lays down in the history of the theocracy certain principles. When the reader becomes well acquainted with these principles, other lessons will be comparatively easy. So in the first part of this the reader may not be so forcibly impressed in reading the history of Israel. But we will promise that, if he will be careful to understand the first part pertaining to the principle found, the latter part of the book will increase with interest till the close. It is a connected and continuous story, based upon God's scientific principles, all in harmony, and applying to us now, to-day, as well as then. So do not get weary in the first part.







*SAMUEL BLESSING SAUL.*



"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

*John 15: 7*

## CHAPTER IX.

### A KING.

ISRAEL now desire a king, that they might have a form of government more like other nations. The Lord informs them that it would not be for their good. "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, Harken unto their voice, and make them a king." But let the reader bear in mind the fact that, while this request is granted, the king is placed subject to the prophet, and the same laws still govern and the same judgments still follow Israel in their experience.

The Lord appeared to Samuel in vision, and gave him instruction concerning the anointing of a young man called Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, the son of Kish. "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. . . . And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. Then Samuel told

the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord." 1 Sam. 10:23-25.

The people had now gotten just such a looking man as they desired. Saul was of tall stature and of beautiful appearance, and was such as would attract the attention of those who put their dependence upon man.

"And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have harkened 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 you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught 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 aught in my hand. And they answered, He is witness." 1 Sam. 12:1-5. Samuel now reasoned with Israel thus: "It is the Lord that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt." "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 Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them." "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." Verses 6, 9, 12. The people then saw their mistake, and "all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel."

"And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy serv-

ants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." Samuel then answered them: "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way; only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things He hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king." Verses 23-25. In chapter 13 we continue to read (verse 5 and following): "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 seashore in multitude; and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Beth-aven. When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were distressed), then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits." Saul was now king. "And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt-offering to me, and peace-offerings. And he offered the burnt-offering. 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. 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; . . . I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt-offering. 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 forever. 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 com-

manded thee." Although Saul was anointed king, he was not endued with power to fill the office of either priest or prophet. This shows that the king was subject to those holding either of these offices, and was not above them.

The armies of the Philistines and Israel were now gathered, and Jonathan, the son of Saul, said to the young man that bare his armor: "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 armor-bearer said unto him, Do all that is in thine heart; turn thee; behold, I am with thee according to thy heart." "And Jonathan said unto his armor-bearer, 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 armor-bearer after him; and they fell before Jonathan; and his armor-bearer slew after him. And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were a half acre of land. . . . 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." Saul was now interested to know who was doing this great work. "And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armor-bearer were not there." "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." "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.”

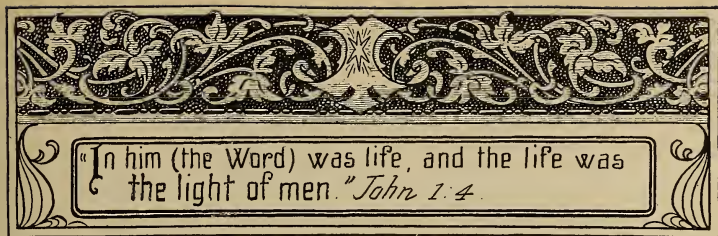
The nation of the Amalekites had greatly distressed Israel when they left Egypt. As they passed through their country, they fell upon the old men, women, and children, and those who could not help themselves, and slew them. The Lord then said that that nation should be banished from the earth, because of the course they then took. Time passed on, but finally the hour of retribution was reached. The Lord now gives Saul instruction to inflict the punishment due that nation. We find the details in 1 Sam. 15:3, and following: “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 said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them; for ye shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. 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 flocks and herds, alive. But everything that was vile and refuse they destroyed. This was not according to the instruction the Lord had given him. He was to “utterly destroy all that they have.” The Lord now sent Samuel to Saul to inquire why Saul had not obeyed the voice of the Lord. Saul ran to meet Samuel, and said, I have kept 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." "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?" "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. 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 harken 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. 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."

Saul continued to plead with Samuel, but to no avail. Samuel then instructed them to bring Agag to him. "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." "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."





## CHAPTER X.

### DAVID ANOINTED KING.

"AND the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? 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." Samuel feared Saul in this undertaking, but the Lord assured him that he would be protected. And so he went to the house of Jesse. "And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him. 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." Jesse now caused seven of his sons to pass in order before Samuel, but Samuel failed to see the one whom the Lord had shown him, and he inquired of Jesse, Have you no other sons? And Jesse answered: "There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he come hither. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise,

anoint him; for this is he. Then 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. . . . But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him."

David was a descendant of Ruth and Boaz. This couple were the great-grandfather and grandmother of David. Their history is told in the book of Ruth. Elimelech and Naomi, his wife, left Canaan on account of a famine in the land. Israel was at this time so backslidden that famine was in the land as a judgment from the Lord. Elimelech and his wife Naomi left Canaan for Moab. As a result of this removal, their two sons married Moabitish women. Naomi's husband died, also his two sons. This left the women alone. On learning of prosperity having returned to Israel, the mother decided to return to her home. The two daughters-in-law, Orpha and Ruth, decided to return with her. But she, knowing they were not of the same nation, requested them not to go, but to return to their own people and to their own religion. Orpha decided to do so, but Ruth could not bear to leave her mother. She had learned to love her mother, although of another nation, also to reverence God. She said to Naomi: "Entreat 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 ought but death part thee and me. When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her." Ruth 1:16-18. This reveals the faithfulness of this woman to principle.

Boaz, who subsequently married Ruth, was a man of true moral worth, as revealed in the book of Ruth. While Ruth was a Moabitish woman, she was thoroughly con-



*RUTH AND BOAZ.*



verted to God. It was from these faithful persons that David descended; hence we would expect him to be a man of great integrity and of good principle.

The book of Ruth is one of special interest to the reader, but space forbids further quotations from it at this point.

Eight years more passed before Saul was slain in battle with the Philistines, and David received the kingdom. This period of eight years, recorded in 1 Samuel, from the sixteenth to the thirty-first chapters, is most interesting to the Bible student, as it reveals the human character as no other scripture. Every Christian should be well acquainted with the history of this man David, whom the Lord now chooses to stand as head over His people. It also reveals the fact that disobedience, as manifested by Saul, is sure to lead to utter ruin. Saul from this time on was envious of David, or at least from the time he found that David had been anointed king. After David's anointing by Samuel, he returned home to feed his father's sheep, and awaited God's providence to give him the promised kingdom. And in all the eight years, during which Saul was envious and almost constantly seeking his life, David never once sought the office. His story of slaying Goliath is most interesting. This man had defied all Israel. David visited his brethren in the army, and heard Goliath's boastful defyings of the host of Israel. "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?" His brethren standing by, supposing that David wanted to exalt himself, remarked: "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. And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

David was now taken before Saul. "And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth." David pressed the matter by relating to Saul how, when keeping the sheep, he had met a lion and a bear, and told how he slew both the lion and the bear; and then continues a lesson of faith, that God, who had delivered him out of the power of the lion and the bear surely would deliver him from the hand of Goliath. Saul consented to let him try it. "And Saul armed David with his armor, and he put a helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his armor, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I can not go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him." This was a new experience to the lad. He was unacquainted with this mode of warfare. He then 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." When the Philistine saw him, he disdained him. "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." "And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands. . . . David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth." "And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent."

Saul watched this scene, and he inquired of his chief captain, "Whose son is this youth?" "And Saul said to





*SAUL ATTEMPTING DAVID'S LIFE.*



him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite. And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." From that day forward Jonathan, the son of Saul, and David were inseparable friends.

The fame of this act of David, which resulted in the defeat of the Philistines, was sounded abroad everywhere. And it was a saying among the women, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." From this time forward Saul sought David's life. Previous to this Saul had taken him to be his private musician, and when David played with his hand, as at other times, "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 David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him." "All Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them."

Saul now undertakes another plan. He next offers David his daughter to wife, on condition that he will slay one hundred of the Philistines. David refused the offer of Saul's daughter, and as an excuse said he was a poor man and lightly esteemed. But being persuaded, he doubly accomplished the task, by slaying two hundred. Next Saul asked Jonathan and all his servants to slay David. But Jonathan pleaded for him. Again he attempted to smite him with his javelin. He also sent messengers to David's house to watch for him, and at last David fled, and came to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth. And when Saul heard it, he sent messengers to take him. The Spirit of the Lord fell on these messengers, and they could do nothing but prophesy. And Saul sent other messengers, and the

Spirit fell on them, and they prophesied likewise; and when they sent a third company, they had a similar experience. Then Saul himself went, and the Spirit came on him, and the saying went abroad, "Is Saul also among the prophets? 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?" "Truly as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death."

Jonathan now interceded for David, and assisted him in escaping for his life. As a result of this, Saul cast a javelin at Jonathan, to smite him, "whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David." Jonathan and David, in their last meeting, "kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded. 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 forever. And he arose and departed; and Jonathan went into the city." Then David, after sundry wanderings and checkered experiences, came into the wilderness of Ziph. "And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God. 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 that also Saul my father knoweth."

Saul was informed of David's hiding-place, and pursued him. He took three hundred chosen men of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. David was hiding in a cave, but Saul knew it not, and went into the cave. David's servants wanted to slay Saul, but he would not suffer them. After Saul had gone out of the cave, David went after him and cried, saying, "My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him,



*DAVID AND JONATHAN.*



David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself." And, holding up a piece of Saul's robe which he had cut off his mantle whilst in the cave, he convinced Saul that he neither had evil in his heart nor any desire to do him wrong. "The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee." "After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea." This touched Saul's heart, and he lifted up his voice and wept, and said unto David, "Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil." "And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold. And 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."

Saul again sought David. Although he had made a covenant with him of peace, yet the root of bitterness was in his heart. "David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed." 1 Sam. 26:4. While Saul and his company were camped, David and one of his men went by night into the midst of the camp, and found Saul sleeping in the midst of his men. And they took his spear, which was by his head, and carried it away. But the man that went with David requested, while they were there, that he might smite Saul. But David answered: "Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? 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. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed." But they took Saul's spear, and carried it away. And in the morning David called to them, and showed them what they had in their possession. Saul again repented, and told David to return, and that he would

do him no harm. "Because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day; behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly." "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. 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. 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." "And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath; and he sought no more again for him." "Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day; wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day. And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months."

The Lord had utterly forsaken Saul, and war again broke out with the Philistines. He went to the witch of Endor for information. She claimed to have communication with the dead, which would now be termed Spiritualism. He inquired of her concerning the war between Israel and the Philistines. In response to this woman's call, one appeared in the guise of an old man, professing to be Samuel, who related to Saul his experience in regard to how the Lord had rejected him, and the kingdom had been taken away from him, and said, "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." 1 Sam. 28:19. This information purported to come from Samuel, who had died, but it was really from Satan. However, on the third day after Saul was slain the prediction was fulfilled. "Now the Philistines

fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul's sons. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers." Saul now takes his own sword and falls upon it, and so finishes the work. "And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him." David, on hearing of the death of Saul, lamented greatly for Saul and Jonathan. "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places; how are the mighty fallen! 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. Ye mountains of Gilboa, 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." "Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, 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. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" This shows what the grace of God can do for human beings. The office which Saul held, as the king of Israel, was very sacred to this young man David. His respect for it surpassed everything else, and nothing could destroy his love for Jonathan and his father Saul. In all this experience not a murmur came

from David's lips. His unbounded faith in God taught him that time would work all things together for good, and so he patiently waited that time.

The course Saul had taken brought the trouble upon his own head, and there was no one to blame but himself. "And it came to pass after this, that David inquired 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." David would not make a move toward the kingdom until God had told him to do so. He now goes up to Hebron. "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 showed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. And now the Lord show kindness and truth unto you." "And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months."

The descendants of Saul reigned over Israel during this time. "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel; 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." "And David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him."

But "Saul died for his transgression which he com-



mitted against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it; and inquired not of the Lord; therefore He slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse." 1 Chron. 10:13, 14.

"But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the hold. The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim." 2 Sam. 5:17, 18. David now inquired of the Lord concerning the move that he should make. The Lord told him the course to pursue, and gave him a sign: "When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself; for then shall the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines. And David did so, as the Lord had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer." Verses 24, 25.

The next move David made was to restore the ark to its proper place in Jerusalem. The necessary preparations were made, and it was brought back with great pomp and rejoicing by Israel. Nathan was the prophet of Israel at this time; and it came into David's heart to build a temple for the Lord, but the Lord spake through Nathan, and told David that, as he was a man of war, and had shed blood, he should not build the house, but that his son, who should sit on his throne, was to build the house for His name.

David's reign was most prosperous. "And the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went." 2 Sam. 8:6, 14. But a change came into his experience. Nineteen years of his reign had passed. The Lord had said prior to this that he was a man after His own heart. But the weakness of human nature was now manifested in the wicked act which he committed, as recorded in the eleventh chapter of 2 Samuel, in causing Uriah to be killed, in order that he

might take his wife. This proved to be a sad experience for the king of Israel. But it reveals the fact that God is no respecter of persons. After he had committed this terrible crime, the Lord sent to him His prophet, and informed him, saying: "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. Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. 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." David was a man that knew what was right. His sin opened up before his face, and he exclaimed: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight; that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part Thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the

joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness. O Lord, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise. For Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; Thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Psalm 51.

Here is the most remarkable case of repentance ever recorded by inspiration. It shows that the man realized to the fullest extent the terribleness of his crime. But the Lord has said, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18. David was forgiven his terrible crime, but the judgment pronounced against him and his house in this life was never removed. And from this day forward David's life was anything but pleasant. The trouble was to come from his own family, and in his own personal experience.

The first trouble recorded was with his own son and daughter, Ammon and Tamar. Out of this difficulty grew the slaying of Ammon by his brother Absalom. This resulted in Absalom's banishment, which increased the trouble; for "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." After a time he was permitted to return to Jerusalem, but he "dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face." At the end of this period he was permitted to see David, and reconciliation was effected.

But Absalom, on being restored to favor, began a conspiracy against David for the kingdom, and, by making friends with the people, he succeeded in raising an insur-

rection against the king. And David, seeing the danger in which he was placed, "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 overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword." "And the king went forth, and all his household after him." "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 wilderness." "And David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot; and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up." "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; he came forth, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David; and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial; the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son; and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man. Then said Abishai the son of Zeruah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. And the king said, . . . So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? 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? let him alone, and let

him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day. 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 cast dust."

Counsel was now taken by Absalom in regard to what course to pursue. Also David laid plans to meet the situation. The decisive battle was soon to be fought. The friends of David would not submit to have him go into the battle. "And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom." 2 Sam. 18:5. A great slaughter followed, and twenty thousand of Israel were slain by the servants of David. Absalom was caught by the hair of the head as he was riding his beast under the boughs of a tree, and he was left hanging between the heavens and the earth. And Joab took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom. On hearing the report, the king's anxiety was for the safety of Absalom. And when he heard that he was killed, he mourned greatly, saying, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

The way was now open for the king to return to Jerusalem. "So the king returned, and came to Jordan. . . . And Shimei the son of Gera [the one who cursed David], . . . hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David" and "fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan; 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 take it to his heart. For thy servant doth know that I have sinned. . . . But Abishai . . . said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the

Lord's anointed?" But the king refused to listen to his urgent counsel, and said to Shimei: "Thou shalt not die. And the king sware unto him." There was no spirit of revenge in David. But this was not the end of David's troubles. They were to continue till the day of his death, because of the great transgression which he had committed.

There was another insurrection raised by a man whose name was Sheba. "He blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David." "And David said to Abishai, Now shall Sheba . . . do us more harm than did Absalom; take thou thy lord's servants, and pursue after him." He was followed, captured, and beheaded.

God is an avenger of wrongs, and, in reading the history here carefully, we find that God is never forgetful of these wrongs, but sooner or later recompense will be required in this life, to say nothing of the final punishment, when the wicked of all the earth will meet their doom. Joab had charge over all the hosts of David's house, and in the pursuit of Sheba he played deception, and slew an innocent man, Amasa. Later on in the history we find that this wrong comes back upon Joab's own head. We also read in this connection of a wrong performed by Saul to the Gibeonites, for which wrong Israel must now pay the penalty. We call attention to these things, that the reader may see the object for which these lessons were written, and that we may better understand God's dealings with men. Famine, pestilence, and the sword are the curses God told Moses would ever follow His people as the result of an evil course. So we now read in 2 Sam. 21:1, and following: "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 Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites." "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?" They answered and said: "We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, . . . [but] let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord in Gibeah of Saul, whom the Lord did choose. And the king said, I will give them." This was performed, and after that God was intreated for the land.

Following this event there was a war with the Philistines, and they were subdued; and David composed the following hymn: "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me. In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God; He heard my voice out of His temple, and my cry came before Him, even into His ears." "Therefore will I give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto Thy name." Part of Psalm 18.

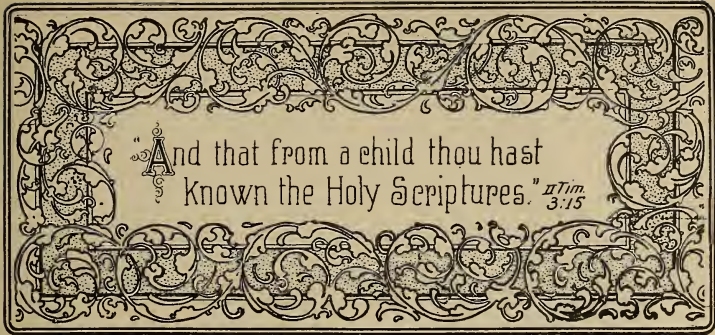
David's trouble lasted to the very close of his pilgrimage. "Now king David was old and stricken in years." "Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king; and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him." "And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruah, and with Abiathar the priest; and they following Adonijah helped him. But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah."

Solomon was the son of Bath-sheba. And Nathan the prophet informed her what Adonijah was doing, and she informed David. "Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. And the king sware, and

said, As the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, even as I sware unto thee by the Lord God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day." David instructed them to place Solomon on his own mule, and bring him down to Gihon, and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel; "and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon."

Thus his trouble continues to the very last days of his life. "Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth; be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself." "Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace. But show kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table; for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother. And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, . . . which cursed me with a grievous curse. . . . Now therefore hold him not guiltless; for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood. So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David." 1 Kings 2.





## CHAPTER XI.

### SOLOMON.

THE instructions here given were carried out, and the men mentioned for retribution, having themselves engaged in actions worthy of punishment, hastened their execution, and ended their career.

"In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before Thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with Thee; and Thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that Thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people, that can not be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord,

that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; . . . lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor; so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days. And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream."

Solomon took the throne 1014 B. C., nearly five hundred years after the time that Moses left Egypt. "And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men." I Kings 4:30, 31.

He at once set about to build the temple of the Lord, which building was a marvel to the world. Solomon's prayer at the dedication expresses the situation and the needs of God's people, and evidences his deep sense of their dependence upon God, intreating that the blessings of heaven might be meted out to His children according to their actions here upon earth. It further shows that the curses pronounced by Moses will always follow disobedience. We here quote some of the sentiments of this remarkable prayer: "If any man trespass against his neighbor, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before Thine altar in this house; then hear Thou in heaven, and do, and judge Thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness. When Thy people Israel be smitten down before





the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and shall turn again to Thee, and confess Thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto Thee in this house; then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which Thou gavest unto their fathers. When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against Thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess Thy name, and turn from their sin, when Thou afflictest them; then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy servants, and of Thy people Israel, that Thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon Thy land, which Thou hast given to Thy people for an inheritance. If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be a caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; what prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all Thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house; then hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and forgive." "And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying," "Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in His statutes, and to keep His commandments, as at this day." "And the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before Me; I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put My name there forever; and Mine eyes and Mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if Thou wilt walk before Me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to

all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep My statutes and My judgments; then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel forever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. But if ye shall at all turn from following Me, ye or your children, and will not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them; then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for My name, will I cast out of My sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people." 1 Kings 8:31-39, 54, 55, 61; 9:3-7. This temple and Solomon's house were about twenty years in building, and, had not sin and transgression followed in the life and experience of God's people, that house would still be standing, and Israel be an independent nation, governed by the Lord, and thus they would have been a light to all the world.

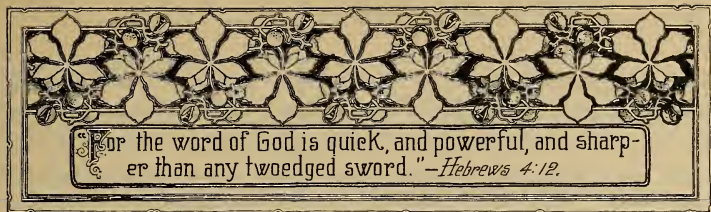
The fame of Solomon's wisdom went out throughout all the earth. Kings and queens came and sat at his feet to hear his gracious words. But Solomon, like the majority of rulers before him, was possessed of a weakness in his nature, which led him astray from God, and so a change came over his experience. The twenty-third year of his reign marked a fatal departure from God. "But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in to you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods; Solomon clave unto these in love." "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.

For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord." "And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice." 1 Kings 11:1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9.

The Lord had expressly told Solomon that he should not go after other gods, but he kept not that which the Lord had commanded him. "Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant." "Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David My servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen. And the Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was of the king's seed in Edom." Verses 11, 13, 14. Joab had slain all the Edomites except Hadad, who, "being yet a little child," fled into Egypt. But after Joab was slain, then Hadad returned. "And God stirred Him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hada-dezer king of Zobah; and he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah; and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus. And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad did; and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria. And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, . . . even he lifted up his hand against the king." "And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field; and Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces; and he said to Jero-

boam, Take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee (but he shall have one tribe for My servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel)." "Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand; but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David My servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept My commandments and My statutes; but I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand; and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David My servant may have a light alway before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen Me to put My name there." "And it shall be, if thou wilt harken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in My ways, and do that is right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as David My servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee. And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not forever. Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, . . . and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon." "And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. . . . And Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead." Verses 23-26, 29-32, 34-36, 38-40, 42, 43.





## CHAPTER XII.

### ISRAEL DIVIDED.

WE now reach the period when Israel is permanently divided, over five hundred years after they left Egypt. Ten tribes now compose what is known as the kingdom of Israel, the other two the kingdom of Judah. The reader will see that this division was the result of sin. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, was so oppressive to Israel that the ten tribes revolted, and Jeroboam became their king. "So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day." 1 Kings 12:19. Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, was one of the most wicked rulers Israel ever had. "He made a house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi." Verse 31. He also made two calves of gold, like those which Israel had worshiped when they left Egypt, and set apart days of worship, "which he had devised of his own heart." Verse 33. The Lord sent a prophet to him, and warned him of the course he was pursuing; but he paid no heed to the admonition. "After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places; whosoever would, he consecrated him. . . . And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth." The Lord visited him with sickness in his family, and explained the cause through his servant. The Lord

“rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and yet thou hast not been as My servant David;” “therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam” all male issue, “and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat; for the Lord hath spoken it.” “For the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and He shall root up Israel out of this good land, which He gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the Lord to anger.” 1 Kings 14:8, 10, 11, 15. “And the days which Jeroboam reigned were two and twenty years; . . . and Nadab his son reigned in his stead. And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. . . . He reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem. . . . And Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked Him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done.” Verses 20-22.

Thus we see that both houses were at this time in a very wicked condition. And, according to the principle already laid down, we would naturally look for the judgments of God to follow close upon such reckless conduct. “And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem; and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king’s house; he even took away all; and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.” “And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days.” After a reign of seventeen years, Rehoboam, king of Judah, died, and Abijah, or Abijam, his son, reigned in his stead. He reigned three years in Jerusalem. “And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had

done before him." "And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam." Abijam died, "and Asa his son reigned in his stead," who reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. "And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did David his father." Asa died, and was succeeded by Jehoshaphat, his son, who reigned in his stead. "And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father." Baasha conspired against Nadab, slew him, and reigned in his stead. "And it came to pass, when he reigned, that he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the Lord, which He spake by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite; because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger." "And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days."

Baasha reigned four and twenty years over Israel. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord all his days, and walked in the way of Jeroboam. "Then the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over My people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made My people Israel to sin, to provoke Me to anger with their sins; behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat." Baasha died, "and Elah his son reigned in his stead." He reigned two years. His servant Zimri conspired against him, and while Elah was in Tirzah,

in a state of intoxication, he went in and killed him, and reigned in his stead. "And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha; he left him not one, . . . neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends." 1 Kings 16:11. This was done in accordance with the word of the Lord, which He had spoken against Baasha by Jehu the prophet. Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah.

All Israel, hearing of Zimri's course, chose Omri king in his place, and Omri went with all Israel and besieged Tirzah. And when Zimri saw that he was besieged, he "went in the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died, for his sins which he sinned in doing evil in the sight of the Lord." Verses 18, 19. Omri reigned twelve years over Israel, six of which he spent in Tirzah, as his capital. "And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria." Verse 24. From this time on Samaria became the capital of Israel, whilst Jerusalem remained the capital of Judah. "But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all that were before him." Verse 25. Omri was buried in Samaria, and Ahab his son reigned in his stead for twenty-two years. "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. . . . He took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshiped him." "And Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him."

The reader will easily be able to see that we are now in the midst of a fearful apostasy from God, and that the Lord must do something to stay the terrible reign of iniquity. "And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of

Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." "And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook." 1 Kings 17:1-4, 6. "And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria." During these three years Elijah was cared for, at first by the ravens, and later on by a poor widow at Zarephath.

"And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks; peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it; Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself. And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him; and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah? And he answered him, I am; go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here." Obadiah informed Elijah that there was no nation or kingdom whither Ahab had not sent to seek and find him. Jezebel, Ahab's wife, had undertaken to slay all the prophets of the Lord, but Obadiah, being a God-fearing man, though over Ahab's house as governor, had hid fifty of them in a cave, and fed them with bread and water. But he was afraid to go and tell Ahab that he had met Elijah, for fear Elijah would disappear, and then Ahab would slay him. However, Elijah assured him

that he would meet Ahab. "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim."

Elijah further informed him that, if he would gather all the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, all those who ate at Jezebel's table, they would settle the question as to who was the true God, and what the real cause of the famine was. Ahab consented to the proposition, and gathered the prophets of Baal. "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him. . . . Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken."

The prophets of Baal proceeded to carry out the proposition. The altar was made, the bullock was dressed and laid on the wood. And they called on the name of Baal from morning "until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar," "and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them." They continued this until evening, but "there was neither voice, nor any to answer." And Elijah mocked them, and said, "Cry aloud; for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or per-

adventure he sleepeth, and must be awakened." But no voice was heard; the effort was a total failure.

Elijah's trial now comes. He builds an altar in the name of the Lord. He lays the wood in order, and cuts the bullock in pieces, and lays it on the wood. He now says, "Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood." They did so, and he told them to do it the second time. And, as they had done as requested, he said, "Do it the third time." And they did so. The trenches around the altar were now filled; the wood was soaked. Twelve barrels of water had been poured upon it. "Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." The people were convinced. They took the four hundred and more prophets down to the brook Kishon, and Elijah slew them there. Turning to Ahab, he said, "Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain."

Elijah went up to Mount Carmel, and prostrated himself before the Lord in prayer, but told his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea," to discover if there be any sign of rain. He came back, saying that there was nothing. He thus sent him seven times. The last time he returned he told his master that there was a little cloud arising out of the sea, like a man's hand. At once he sends to Ahab, to tell him of the coming rain. And meanwhile "the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." Ahab informed his wife Jezebel of all that

had transpired. Instead of repenting, she took an oath that by to-morrow Elijah should meet the same fate as her prophets had met. Elijah arose and went for his life to Beer-sheba. He left his servant there, and went a day's journey into the wilderness, and requested of the Lord that he might die, saying: "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head." After lying down and sleeping again, the angel wakened him, and told him again, "Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee." And in the strength of that food he went "forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there." While in the cave, the Lord spoke to him, and said, "What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." "And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus; and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. So he departed thence, and found Elisha . . . plowing." No doubt it was the first plowing that had been done, since there had been no rain for three years and six months until now.





*ELIJAH AND THE ANGEL.*



The next six years, from 906 to 900 B. C., mark a war between the children of Israel and Syria. The very next year bears the record of a conspiracy entered into by Ahab and Jezebel, his wife, to have Naboth and his family exterminated, in order that they might obtain possession of his vineyard, an inheritance left him by his father. As a result of this act, the prophet of the Lord again met Ahab, and at this time his sentence was pronounced: "And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, . . . In the place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee; because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab" every male, "and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked Me to anger, and made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel also spake the Lord, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel." 1 Kings 21:17-23.

War followed between Israel and Syria, and three years after this prediction Ahab was slain by the Syrians. He was wounded by a Syrian while in his chariot, "and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot." "So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armor; according unto the word of the Lord which He spake." Thus the prediction of the prophet

was literally fulfilled concerning Ahab. Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

Jehoshaphat, who began his reign in 914 B. C., was now reigning over Judah, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. "And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord." Ahaziah reigned two years over Israel, and he did evil in the sight of the Lord. He "fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber," and was hurt, and he sent to Ekron to inquire of Baal-zebub in regard to his recovery. The Lord sent word through these to tell their king that, because he had gone to this satanic source for information, he should not recover, but would surely die. This information came through Elijah the prophet. Ahaziah inquired of his returned messengers, "What manner of man was he?" They said, "He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins." He recognized from the description that it was Elijah. He then sent fifty men to bring Elijah to him. Elijah commanded fire to come down from heaven, and they were consumed. He sent fifty more. And they were treated in like manner. He sent the third fifty. The captain of this fifty pleads with Elijah that they might be spared. The angel of the Lord tells Elijah to go down with them, and not to be afraid of them. Then Elijah gave the king the same message that had been sent him at the first,—that he should surely die. He also repeats the reason. This ought to teach us to-day to consider of whom we are seeking information, whether of Spiritualists, or any other satanic delusions, or of God. "So he died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son." The Lord now informed Elijah that he should be taken away, which came to pass in 896 B. C., six hundred years after the chil-



*DEATH OF AHAB.*



dren of Israel left Egypt. His mantle fell upon Elisha, who was to take up the work where Elijah laid it down, as recorded in 2 Kings 2.

Jehoram reigned over Israel twelve years, and he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord, but not so extensively as his father or mother had done. As a result of this wicked reign, the Moabites rebelled against Israel. Prior to this they had been brought under tribute. At this time the kings of Israel and Judah and Edom united forces to go against Moab. They took a course that brought them into close trial. There was no water, either for their hosts or for the cattle that followed them. Jehoshaphat now inquired if there was not a man of God of whom they could inquire. They were referred to Elisha, saying that he was one who had poured water on the hands of Elijah. Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and the king of Edom went down to see Elisha. "And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay; for the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee." Elisha now told them that they should see neither wind nor rain, but yet that valley wherein they were, and which they were to make full of ditches, should be filled with water, and that that was but a light thing in the sight of the Lord: And he continued to tell them how great their victory would be. "And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat-offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water." As the Moabites advanced that morning, and the sun shone on the water, it was red like blood. They concluded that Israel had gone

to war with one another, and said therefore, "Moab, to the spoil." And when they came to the camp of the Israelites, these arose and killed the Moabites, and subsequently beat down their cities. This was a complete victory over Moab, for Judah's sake, though undeserved by Israel.

The next war against Israel was organized by Syria. Every time the Syrians would encamp, Elisha, by the Spirit of the Lord, would inform Israel. The king of Syria, thinking there must be a spy or traitor in his camp, made diligent search, but was told that probably the information came through Elisha, a prophet of Israel. So he sent spies to find out, if possible, where Elisha was. He ascertained that he was at Dothan. Thereupon he sent an army to Dothan, and surrounded the place, both with horses and chariots. Elisha's servant said, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" Elisha told him to keep quiet, that they who were with them were more than they who were with their enemies. "And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the Lord, and said, Smite this people, I pray Thee, with blindness. And He smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha." Elisha then told them that this was not the city that they wanted, and they asked him to be their guide. Elisha led the host to Samaria, and when there he prayed that their eyes might be opened. And their eyes were opened, and, behold, they were in Samaria, and completely surrounded. Elisha's friends wanted to slay them while they had them in their power, but he said, No. "And he prepared great provision for them; and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel." 2 Kings 6:23.

"And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria." This was some four years later. "And there was a great famine in Samaria; and, behold, they besieged



it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver." So great was this famine in the city that women boiled their own children and ate them. As in the days of Ahab, the blame was all laid upon the prophet Elisha, because he had been reproving them for their sins. So the king vowed that the head of Elisha should fall that very day. He sent messengers to Elisha's house, to bring him out. "But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him." The king followed the messenger, and came also. "Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord, To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof." The Syrians were encamped all about the city. There were also four lepers at the gate of Samaria, and it became a question of life or death with them. They decided that they would take their chances and go to the camp of the Syrians. But they found the camp vacated, the tents, horses, asses, provisions, in fact, the whole camp, as it was, except the men, who had fled. "For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host; and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, . . . and fled for their life." The lepers came back and gave a report of what they had found, and, upon investigation, the report proved true. Then the king "appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate; and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who

spake when the king came down to him." Elisha now informed the widow whose son he had restored to life that she should leave Samaria and that country, "for the Lord hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years." "And Elisha came to Damascus; and Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither." The king sent Hazael to inquire of Elisha whether he should be healed from his disease. "And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover; howbeit the Lord hath showed me that he shall surely die. And he settled his countenance steadfastly, until he was ashamed; and the man of God wept. And Hazael said, Why weepest my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel; their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord hath showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria." 2 Kings 8. Hazael returned to his master, whose anxiety concerning his recovery he put at ease, by assuring him that the prophet had said he should surely recover. But Hazael took a wet cloth and smothered Ben-hadad, and reigned in his stead.

Jehoram was now sole king over Judah, having been regent eighteen years along with his father Jehoshaphat. His reign as king lasted eight years. He married the daughter of Ahab, king of Israel. He was a wicked king, "yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for David His servant's sake, as He promised him to give him always a light, and to his children." "Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah. . . . Then Libnah revolted at the same time." Joram also, the king of Israel, died about this time, and Ahaziah, or Azariah, his son, reigned in his stead.

“In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign. . . . And he reigned one year in Jerusalem.” He was also a wicked king. Ahaziah king of Judah and Joram king of Israel united in war against Hazael king of Syria in Ramoth-gilead.

The Lord at this time directed Elisha to send one of the children of the prophets to Ramoth-gilead, to seek Jehu, the son of Nimshi, and anoint him king over Israel, and instruct him as follows: “And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab” every male, and “him that is shut up and left in Israel; and I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah; and the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And,” having carried out his orders to the letter, “he opened the door, and fled.” Jehu informed his friends of what had transpired. They immediately “blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king.” Ahaziah, king of Judah, had gone down to see Joram, king of Israel, at Jezreel, where he was recovering from his wounds. Jehu immediately procured his chariots, and started for Jezreel. The kings saw some one at a great distance, coming in haste. They sent out their messengers to inquire if these hasty movements meant peace. The messengers were detained by Jehu and his company. Finally Joram himself started to meet Jehu. He inquired of Jehu, “Is it peace?” And Jehu answered: “What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many? And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah. And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and

smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot. Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite." Ahaziah fled, but he was also overtaken and slain. "And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window." And Jehu rode up to the window, and he called out, "Who is on my side? . . . And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down; and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and he trode her underfoot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her; for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury her; but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the Lord, which He spake by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel; and the carcass of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel." 2 Kings 9.

There were yet seventy sons left of Ahab in Samaria, who had been brought up by the best families of the city. Jehu sent their guardians word that by to-morrow the heads of these seventy sons must be brought in baskets to Jezreel. This was also accomplished. Then Jehu said, "Know now that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the Lord, which the Lord spake concerning the house of Ahab; for the Lord hath done that which He spake by His servant Elijah." 2 Kings 10:10. He also destroyed the kinsfolks of Ahab and the priests of Baal. He made a feast in honor of Baal, that he might be able to detect all the priests who claimed to belong to that form of worship.

and through this stratagem he caught all the priests of Baal and slew them. The Lord promised Jehu that for this zeal in so well carrying out the word of the Lord, his children should succeed him on the throne to the fourth generation. "But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart; for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin. In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short; and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel." Jehu died, and was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz, after reigning over Israel over twenty-eight years.

#### ISRAEL'S DOWNFALL NOW BEGINS.

From the death of Jehu, 884 B. C., to the captivity of Israel and the end of the reign of Hoshea, B. C. 721, a period of 163 years, Judah had ten kings and Israel eleven. This was a period of great apostasy from God. During this time Judah had some good kings, but Israel not one.

Among the kings of Israel, Jeroboam's reign was the longest, for he reigned forty-one years, "and did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." And "the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter; for there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel. And the Lord said not that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash." 2 Kings 14:26, 27.

The ten tribes were broken up by Assyria 721 B. C. The Lord is already commencing His work of the long-threatened judgments. The reader will see that from this time forward perplexities are multiplying on every hand, both on Judah and on Israel. Their cup of iniquity is being filled almost to the full.

"In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river

of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, and walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made." "Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God." "And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal." "Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah only." "So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day."

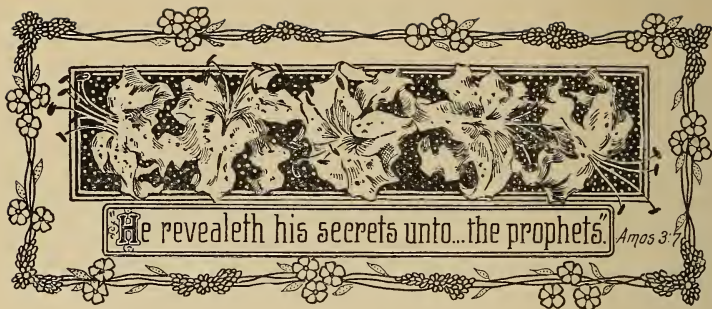
This is 721 B. C. Thus ends the history of the ten tribes which left Egypt, so far as the theocracy was concerned. God was no longer their ruler. They are now scattered abroad, and have been subject to earthly governments from that day to this. In going over the history of the two houses of Israel and Judah, from the death of Solomon to this time, the thoughtful reader can not fail to see that the ten tribes were more wicked than Judah, hence they are the first to go into captivity and be scattered abroad.

Let the reader not be discouraged in studying the history of the theocracy of Israel and Judah, for in it are revealed principles which every man should understand, to realize that God's hand rules over the kingdoms of this

world. And, as Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "He removeth kings, and setteth up kings." Dan. 2:21. These principles will be manifested until the end of time, and he who understands them best will understand best the movements of earthly governments in the last days, and will be able to discern between true and false principles. He will also be able to tell whether the so-called Christianizing of the world is the work of God or not. Let him bear in mind this one fact, that in all this history God never sent an army to civilize or Christianize a heathen nation.

It was His own people whom He desired to be a light to the world, and, had they lived up to the privileges they enjoyed as a nation, the world would have seen the light, and been led to accept the gospel. But as it was, they were a reproach and a hindrance to God's work, and the enemies of the cross of Christ. May not movements to-day, which are inaugurated under the name of Christianity, be more of a hindrance to the advancement of truth than they are a help? This one thing is sure, that God is not in any movement which is not just and righteous, and in strict harmony with the law of ten commandments, a divine copy of which was carried by Israel in the ark of the covenant.

Judah's history continues for a time, until their cup of iniquity is also full, and they meet the same fate as the ten tribes.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### JUDAH.

“ALSO Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.” 2 Kings 17:19. “Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. . . . And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did.” “He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.” “And the Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth; and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not. He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza.” Now eight years later, the king of Assyria declared war against Judah, and Sennacherib king of Assyria came “up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.” And Hezekiah was compelled to surrender, and gave the king of Assyria “all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king’s house.” And he even “cut off the gold from



the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria." The king of Assyria was not satisfied with this, however, but demanded a full and complete surrender of the city, and all that was in it. He besieged the city, and sent word to Hezekiah that the God in whom he trusted would not be able to deliver him, and he made a great boast of what he would do. "And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord." 2 Kings 19:1. Isaiah was the prophet of the Lord at this time. And Hezekiah sent word unto him, saying, "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring them forth." Isaiah answered and said: "Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumor, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land." "And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said, O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubim, Thou art the God, even Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; Thou hast made heaven and earth. Lord, bow down Thine ear, and hear; open, Lord, Thine eyes, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God." "Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard." And the Lord sent this message to the king of Assyria: "But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against Me. Because thy rage against Me and thy tumult is come up into Mine ears, therefore I will put My hook in thy nose,

and My bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest." "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion; the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this. Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it." "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." 2 Kings 19.

This is a wonderful manifestation of God's power, and a vivid illustration of His manner of warring against the enemies of His people. What a contrast from the method of warfare in "Christian" armies of our day!

Hezekiah was succeeded by his son Manasseh. He reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, "for he built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them." 2 Kings 21:3. Here, as well as in other places, we have the evidence that Baal worship was that system of idolatry which adored the planets of heaven. This system can be traced through the entire history of idolatrous worship. It was later practised by the Romans, who named the days of the week after the sun, moon, and five leading planets of heaven respectively. Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors substituted their Saxon names for some of them in our nomenclature. "And the Lord spake by His servants the prophets, saying, Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly

above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols; therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab; and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down." "Because they have done that which was evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day. Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." Such is the sad summary of the history of the fifty-five years' reign of this wicked king. And Amon, his son, reigned in his stead. He reigned two years in Jerusalem, and did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of his father. His servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.

Josiah his son succeeded him. He reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. It seems that under this man's reign the book of the law of Moses was discovered. "And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes." 2 Kings 22:11. He instructed the high priest and others, saying, "Go ye, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found; for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us." This shows how great was the apostasy that existed. Even the book of the law containing the blessings and cursings written by Moses, which was put

in the side of the ark, wherein were contained the principles which should govern Israel, had been entirely lost. This king began at once to make a great reformation, in order, if possible, to rescue Judah from the great judgments which were hanging over it.

At this time the Lord was using a woman by the name of Huldah as a prophetess in Judah. The high priest went to her to inquire. Her reply was: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read; because they have forsaken Me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore My wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard; because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before Me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place." Verses 16-20.

Josiah gathered all the elders of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests and prophets, and all the people, both small and great, and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which had been found. And they brought forth all the vessels which had been dedicated to the sun, the moon, and the planets of heaven, out of the house of the Lord, to the brook Kidron, and burned them there. He also brought the grove out of the house

of the Lord, and brake it in pieces, and stamped it in the dust. ("Groves" were sun images.) He also appointed a passover. "Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah." "Moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, . . . did Josiah put away. . . . And like unto him there was no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him. Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of His great wrath, wherewith His anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked Him withal. And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there." 2 Kings 23.

Josiah was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz, who reigned three months in Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of the Lord. The next event in the history of Judah was that it was put under tribute to Egypt by Pharaoh-nechoh. Jehoahaz was put in bands, and Eliakim, another son of Josiah, was made king. Eliakim's name was changed to Jehoiakim. This king reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of the Lord. "In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years; then he turned and rebelled against him. And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord, which He spake by His servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of His sight, for the sins of Manasseh,

according to all that he did." Jehoiakim was succeeded by Jehoiachin. He reigned in Jerusalem three months, and did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.

"And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it." And Jehoiachin and his servants, and princes, and officers, were taken prisoners by the king of Babylon. "And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths; none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land." "And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah." He reigned eleven years in Jerusalem, and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. "For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until He had cast them from His presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon." The city was again taken in the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah. "And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon." "And he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about." "But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen." 2 Kings 25:7, 9, 10, 12.

Thus we have completed the history of the theocracy of Israel, commencing with the time they left Egypt, and ending with their captivity by Babylon, 588 B. C., making a history of nearly nine hundred years. This history has been recorded in Exodus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings.

We want to establish one point right here that we wish

the reader to grasp, viz., that, from the time when the theocracy was broken up and the children of Israel went into captivity and were scattered abroad, the book of Daniel takes up the history as does no other book in the Bible. And he who fails to make the connection between the book of Daniel and the ending of the theocracy, makes a mistake which he can not correct, and sustains a loss which he can not fully make good from any other book or books in the Bible. And, in order to show the perfect connection, we will quote the first part of this wonderful book:—

“In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand.” This shows that Daniel takes up the history exactly where the books of the Kings close. But before considering the book of Daniel, we wish to call attention to some of the points of history already passed over.

First, rebellion against God has always sooner or later resulted in punishment of the transgressor, regardless of position or class.

Second, we have learned, through this entire history of the government of God, that the Lord always had a true prophet as the highest officer in the state.

Third, the law of the ten commandments is the basis upon which all true government is founded.

Fourth, the law of blessings and cursings runs parallel with the law of the ten commandments.

These principles always have governed and always will govern the people of God, wherever they exist. Regarding the spirit of prophecy, we wish to speak further. We are now 3,397 years this side of the creation in our study. Adam, Enoch, Lamech, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph bring us from creation 2,369 years. These

all talked with God. All of them except Adam spoke of the future, and had the spirit of prophecy, thus showing that for 2,369 years God talked with the people here on the earth. There were others with whom He spoke, but we mention these as covering that period. This brings us down to the close of Joseph's life in Egypt. He told his brethren that the Lord would visit them and bring them out. Moses was raised up by the Lord, having this same gift of prophecy, and he led the children of Israel out of Egypt 144 years later, thus leaving us a space of 144 years from Joseph to Moses, in which we have no direct evidence of the existence of the spirit of prophecy. This includes the period of hardest servitude of Israel in Egypt. Malachi was the last Old Testament prophet. He prophesied 397 years before Christ, or 3,607 years after the creation. Now, during this entire period of 3,607 years, the spirit of prophecy was a continual light to the world, with the exception of 144 years, while Israel was in Egypt. During this period we have the record of between fifty and one hundred prophets, consisting of both men and women, mentioned by name, besides where the Scriptures speak of companies of prophets. Another query that might arise in the minds of some is, Why do we have the writings of nearly twenty of the prophets just prior to and immediately following the breaking up of the theocracy? The only logical answer that can be given is this, God's children were to be scattered abroad, and these books, such as Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the minor prophets who prophesied at this time, were to foretell the history of the world, that God's people, though scattered abroad throughout the earth, might fully understand the history of the work of the Lord in the earth, until the Lord would come the second time, and set up His everlasting kingdom. Let the reader carefully peruse and study these books here mentioned, with this thought in view, and he will see a beauty







*BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.*

in the writings of the prophets that he has not heretofore realized. The subject-matter in all these nineteen books of the prophets which pertain to their own day, as compared to the future, is very small indeed. Later on in this study we will refer more particularly to these books, and shall show that their writings pertain very largely to the latter days, and especially to the time when God will gather the remnant of His people who have been scattered abroad, preparatory to setting up His everlasting kingdom.

The breaking up of the theocracy was a sad time for the church. The Lord intended that His people should continue in that form of government, with Him as ruler, until He should come the second time; but, owing to their rebellious condition, and their departure from God, He said through the prophet Ezekiel (chapter 21, verses 25 to 27) to the last king on the throne, which we have learned was Zedekiah: "And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." "Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them." Micah 3:6. "Her gates are sunk into the ground; He hath destroyed and broken her bars; her king and her princes are among the Gentiles; the law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the Lord." Lam. 2:9.

What a sad picture this gives, when God has departed from His people! There had been a continual light burning through the spirit of prophecy for nearly thirty-five hundred years. The law of God and this great gift to the church had stood side by side. The shekinah had followed the ark

of God for forty years through the journey in the wilderness. It had rested upon the prophets for centuries, but the sun has now gone down, and it is a dark day for Israel. The cause of this is plainly stated in the last text quoted, which says, "The law is no more." We also read, "Where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." Prov. 29:18. The Lord will not recognize His people when they so far depart from Him that they no longer regard His law and set at naught His precepts. This is a fixed principle; let it ever be remembered.

From 397 B. C. until about the time of John the Baptist is another period in which this gift was not signally manifest. Israel was in a deplorable condition. Their religion was merely an outward form. And, as Paul shows in Romans the second chapter, while they claimed to keep the law, they were breakers of the law, and dishonored God. Hence there was no vision during this period. This gift of prophecy sprang up about the time of John the Baptist, and lasted during the lives of the apostles, until the book of Revelation was written, in A. D. 96. This period was something over one hundred years in length.

Following this period there was to be another great apostasy, called "the mystery of iniquity," which was foretold by Daniel, Paul, and John, and was to continue 1,260 years. This power was called the lawless one, or the man of sin, who was to "trample the truth to the ground, and practise, and prosper." The apostle Paul said, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." Corruptions began to enter the church in his day. They continued to increase until the full development of the Papacy, in 538 A. D. Its supremacy continued till 1798, including, as it does, the time we call the "Dark Ages." Consequently during this period the spirit of prophecy was again withdrawn from the people. Having thus clearly and unquestionably laid down the principles governing God's people, we

pass this line of thought, with the promise that later on in this study we will show that, in the gathering time of those who were scattered abroad, these two principles, the law of God and the spirit of prophecy (the two combined constituting the ensign of Israel), will be again held up before the world, under the proclamation of a special message foretold in the book of Revelation, fourteenth chapter, that is to be given to all the dwellers upon the earth. This message is to gather the remnant of Israel which is scattered abroad, preparatory to meeting the Lord when He shall come the second time to this world.

We will now consider the prophecies of Daniel, which connect the history of the overthrow of the theocracy with the future of earthly governments. This connection made by Daniel must not be overlooked by the Bible student. Without it as made by this writer, the prophetic chain would be broken and the history be incomplete.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY.

THE Lord has always desired His people to be a nation unto themselves, in order that they might be a light to the world. This fact is plainly stated in the seventeenth chapter of Jeremiah, where the prophet gives a plain warning in the following language: "Thus saith the Lord; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction. And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently harken unto Me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but hallow the Sabbath day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain forever. And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the plain, and from the

mountains, and from the south, bringing burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, and meat-offerings, and incense, and bringing sacrifices of praise, unto the house of the Lord. But if ye will not harken unto Me to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." Verses 21-27.

This scripture plainly declares that Jerusalem might stand forever, and kings and princes should ride through her gates. This prophecy was made even after Nebuchadnezzar had come against the city and put them under tribute, not long before Zedekiah, the last king, was taken and the city destroyed. Sabbath-breaking was one of the common sins of Israel, which led them away from the worship of the true God, to worship the host of heaven. The first day of the week having been dedicated to the worship of the sun, its observance had taken the place of that of the Sabbath of Jehovah. This prophecy was left unheeded, and soon the city met its threatened doom. But even later on the Lord put it into the heart of King Cyrus of Persia to issue a decree that the captive Jews might return and build their city, and thus have a place in the earth above all other places in which the Lord could meet His people.

Although the crown and diadem had been removed, and there could not exist another kingdom as before, yet the Lord would be their ruler, and turn the kings of nations in their favor, as He ever has had the power to do. "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him a house

at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the free-will offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem." Ezra 1:1-4. The fathers of Israel arose, and took hold of the matter. Means and help according to the decree were furnished. The vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away, were restored to them, and they returned and began the work. "And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem." Ezra 3:1.

They were afraid of the people who were dwelling in their land. The first thing they did was to erect an altar. They also kept the feast of tabernacles. "And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David king of Israel." "But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy; so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off." Verses 10, 12, 13.

This was a happy day for the exiles. But trouble now begins. Satan still lives, and, if he can not allure the Lord's children into sin, he will openly undertake to defeat their work. "Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin



heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel; then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto Him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither." This request was refused, however. "Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building." This they did all the days of Cyrus until Darius came to the throne of Persia.

"This is the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, even unto Artaxerxes the king; . . . Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations. Be it known now unto the king, that, if this city be builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings." In this letter they also made a request that the records be examined, stating that therein the king would find that this city was "a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces," and that they were movers of seditions, "for which cause was this city destroyed." "Then sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their companions that dwell in Samaria, and unto the rest beyond the river, Peace, and at such a time. The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before me. And I commanded, and search hath been made, and it is found that this city of old time hath made insurrection against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been made therein." "Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me."

This letter was addressed to and the reply despatched

by Artaxerxes, who succeeded Ahasuerus, and reigned but six months on the throne of Persia. The Jews were then compelled by force to quit the work. "Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia." Ezra 4. The second year of the reign of Darius was B. C. 519. The decree of Cyrus was issued B. C. 536. This shows that the second decree was seventeen years later than the decree made by Cyrus. This second decree is recorded in Ezra 6. During the seventeen years above mentioned, the Jews became discouraged, and returned to their occupations. But the Lord desired that this house should be built and His people should again enjoy His blessings as of old. So He raised up Haggai, a prophet, and gave him a message for the people. "Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of Mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labor

of the hands." Haggai 1:3-11. This stirred up the people to renewed effort.

"Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God helping them." Ezra 5:2. Satan was determined that this house should not be built. So the governor and his companions, whom the king had appointed again, visited the builders, and said: "Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall? Then said we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the men that make this building? But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius; and then they returned answer by letter concerning this matter."

The governor wrote a letter to Darius concerning this meeting with the Jews, and gave him their reply. And in this reply they referred to the decree of Cyrus nineteen years previous to this, and asked that the king might search in the books for this decree. On the receipt of this letter by the king, we read in Ezra 6:1, "Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon." The decree was found. Then King Darius wrote letters back to the governor of Judah and his companions, saying: "Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in His place. Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God; that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered." He further added in this decree: "And the God that hath caused His name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand

to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed." Thus ends the second decree for the rebuilding of the temple.

Concerning this building the prophet says, "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" Haggai 2:3. At the writing of Haggai the building had advanced to a considerable extent, and he wished to impress them with the thought that it was nowhere near completion. Then he adds, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." Verse 9. This was a great promise made to Israel, that, if they would obey the Lord their God, He would make that house far excel any house that had yet been built. And the glory attending it would far exceed that of the past, for that would be the temple to which the Messiah would come and "give peace."

Ezekiel, who had prophesied a few years prior to this, made a conditional prophecy to Israel regarding a temple that should remain forever upon the earth. This conditional prophecy is recorded in Ezekiel, chapters 40 to 48. This prophecy has been a query in the minds of many, but it is easy to be seen, when compared with historical facts which we are now considering, that it was a conditional prophecy, and would come under this heading, "*Another Opportunity.*" For we read: "Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from Me, and I will dwell in the midst of them forever. Thou son of man, show the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, show them the form of the house, and the

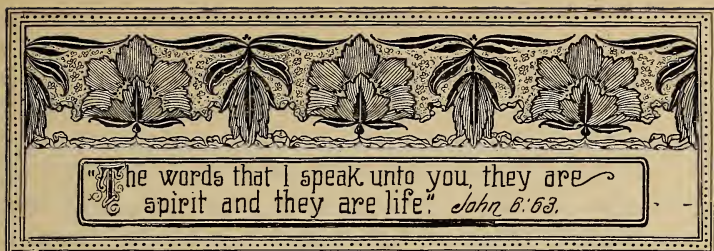
fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof; and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them." Eze. 43:9-11. This shows very plainly that the Lord never desired that His people should be left without a house on earth where His name would be placed. It is wonderful what great promises and privileges the Lord's people have had in all their history. But in the language of the prophet, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." Isa. 59:2.

Returning now to Ezra 7, we read of the last decree issued for the complete rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the restoration of the Jewish commonwealth. This decree was issued by Artaxerxes, king of Persia, and given to Ezra the scribe 457 B. C., sixty-two years after the second decree, issued by Darius Hystaspes. The decree is quite lengthy, covering not only Ezra's power to govern and establish order in Judea, but to furnish him with all means needed to support the priesthood and "to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem." From the date of this decree begins a very important prophetic period, brought to view in the eighth and ninth chapters of the book of Daniel, which will be considered later on in this study, and for this reason let the reader note these decrees carefully, for the better we understand all the scriptures thus gone over, the better we will comprehend that which is to follow.

"And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia." Ezra 6:14. Thus we

see that it required all of these decrees to complete the building and restoration of Jerusalem, thus making it clear that, later on, when the Lord said that the commandment to go forth to restore and build Jerusalem would mark the commencement of a prophetic period, that that period must date from the last decree, which threefold decree was completed by Artaxerxes, in 457 B. C.

We now call attention to the spiritual condition of Israel at this time and forward, for upon this point depends their future prosperity.



## CHAPTER XV.

### EZRA'S RETURN.

EZRA was a very devoted, earnest man, and one who was well acquainted with the history of God's people, and knew the true source of power and wisdom. "Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of Him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way; because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek Him; but His power and His wrath is against all them that forsake Him. So we fasted and besought our God for this; and He was entreated of us." Ezra 8:21-23. "And they delivered the king's commissions unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river; and they furthered the people, and the house of God." Verse 36.

Ezra, on arriving at Jerusalem, found his people in a sad condition spiritually. "Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated them-

selves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations. . . . For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons; so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands; yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass. And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished." Ezra now offered a prayer to the Lord, "and said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens. Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day." Ezra continues by acknowledging the sins of which they had been guilty, naming them before the Lord. "Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children; for the people wept very sore." Ezra 10:1. The people confessed all their wrongs. A general congregation of Israel was called from throughout Judah and Jerusalem, and they entered into a solemn covenant with Ezra and the Lord that they would put away their strange wives and correct their wrong habits, in order that the wrath of God might be turned from them. They made their offerings for their sins, and there was a general reformation wrought. Thus closes the book of Ezra.

Passing down eleven years later, to 446 B. C., the prophet Nehemiah carries the history still further. The report comes to Nehemiah that the affliction of Israel is great. "And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the



captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach; the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven." Neh. 1:3, 4. Nehemiah knew the cause of all this which had befallen Israel, for he mentions the cause in prayer. "We have dealt very corruptly against Thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which Thou commandest Thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech Thee, the word that Thou commandest Thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations; but if ye turn unto Me, and keep My commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set My name there." On the strength of this promise of the Lord, Nehemiah prays that He will forgive their trespasses.

The prophet was very sad of countenance. On going in before the king, his majesty noticed the sadness upon his face, and inquired the cause. The king was then told of the situation in Jerusalem. He asked Nehemiah what request he wished to make. He made the request that he might be permitted to go back to the land of Judah and repair the breaches that had been made in the wall, and to look after his people. He also asked for letters to the governors to convey him over to Judah, also letters that he might secure material for the rebuilding of the wall. This was all granted by Artaxerxes, the same one who had given the command to Ezra. Nehemiah arose at once, and went to Jerusalem, and viewed the wall which was broken down, and the gates which were consumed by fire. This faithful man then laid the matter before the Jews, saying, "Ye see

the distress that we are in; . . . let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach." By reading the book of Nehemiah, we find that they again, as of yore, had great opposition in this work. Enemies came in and threatened them, and the wall was built in most troublous times.

Nehemiah's experience with the Lord's people was very similar to that of Ezra's. A separation again took place after they heard the reading of the law by Nehemiah. Their idolatrous practises were laid aside, and their marriage relations with other nations stopped. But there is still another habit which always follows the practises mentioned, namely, Sabbath-breaking. "In those days saw I in Judah some treading winepresses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals." "Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath. And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath; and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day."

Sabbath-breaking was not only a sin at this time, but their fathers had done the same thing. As we have already learned, this was one of the causes for which they had been taken to Babylon, as recorded in Jeremiah 17. This brings us down to 445 B. C. The history of Israel from this time to the first coming of Christ is not recorded

in the Bible, except as they come in contact with earthly governments. These governments are taken up by the prophet Daniel, and for their history we go to that book. Suffice it to say that their condition is not improved between this and the advent of our Lord, for we find them at this time loaded with traditions and error of every sort concerning the Scriptures. As a body they rejected the message of John. They crucified Christ, persecuted the apostles, and, as a result, one more judgment, in harmony with the law of blessings and cursings, rested upon them. Their city was destroyed by the Romans, twelve hundred thousand were slain, and the apostles were compelled to say, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles." They are scattered abroad throughout the earth, and to-day, in fulfilment of the prophecy, they are a byword to all nations. But we have reason to be thankful that in all their history there have been among them some of the most devoted, God-fearing men and women the world has ever known. The word Israel from this time forward applies to God's professed people, and not to literal Israel.

We now turn to the book of Daniel, and trace the history of other nations through the remaining history of the world as depicted by his pen.

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