

THE ARGUMENT
OF
THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

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THE ARGUMENT

OF THE

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

A POSTHUMOUS WORK

BY

GEORGE STEWARD,

AUTHOR OF 'MEDIATORIAL SOVEREIGNTY,' ETC.

EDINBURGH:

T. & T. CLARK, 38, GEORGE STREET.

1872.

P R E F A C E.

IN giving to the world Mr. Steward's last papers, intended by him as in some sort a sequel to the *Mediatorial Sovereignty*, the Editors (his wife and daughter) feel that a few words of explanation are necessary. When the last sheet was dictated, a few weeks before his death, he told his wife that he regarded the work as virtually finished; that nothing essential remained to be added, as the argument of the Epistle terminates with the twenty-second verse of the tenth chapter. It was his intention, however, to append a concluding Meditation,—an intention he was not permitted to fulfil.

Mr. Steward's method of working was singular: he put nothing upon paper until the whole scheme was clearly wrought out in his own mind. He then dictated deliberately, but continuously, rarely recalling so much as a word, the sentences dropping from his lips with wonderful completeness; but he gave to his amanuensis no hint of chapter or paragraph, and left even the punctuation to her own perception of the meaning. When the dictation was finished, the whole was subjected to an unsparing revision. In the case of the present

volume, this revision was never made; and the responsibility of it devolved upon the Editors. They have deemed that they should best fulfil their trust by leaving the *ms.* intact, even at the risk of retaining a few apparent repetitions, rather than by venturing on any changes,—changes which Mr. Steward would have made with great freedom, but which, they feel warranted in saying, would have affected the *form*, but not the *substance*, of the thought.

For the divisions into chapters, for the titles of the chapters, for the marginal notes, and for the Addenda, the Editors alone are responsible.

Of their insufficiency for the work, no one can be so conscious as they are themselves; but they have only undertaken what must otherwise have been left undone. Most gladly would they have given it into abler hands, but the burdens which the nineteenth century lays upon her more gifted sons, leave them no leisure to pore over the manuscript of a brother, in order to gain the minute familiarity with it necessary to a careful revision for the press.

The Addenda are compiled from sermons, some of them dating as far back as 1833, and from notes of Scripture readings preserved by his wife. They carry on the exposition to the end of the Epistle, and are added in the hope that, though here and there but slight and fragmentary, they will yet be found on the whole suggestive and interesting.

If this posthumous work should be the means of extending in any degree the influence of its beloved author; if it should impart to but one soul the ardent, personal, all-absorbing interest in the Divine Records for which he was so remarkable; or if, in this age of minute criticism and petty cavil, it should teach one faltering student the true method of studying the great Catholic Verities, the Editors will not have laboured in vain. For them, indeed, their work has a mournful significance: it is the last token of affection which guards a grave.

CHIPPING ONGAR,
April 13, 1872.

CONTENTS.



	PAGE
INTRODUCTION,	1
CHAPTER I.	
The Son.—Heb. i. 1-3,	5
CHAPTER II.	
The Sonship of the Humanity.—Heb. i. 1-3,	18
CHAPTER III.	
Historical Developments of the Human Sonship in the New Testament.—Heb. i. 1-3, ...	23
CHAPTER IV.	
Doctrine of the Sonships tested by an Examination of the Old Testament Scriptures quoted in the Epistle.—Heb. i. 4-14, ...	34
NOTE.—On the Agency of the Angels under the Law.—Heb. ii. 1-4, ...	47
NOTE.—On the Pauline Authorship, ...	51
CHAPTER V.	
Doctrine of the Sonships continued.—Heb. ii. 5-9,	53
CHAPTER VI.	
Atonement in its relation to God.—Heb. i. 3,	61
CHAPTER VII.	
Atonement in its relation to Man.—Heb. ii. 9, 10, 14, 15,	74

CHAPTER VIII.

	PAGE
The Human Sonship the Ground of the Sonship of Believers.—Heb. ii. 11-13, and 16, ...	87

CHAPTER IX.

The Divine and Human Sonships the Ground of Christ's Rule over the Church.—Heb. iii. 1-6, ...	95

CHAPTER X.

'The Rest.'—Heb. iii. 6-19, and iv. 1-13, ...	102
NOTE.—On the Sabbath.—Heb. iv. 4, ...	121

CHAPTER XI.

Practical Discussion—'Elements.'—Heb. v. 11, 12, and vi. 1-3, ...	127

CHAPTER XII.

Practical Discussion—Growth and Perfection.—Heb. v. 12-14, and vi. 1, ...	133

CHAPTER XIII.

Practical Discussion—Of Irremissible Sins.—Heb. vi. 3-9, ...	140

CHAPTER XIV.

Practical Discussion—Social Developments of the Primitive Church.—Heb. vi. 9, 10, ...	152

CHAPTER XV.

Practical Discussion—Distinction between the Christian Status and Christian Works.—Heb. vi. 10-12, ...	153

CHAPTER XVI.

The Abrahamic Covenant.—Heb. vi. 13-20, ...	167

CHAPTER XVII.

Priesthood: its Relations to the Doctrine of the Sonship.—Heb. ii. 17, 18, and iv. 14, 15, ...	175

CHAPTER XVIII.

Priesthood: Qualifications and Office of the Aaronic High Priest.—Heb. v. 1-6, ...	186

CONTENTS.

xi

CHAPTER XIX.

PAGE

Priestly Character of Christ's Obedience and Suffering.—Heb. v. 7-9, 193

CHAPTER XX.

Melchisedec.—Heb. vii. 1-21, 203

CHAPTER XXI.

Unity and Finality of Christ's Priesthood.—Heb. vii. 22-28, 227

CHAPTER XXII.

Christ's Unseen Ministry.—Heb. viii. 1-6, 233

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Covenants.—Heb. viii. 7-13, 252

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Hebrew Tabernacle.—Heb. ix. 1-6, 266

CHAPTER XXV.

The Day of Atonement.—Leviticus xvi. 281

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Day of Atonement: its New Testament διερρώσις.—Heb. ix. 7-12, 290

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Great Sacrifice on Earth and its Presentation in the Heavens.—
Heb. ix. 12, ... 307

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Legal Atonement and Evangelical Atonement.—Heb. ix. 13-15, . 318

CHAPTER XXIX.

Διαθήκη, Testament or Covenant?—Heb. ix. 16, 17, 328

CHAPTER XXX.

Atonement the Ground of Remission.—Heb. ix. 18-22, 334

CHAPTER XXXI.

Finality of Atonement, Death, and Judgment.—Heb. ix. 23-28, 342

CHAPTER XXXII.

'Shadow' and 'Image.'—Heb. x. 1-4, .	PAGE 354

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Quotation from the Fortieth Psalm : its Teachings.—Heb. x. 5-9, .	363

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of the Nature and Doctrine of Evangelical Sanctification.—Heb. x. 10-14, ...	371

CHAPTER XXXV.

The Office of the Holy Ghost in reference to Divine Truth.—Heb. x. 15-18, ...	383

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The 'Holiest,' the 'Way,' the 'Veil.'—Heb. x. 19-21, .	388

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Evangelical Worship : its Qualifications and Privileges.—Heb. x. 22, .	395

ADDENDA.—Heb. xi. xii. xiii.	407

INTRODUCTION.

—◆—
(FRAGMENT.)

REVELATION is always put before us as a *fact*, the criteria of which are given, but the rationale of which is withheld. The Bible opens with this doctrine, it is ever and anon repeated throughout all the books of which it is composed, and is assumed in every statement from one end to the other. In adopting this form of communication, the Bible does not merely consult its own dignity, as being professedly a revelation from God, but is also in keeping with the essential data of all knowledge whatever. It is impossible that reasons should be the antecedents of existence, either with respect to the Divine Nature or to any natures derived from it. For instance, the existence of God itself must come to us as something *given*, and not as the thesis of mere reason; and this is equally true of our own existence, which is a thing *given*, not proven; the reasons must lie in the Infinite alone, and are only traceable in their outgoings from Him in the form of facts or declarations to His creatures. It is in respect to these that reason has its operation, and truth its limits. All knowledge must begin with the preamble of EXISTENCE

INTRODUCTION.

AS A FACT, and be propagated from this great parent truth. The fact or facts lying at the basis of knowledge, may lie more or less near to or remote from the starting-point of inquiry, but in every case the beginning truth must always be found in something GIVEN, never in a postulate created. Hence Revelation, starting from certain assumptions, is but an example of the one law of knowledge.

Whether Revelation be supposed to preclude the search of the human mind after elementary truths concerning God and the creature, which by possibility might be arrived at (thus, as it were, sparing us the labour of a long and doubtful road), or whether it be understood to declare, by the very fact of its own existence, such road to be impracticable,—authority and directness must in any case be deemed immense advantages which Revelation possesses over the exertions of the best trained intellect, or the best teachings of human experience. It is historically true that uncertainty and bewilderment seem more than incident to the history of the human mind in this direction, and seem to negative the presumption that in any case it is able to master these elementary truths. . . .

The problem of the Divine Existence can only be approached by means of the finite, *i.e.* the individual mind. It may be put thus: Given the finite to discover the infinite, or the known to reach the unknown. This, however, must imply the existence and apprehension of some relation between them, and that such relation is demonstrable. If this be in its own nature impossible, the inquiry must end where it began. . . .

All arguments drawn from the phenomena of humanity must be conflicting, since there is plainly little within this sphere which reflects the moral glories of a supposed infinitely Perfect Nature. Those who are bent upon maintaining the moral doctrine of Theism, at variance as it is with the facts of human nature as they everywhere show themselves, must need a much stronger faith than any which Revelation demands, or else must fall back on the old Gnostic doctrines of dualism. The religious history of the human mind seems to be unfolded in such doctrines as the following:—

1. A mere philosophical transcendentalism, which ascribes to Deity (if such it may be called) neither personality nor attributes cognizable by men or appropriate to the conception of an actual Being, but an abstraction merely, or an apotheosis of idealism. This was characteristic of the loftier flights of the Oriental and Greek philosophy, the tenets of Gnosticism, and the mystical reveries of Buddhism.

2. Dualism, which ascribes creation to another than the Supreme Deity, and accounts for the incongruities of the mundane system, either on the supposition that the agent employed in forming it was himself a being of ungodlike attributes, or that the material to be disposed and actuated was, to a certain extent, intractable to his hand.

3. Pantheism, which regards no Deity as prior to and independent of nature, nature being viewed as a self-developed system under various and inscrutable phases.

4. Polytheism, the antithesis of Pantheism, exhibiting, with limited and often incongruous attri-

butes, a wild exaggeration of the personality of Deity; for, while Pantheism extinguishes personality, Polytheism indefinitely multiplies it.

The whole showing of these remarks is, that the general doctrines of Theism are and must be teachings *ab extra*, and not *ab intra*; that turning in any direction which the mind may, to find out God, its search is abortive, both from its constitution and from its relations to the universe, unless in some form or other this knowledge be GIVEN to it. It is supernatural, easily introduced, as it were central in the man and his standpoint toward the universe; it brings with it a light peculiarly its own; in a qualified sense it is intuitional, though distinct from our mental constitution, and prepares us to desiderate and to apply illustrations and proofs from all quarters, more especially from direct and authenticated Revelation.

The passage which opens the Epistle to the Hebrews is a sublime concentration of the entire doctrine of Revelation, strongly resembling the opening chapter of the book of Genesis, or that of St. John's Gospel. It is at once majestic and full. Though simple in its construction, it is remarkable for its antithesis: for example, the word God is evidently to be ruled in interpretation by that of Son; the antithesis here is clearly personal. . . .

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

CHAPTER I.

THE SON.

‘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; who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power.’—HEB. I. 1, 2, 3.

NEITHER here nor in the Scriptures generally is revelation put before us as a new fact, it always goes backward as a history to former times and persons. It assumes that divine communications to the world have in all ages been accepted as such by sections of men at least. Hence there is no attempt to argue in favour of their certainty or probability. They are assumed as matters of fact, and new revelations are placed on the foundations of older ones. This seems to intimate the necessity of some training in accordance with the divine measures, and that, where there is no such preparation for the divine oracles, no such oracles are given. A nation, a family, or a series of individuals (bearing some relations, more or less remote, to one another), are the chosen receptacles of these divine communications; in order both that the truth may be imparted to suitable recipients, and

Later revelations rest on earlier ones.

CHAP. I. that a line may be formed to give unity and consistency to an entire series, which would otherwise become fragmentary and liable to mutilations or extinction. So here 'the Fathers'¹ are mentioned as the depositaries of the earlier revelations, and the generation existing in the time of the writer as the depositaries of the last revelations,—which last must be regarded as declaring the rule of all earlier ones. All revelations were cotemporary with some persons who were eye-witnesses of the facts they relate, or the immediate recipients of the oracles delivered. Thus the oracles were fastened in their integrity, were available for existing religious needs, and became fundamental to other revelations as yet reserved for the future.

All terminate
in the Son.

The prophetic revelations here referred to are accordingly represented as extending over 'sundry times,' and as given 'in divers manners,' while the whole series is, with marked emphasis, declared to have terminated in the manifestation of the Son. His mission and ministry stand at the close of the prophetic ages,—in prophetic phrase here called 'these last days.' This phrase, in the Old Testa-

Last days.

¹ Our translators probably took 'Fathers' exclusively in a Jewish sense. For this limitation, however, there is no warrant in the text; for, though this is undoubtedly the familiar sense of the word in the New Testament, it ought not to be so restricted here. To do so would be to limit the retrospect of revelation to the Jewish race, whereas the passage offers a synopsis of its whole course. 'Not that it is of Moses, but the Fathers.' The *πρεσβύτεροι* of the 11th chapter cannot be thus limited, and may be taken as the synonym of *patres*. The Fathers are the great historical personages—Jewish, Noachian, and pre-diluvial, including the Father of the race himself.

Jewish writers the phrase has generally been held to signify the Messianic age, *i.e.* the age of Messiah's manifestation and ruling glory. CHAP. 1.
Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

The relation of the Son's mission both to the past and future of the world, as well as the ground of that relation, is declared by the very title 'Son,'—since, had Jesus Christ been a merely human person, though dignified with this appellation, it could not be made apparent why He must needs be the last of the prophets, or why He might not have stood at the head of a new series. He is here manifestly put into the class of prophets; and had He not been as a *person* immeasurably superior, with this parity of office, there could have been no reason why He might not have had a series of successors. Revelation might have been made continuous to this day, instead of being broken off with the Son,—the apostles being its continuators instead of being regarded as included in Him. Here, however, they are not so much as named; for, as the history shows, they were the mere organs of His doctrine, and received their prophetic powers entirely from Him. The position in which the Son is placed in the rear of all the prophets, and as having no successor, implies a truth of the first importance, *viz.*, that, strictly speaking, His is the sole revelation of God given to the world, at once the light of the past and of the future. Properly considered, all antecedent systems were but anticipated Christianity. It borrowed nothing from them—they rather reflected it, and were therefore, as it were, recalled and absorbed in the one glory of the Only-Begotten.

The Son as divine closes the series of prophets.

The apostles merely His organs.

The Son the only revelation given to the world.

CHAP. I.

Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

The Son the
very substance
of the New
Testament.

It is obvious, then, that a supreme importance here belongs to the term 'Son.' The whole doctrine of this epistle may be said to take its rise from it, and to be only a great development of this its first principle. Nor must it be overlooked that this view is but a synopsis of New Testament teaching, and its cardinal distinction from the teachings of the Old. In the New Testament, we have the development of a PERSON variously represented and carried through the whole, so that the entire system of facts and doctrines can exist only in this peculiar combination. The Son is, personally and directly, only *partially* the author of the New Testament. As the *organ* of this revelation He has associates in the apostles; but as the SUBSTANCE of the revelation He stands alone: so that, were it possible to conceive of His *organic* relations to the gospel being other than they are, His *essential* relations to it could never be altered—He is less the Revealer than He is the Revelation itself.

The prophets
organs only of
revelation.

In this lies the capital distinction between the Old Testament and the New. In the former there are not only 'sundry times and divers manners,' but divers persons also, concerned in the formation of the whole; but all are, nevertheless, entirely severable from the truth delivered; personally they make no part of it,—they are mere organs between God and the world, nothing more. The order of their ministries, the times, circumstances, and even names, might be conceived of as entirely different from what they are, and yet the Old Testament might have been produced. But this cannot be affirmed of the New, which sets forth

The Son the
revelation
itself.

the person, attributes, and office of the Son, simply as facts which no more admit of substitution or change, than the system of nature could be altered, and the phenomena of existence remain what they are. CHAP. I.
Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

The germ of this great distinction is easily discoverable in the bosom of the Old Testament, and in the history of the Hebrew polity, but it appears expressly in the prophets. There the very same title—the Son—occurs: ‘Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given’ (Isa. ix. 6). And again in Psalm ii. 7: ‘I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.”’ The Son was the first oracle of the Incarnation, given by the angel to the Virgin Mother, and the sublime theme of the Baptist’s ministry. These testimonies were followed by our Lord’s own concerning Himself, more fully recorded in John’s Gospel than in the others; it seems, indeed, as if written on purpose to put on record the earnestness and persistency with which Jesus maintained this truth, even to the death. It is the doctrine of the Acts; it is the Pauline gospel; the gospel of the Epistles; it is given even in the Apocalypse, and is manifestly the foundation truth of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The statement here, then, is an evangelical summary; and is, with great propriety and majesty of diction, made the exordium of this epistle. ‘Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power.’

CHAP. I. The first expression, 'heir of all things,' is
 Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. manifestly the proper correlative of His Sonship,
 Verbal criti- and also of the work ascribed to Him, viz. 'that
 cism. He made the worlds.' As correlative to the Son-
 ship, and as standing with the declaration of His
 office as Creator, it effectually bars out the notion
 that He was a mere delegate or instrument in
 the production of the universe; since, besides the
 impossibility of conceiving that this was done
 by a Being less than God, it ascribes to the Son
 a right or heirship in all things which entitles
 Him to rank as their Final Cause. If we render
κληρονόμον by 'Lord,' as some critics have done,
 this must still be construed strictly as an in-
 herent dignity, and must not be confounded
 with His acquired and historic sovereignty as
 the Mediator. The expressions *ἀπαύγασμα τῆς*
δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, rendered
 'the brightness of His glory, and the express
 image of His person,' are, though figurative,
 wonderfully chosen to illustrate and confirm the
 august appellation of the Son. The *ἀπαύγασμα*
 signifies an outflowing radiance, as that of the sun.
 This figure gives us the *manifestative* idea, as essen-
 tially belonging to the Son, i.e. the power of making
 present and conscious to creatures a nature not
 otherwise accessible, just as the sun, though vastly
 distant from the eye, is made present to it by the
 efflux of his rays.

This is a general argument, illustrative of our
 Lord's filial divinity. What follows is still more
 explicit, seeing that the words, 'express image of
 His person,' were intended as something more than
 an exegetic equivalent to 'the brightness of His

Image of His
 person.

glory.' Express image, or literally 'character,' is far more definite than ἀπαύγασμα, or 'brightness;' as is also ὑποστάσις, or 'substance,' than δόξης, or 'glory.' These are put in apposition, it is true, but the later forms the climax of the description. 'Character' is simply an exact duplicate of an original, and in this connection is undoubtedly meant to stand as the representative of that original, which cannot by itself be seen, but only as the die or seal is seen in the wax, the type in the letterpress, or the plate in the engraving. This 'character' is here said to pertain to the ὑπόστασις or divine essence, which is a stronger expression in favour of our Lord's divinity than if rendered 'person,' as has been done by our translators, after the consent of early theological writers, though the New Testament does not afford a second instance of ὑπόστασις so rendered. The image or transcript of a nature, while it does necessarily include the idea of the representation by another of the person whose nature or substance is characterized, altogether shuts out the feasibility of our understanding this as of a merely reflected likeness or personality; it is of a nature or essence that the Son presents the 'character,' which cannot, therefore, be separated from the notion signified by the ancient χαρακτήρ.

CHAP. 1.
Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

Literally,
character of
His essence.

Strongly ex-
pressive of the
Son's divinity.

This expression, therefore, while it absolutely precludes Arianism on the one hand, renders the humanitarian hypothesis absurd. To complete the force of this remarkable testimony to our Lord's divinity, the words ὃς ὢν, 'who being,' with which it opens, should not be overlooked, since these are emphatic as declaratory of personal subsistence in

CHAP. I. respect to the ascriptions which follow, and are not
 Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. to be understood of any official or acquired relations which He may have assumed in the history of His manifestations. He is all this *independently* of these historical relations, and this is the glory which He had with the Father before the world was.

The 'more excellent name' which He has obtained by inheritance (ver. 4), the address to 'the Son,' as God, by the Father (ver. 8), and His recognition as Lord (ver. 10), are all so many titles appropriate to Him simply as the Son, and are intended to enforce the doctrine of the third verse.¹ So is also the remarkable interjection of the doctrine of providence, 'upholding all things by the word of His power,' which is immediately collated with the great preliminary ascriptions to the Son. The true interpretation of these must be held to lie in their being taken entirely apart from the Incarnation, or human condition of this divine Person. The New Testament writers are wont, with very marked emphasis, to distinguish between Who the Son *was*, what He *became*, and what He *did*. Hence, though He is familiarly represented as a Person subsisting in two natures, the higher is still distinctively maintained; and, even in their current phraseology, His divinity is far more commonly used than His official character, much less His human nature, to denominate His Person; and, accordingly, in the exordium of this epistle He is introduced as 'the Son,' not as Jesus Christ.

This remark is singularly borne out by a glance

¹ The examination of this verse is resumed in the section on Atonement, Chapter VI.

at the writings of John. The reasons for this are obvious: the humanity of the Saviour is a thing patent from His entire history, His stock and pedigree, His condition, His life and death, as well as from the national anticipations which heralded His coming. To insist on this, therefore, had been a superfluous labour; but the more wonderful truth—His DIVINITY, and that particular form of it so characteristic of the New Testament—His SONSHIP, did indeed require an emphasis and accumulation of testimony from inspiration itself, as the great foundation truth of Christianity. But it is not from a series of explicit testimonies of this kind, merely, that we deduce the importance of this doctrine of ‘the Son,’ but from tracing its bearings, and, so to speak, its ruling force, throughout the entire system of evangelical truth.

(1.) The doctrine of the *personal* divinity of the Son imparts the peculiar characteristics of the New Testament oracle as distinguished from the Old. The ‘sundry times and divers manners’ which mark the inspiration of the prophets here entirely give place to the one oracle of the indwelling Son in human nature. This gives its significance to the closing phrase of the sentence, ‘hath in these last days spoken unto us by His SON,’—the meaning being, that the Son incarnate, clothed with the veritable and identical supremacy of God, utters the speech of God, yet as if personally spoken by human lips. An examination of the records of our Lord’s ministry entirely bears out this remark, which may be put in John the Baptist’s own words: ‘He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God;’ *i.e.* the indwelling divinity of the Son in

CHAP. I.

Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

Distinction
between the
utterances of
Christ and the
prophets.

CHAP. I. human nature was the very oracle of God Himself
 Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. to the world.

Method of Old
 Testament
 communica-
 tions.

An illustration of the mighty difference between the prophets and the Son may be fetched from the Old Testament; for it would seem that the ordinary mode of communicating with a prophet, according to God's own words, was by vision or dream. To a few privileged persons only was the divine similitude or form and the 'face to face' intercourse permitted. Among this number we may rank the three great Hebrew Patriarchs, especially Abraham, the friend of God, — Isaac and Jacob receiving this honour through him as persons of co-ordinate rank merely, *i.e.* as covenant persons. After them only Moses was exalted to this favour. In the Tabernacle he heard God speaking to him with the voice and language of a man. In the cloud which descended to the door of the Tabernacle the human similitude of God was concealed, but was made apparent to him, and lip converse followed this apparition, 'even as a man speaketh with his friend.' But this is the last example of this honour recorded in the Old Testament. It was rare and special, and only recurs in a more exalted form in the appearance of the Incarnate Son. Henceforth the oracle is resident in HUMANITY, not in its similitude; and the wonder of Jesus of Nazareth is that in His person was exemplified, in a far more exalted manner than in these Old Testament saints, the speaking of God to man by man.

There is this remarkable resemblance, however, between the rare and higher forms of manifestation we have noticed from the Old Testament and

the manifestation of the Incarnate Son, viz. that the conditions of intercourse, on man's part at least, are those of humanity in its ordinary state. There was no trance or ecstasy, dream or vision—no disturbance or suspension of the senses, or of intercourse with the surrounding world. To await the utterances of Jesus, or to draw them forth by questioning, seems much the same thing as to hear the ancient utterances in the Tabernacle, the 'face to face' converse in the Cloud, or the talkings mentioned in Genesis of God with Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. Whatever the degree of inspiration vouchsafed to the apostles by the Spirit, it is obvious from the history that it was not such as to make them individually and independently oracular persons. Even their gifts were divided, as they were derived, not original,—making up a grand total of doctrine resident in the apostolic college. But our Lord's doctrine and manner of delivery are widely different: they are oracular in the most absolute sense, teeming, resident, original; in a word, the style is absolutely peculiar and exclusively appropriate to the Son. Thus far of our Lord's ministry.

CHAP. I.
Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

(2.) This doctrine of 'the Son' is essentially related to the whole scheme of the gospel, considered as a dispensation of grace. The work ascribed to Him included in the word Redemption, cannot be ascribed to, or in the least participated in, by any order of prophets, or any names, however illustrious, met with in either Testament. The work of propitiation and atonement, the offices of mediation, the prerogatives of forgiveness, the mission of the Spirit, are things beyond the range

Redemption
exclusively
the work of
the Son.

CHAP. I. of all creature ministry. They lie without the
 Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. entire sphere of the mere administration of truth,
 prophetically considered, or the external economies
 of religion. Throughout the New Testament the
 Son is put before us, like the Angel of the Old
 Testament, as the representative and acting Deity.
 He is made to fill our vision, to engross our inter-
 est, and is immediately the one great object of
 personal trust. The whole evangelical commission
 centres in setting Him forth as a real, ever-present
 Power, whose offices are indispensable to individual
 salvation, and to access to God. What on any
 other hypothesis could be made of this Epistle to
 the Hebrews, in which the offices of the Son are
 everywhere exclusive and paramount?

The doctrine
 of the divine
 Son alone
 rescued Chris-
 tianity from
 the charge of
 blasphemy.

This is so obvious as to be here glanced at, only
 to show how entirely the doctrinal system of the
 New Testament hinges on the doctrine of the Son,
 and how all its aspects would be changed, and
 certainly made false, were this one truth with-
 drawn. To a Jewish mind, at least, all that part
 of Christian doctrine which rose above the level
 of the mere republication of the primary tenets of
 their Law, and the familiar illustrations of religion
 as then accepted, became extravagance, and even
 blasphemy (and indeed was so reported), by the
 non-recognition of the doctrine of the Son. To
 them it seemed as if trust and recognition were
 demanded for a second God; and that the Jehovah
 of the Old Testament was, by the doctrinal struc-
 ture of the new religion, superseded. This ob-
 jection would have remained in force, had not
 their own prophetic doctrine of the Son been the
 very foundation of the oracles of the 'last days.'

This, and this alone, rescued Christianity—demonstrated, as it was, by a series of unmistakable miracles—from such an imputation, and vindicated the mission of the Apostles to the world, as the authorized teachers of this religion, since they drew their inspiration as directly from the Son, as the Old Testament prophets drew theirs from the inspiration of the Father. Had their ministry been uninspired and unattested by miracles—independent, and not derived from the Son—it would have been a step backward in the history of divine truth. They would have been a class of persons self-interpreting the genius and design of Christianity; they would have marred instead of perfecting it; while, it is needless to say, they would have given no corroborative evidence of the peculiar and distinctive divinity of the gospel, nor could have claimed for it to supersede the law. The apostolic patent, from first to last, rested exclusively upon the divinity of the Son.

CHAP. I.

Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

CHAPTER II.

THE SONSHIP OF THE HUMANITY.

HEB. I. 1, 2, 3—*continued*.

Humanity of
Christ as truly
filial as His
divinity.

THE *divinity* of the Son is intimately connected with the character of His *humanity*; a point of vast moment, but too commonly passed over in discussions on His complex nature. The aspect of the divine Sonship on the human nature, does, in fact, determine the specific cast of that humanity as being personally filial also, and as forming the true human antithesis to the filial Godhead. Without taking this into account, the combination of the manhood with the divinity (from which arises the mystery of the Emmanuel) seems to lose much of its appropriate speciality, and wears a certain air of vagueness and generality not really belonging to it. This, no doubt, has partly arisen from the jealousy of orthodox divines in multiplying safeguards for the doctrine of the true and proper divinity of the Son, and it has too often led them, if not to disparage the humanity of the Saviour, yet to be shy of according to it the filial title. But to us the beauty and fulness of the doctrine of the person of Christ very mainly lie in the perceived harmony of the divine and human natures in this very specific peculiarity.

Indeed it is difficult to perceive on what other hypothesis the one personality of the Son is throughout the New Testament familiarly recognised, or how otherwise a number of its most forcible passages can be fully interpreted; for, unquestionably throughout the evangelistic records (more particularly those of John), *the* Son is constantly put before us as the visible, acting, speaking Jesus Christ. In no one instance is it otherwise, much less have we recurring distinctions between the divine and the human natures as they existed in Him, or definite boundary lines given on which the disciple's eye is bidden to rest. This of itself is enough to establish the doctrine of two correlative Sonships meeting in one Person—the one the image of God, the other the image of man. 'He that hath seen Me,' saith Jesus, 'hath seen the Father. How sayest thou then, Show us the Father?' 'He that seeth Me seeth Him that sent Me.' 'He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me.'

CHAP. II.

Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

New Testament mystery of two natures forming but one personality.

John xiv. 8, 9.

These and the like expressions do not admit of satisfactory interpretation, if the Sonship of the visible humanity be excluded from our regard, and they are explained only of the indwelling divinity of the Son; seeing that in this case the deity of the Son is just as invisible as the deity of the Father, which is opposed to the very words of Jesus. On the contrary, the *expression* of the divinity, both of the Father and the Son (in the one mediately, in the other immediately), is by the human nature of Christ, which nature therefore must be correlatively filial, or the teaching is not true.

Divinity of the Son as invisible as that of the Father; humanity of the Son the medium by which both are revealed; consequently the humanity shares the filial relation, or it could not represent 'the Father.'

CHAP. II. The histories of the nativity, and of the genealogies also, shed much light on this same question; for why does Matthew begin with a pedigree of Jesus Christ, tracing it downward from Abraham to David, and from David to Joseph, when his avowed object was to show that our Lord had no human father? The answer is anticipated. Then, again, the genealogy of Luke is (ch. iii.) significant of the same truth, by the opposite process of tracing the pedigree upward from Joseph to Adam. Why trace it to Adam, and not end it with Abraham, but that the same truth is reached by a counter process with that of Matthew, viz. the Sonship of our Lord's humanity?

Sonship of the
humanity de-
clared by the
Angel to the
Virgin.

The memorable communications of the Angel to our Lord's Mother, with this idea in our minds, need no further interpretation, except verse 35: 'And the Angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' Whatever explanations may be given of the former clauses of the verse, 'the Holy Ghost,' 'the power of the Highest,' etc., this at least is indisputable—that the birth of the Virgin, which must be the human nature (unless we fall into the extravagance of the Papists), is designated the Son of God; *i.e.*, while the filial divinity of the Person becoming incarnate must be fully allowed to contain the primary and surpassing ground of the appellation, yet the same is accorded to the Holy thing 'born,' and manifestly on the ground of its relation to the Supreme Nature. Hence to

interpret the phrase, 'the power of the Highest,' of the Son's divinity, while it is plainly gratuitous and far-fetched, gives no help whatever to a counter hypothesis; it is probably only an exegesis of the previous phrase respecting the Holy Ghost; but if interpreted of a distinct person from the Holy Ghost, verse 32 would settle it as a reference to the Father, not the Son. But, in truth, while these expressions are left somewhat in intentional obscurity where so great a mystery is concerned, the 'therefore' of the Angel which follows is sufficiently decisive that the *humanity* of the Saviour is the point kept in view in the declaration, as indeed the whole gist of the preceding communication demonstrates.

The bearing of this doctrine on the moral and federal aspects of our Lord's humanity, is too important to be passed over. The 'Holy thing,' as the Angel calls it, speaking of its humanity,—*i.e.*, in other words, of its faultless rectitude,—is obviously the result rather than the cause of the human Sonship of the Son. The creation of a human being of perfection suitable to a personal alliance with the divine Son was necessary, and a filial type of humanity was specifically created for this purpose. It possessed, therefore, as a nature, transcendent moral qualities, truly human indeed, but not lineally descended through the ordinary stock of humanity,—though to be truly human it was literally conceived and born. So far as the type went, the nature was unique and transcendent: though of man, rising above man, and a higher type of his nature than the very first moulded by the hand of God. The first was merely man; the

CHAP. II.
Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

Faultlessness
of Christ's hu-
manity the re-
sult of its
Sonship.

CHAP. II. second was God-man. A wondrous birth truly,
 Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. and the type and parent of the last rather than
 the first condition of man.

Christ's federal relation to us rests on the divine fatherhood of His humanity.

The importance of this view of the filial humanity appears also in the antitypal character ascribed to Christ in the New Testament. Romans v. and 1 Cor. xv. are destitute of foundation without it. Adam was the first of a race, and a type of sonship, and as such he is repeated in every one of his descendants. But how can Jesus of Nazareth be invested with such parity to Adam, seeing that, by His maternal side, He is made one of Adam's descendants, and therefore precluded, merely considered as a human being, from standing in the same rank with the first father of humanity? Obviously the truth wanted to bring out this parallel is the immediate divine fatherhood of our Lord's humanity: this raises Him to the same rank as Adam, and gives with the relation a perfect moral nature. He is thus constituted a Second Race Head, though born thousands of years later than the first, and after countless millions of his posterity. Time is of no moment here; it is absolutely reversed in the divine order of events, and the Son of the Incarnation assumes not merely parity but actual precedence of the first father of the race. He is in this sense *Πρωτότοκος* or *ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ*.

CHAPTER III.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE HUMAN SONSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

HEB. I. 1, 2, 3—*continued.*

It is remarkable that, contrary to the order suggested by analogy, viz. that of development from a lower to a higher truth, the order of our Lord's personal development seems to proceed from the higher to the lower. On the one hand, we have no information in the Gospels of any early indoctrination of His disciples into the mystery of His human Sonship; while, on the other, the same Gospels afford abundant evidence to the outset of His mission from the higher point of His divine Sonship. Even His Forerunner, the Baptist, advanced to this lofty doctrine in his preparatory testimony; and, in the later stages of his ministry at least, seems to have concentrated it mainly on this one article: 'I saw, and bare record,' said he, 'that this is the Son of God.'

The higher nature of Christ taught first.

John i. 34.

The Gospel of John, which opens with this testimony of the Baptist, gives continuity to it throughout, as the very testimony of Christ Himself. Indeed, John states that the design of his Gospel is to invest this grand truth with a suitable prominence: 'These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Son of God.'

John xx. 31.

CHAP. III.

Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

The secret of
His birth held
in reserve.

In the other Gospels this doctrine is far less prominent; still, wherever it occurs, it is in terms equally decisive of the true and proper divinity of the Son, while there is not a single passage in any of them which so much as hints at the promulgation of the mystery of His humanity. Probably it remained, during His lifetime, a family secret, and necessarily so, in deference to obvious circumstances. In fact, it could not be divulged at an early period without damage to His claims, which were to be enforced by a species of public evidence amply sufficient to prepare the way for final statements with respect to the true origin of His humanity. The several notices contained in the Gospels, particularly Luke's, respecting the reticence of the mother, are very suggestive on this head; and there is no doubt that among the things she is said to have 'pondered in her heart,' must be numbered the wonders of the Incarnation. These were deposited with her in the nature of reserves properly belonging to herself, but which also, as belonging to her Son, awaited the order of events, and were not to be forestalled in their publication by impatience, or the mere dictates of maternal sentiment. It is highly probable that the particulars of this great mystery recorded in the Gospels were given by our Lord's mother directly to the Apostles and others, after the Ascension, when they were obviously needed to complete the testimony as to Christ's person, and when the season had gone by which would have rendered such disclosures premature. He, who did not permit His disciples to tell men that He was the Christ, bidding them hold their knowledge for a

season in reserve, was hardly likely to permit them to bruit the matter of His own miraculous conception, if indeed, at that time, they knew anything about it.

CHAP. III.
Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

It is an equally interesting, and perhaps more difficult, inquiry, suggested by this subject, at what particular stages of our Lord's human history, and in what manner, the knowledge came to Him, both as to His lower and higher Sonships. This is a subject to be approached with great reverence and delicacy, lest we fall, if not into error, yet into a course of curious and vain speculation. It is, nevertheless, certain that both these mysteries must have had their dates of discovery to His consciousness. It is also probable the one would follow the other, and, in certain respects, progress in brightness down to the date of His Messianic manifestation. As we cannot suppose our Lord, in His human nature, to have been an exception to every law of humanity, and to have attained in mere childhood the knowledge appropriate to manhood, so we cannot judge that His acquaintance with these profound facts of His own existence was strictly coincident with that existence, and was independent of the stages of His human development. On this point we think there can be no mistake. That His development was wonderfully precocious, is indeed matter of positive testimony, and that this precocity took the direction of extraordinary acquaintance with divine things is certain; but it is also added, that 'He grew in wisdom, and in stature, and in favour both with God and man.' It was, therefore, not in the law of development, but in the *power* of it, that Jesus was a prodigy.

Inquiry when
our Lord be-
came conscious
of the mystery
of His own
nature.

CHAP. III.

Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

But with all this, not a word is said by the inspired writers on the great questions now referred to; indeed it seems as if the thirty years of our Lord's life were, with the exception mentioned by Luke, absolutely consigned to obscurity, perhaps on purpose to check the invincible tendency to pry into things which God, for wise reasons, makes secret. Yet we cannot think that during those thirty years, our Lord's wonderful attributes were more than in a condition of progress toward maturity, or that the hour of His public manifestation could have been unduly delayed. Nor can we think that the circumstances of home life, and of subjection to His parents, together with surroundings of neighbourhood and intercourse with His countrymen, admitted of the full consciousness of the transcendent powers which centred in Himself. Self-revelation must have borne some proportion to His position as a man, and must have accorded with that temporary abeyance which was a 'sign' to them during that long term of mysterious sojourning in Nazareth; for there is not the least hint in the Gospels that our Lord's Messianic powers were in any instance brought to light during this period: indeed what scope was there in these secluded circumstances for their exercise? To the men of Nazareth themselves it would seem that His after fame created both surprise and incredulity.

At the visit to the Temple aware of His divine Fatherhood.

Luke ii. 41.

We turn, however, with great interest to the one incident given us by Luke, of the child Jesus being with His parents at Jerusalem at the Passover, when He was twelve years of age; since we gather from it that at so early a stage as this, He was in the possession of the truth of His Fatherhood,—

perhaps in the higher and lower sense, but at least in the latter. As there is no reason to believe that in this latter sense He received the fact from outward instruction, but rather from immediate revelation, there seems equal reason to suppose that the higher truth was at least dawning on His mind. This is apparent from His rejoinder to the complaint of His mother, 'Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.' 'How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' The force of the reply lies in its obvious antithesis to 'thy father and I'—thus somewhat covertly disowning an earthly fatherhood, accompanied by the recognition of a heavenly one. Thus is brought into view the existence at that early time of a supreme Father, to whom He stood very intimately related, and to whom His duty was recognised as taking precedence of all earthly relations and obligations.

The saying itself is undoubtedly the thesis of our Lord's entire future ministry, and the summary of His human history; but that He should so early have comprehended His relation to an unseen Father, and the issue of this in a specific form of duty, might well confound His parents, and invest the episode of the Temple with an air of mystery. That the conversation referred to turned upon the signs and characteristics of the Messiah's manifestation, can hardly be doubted. This seems to have been listened to with peculiar interest by the mother, who is not to be supposed to have interrupted Him; and probably we have here the true explanation of Luke's general remark, 'that His mother kept all these sayings,' *i.e.* these Temple

CHAP. III.
Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

CHAP. III. sayings, 'in her heart.' 'The Father's business'
 Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. thus early opened, was clearly that of awakening,
 by this wonderful child, a new and more intelligent
 interest than the doctors possessed on this great
 national subject, and of drawing attention to Him-
 self, as the object of national expectation, many
 years ere He was actually put before the nation in
 His full divine auspices.

The Tempta-
 tion addressed
 to the huma-
 nity of Christ.

Matt. iv.
 Luke iv.

The Temptation, as given us by both Matthew and Luke, is evidently framed on the hypothesis of a double Sonship, *i.e.* on the Messianic character of the divine Son. The subtilty of the Tempter is apparently directed to experimenting on the *higher* truth of His person, from which alone the miracle-working power could be supposed to issue,—'Command these stones to be made bread,'—while the strength of his appeals lay in the direction of Christ's humanity or His Messiahship; *i.e.* the Son of God cannot be supposed liable to suffer hunger without the power of self-supply, or dash Himself down from a pinnacle of the Temple, and be subject to the ordinary laws of bodily existence. His divine humanity or Sonship is the plea of patent against calamity, artfully urged: angels must minister to Him as the Son. The same truth is insinuated as the basis of His claim to universal empire, which should belong to Him as the Son, *i.e.* in the broad prophetic sense, as the Son of David—only He is to hold it, intermediately at least, as a sort of fief from the Tempter himself. To have proposed these temptations to the Godhead is an inadmissible absurdity; they were based on the Messianic relations of the Son, *i.e.* on the proper Sonship and prerogatives of His humanity.

It may be a question not to be satisfactorily settled, what the full import of the baptismal scene on the Jordan was. Broadly, it may be regarded as our Lord's official inauguration, and as the public recognition of his Messialship by the Father. It may, however, mean more than this; it may be rather a full recognition by the Father of His personal glory, and the climax of all antecedent revelations to Him on this head, from His youth upwards. This is rendered more probable by the voice from heaven, related both by Mark and Luke as a personal address to Jesus Himself, instead of to John the Baptist, as given by Matthew. Matthew may have only intended to render what was in fact a personal address to Christ, as given to John because of his proximity to and interest in the scene. On this supposition the Evangelists may be harmonized, for unquestionably the scope of the threefold narrative centres in Jesus Himself, not in John the Baptist. To *Him* the heavens were opened. *He* saw the Spirit descending on Himself. It is highly probable, therefore, that the voice also was actually addressed to Himself. If so, it is retrospective and culminating; so that, from that hour, the great truth of His own personal glory reached its zenith, and nothing was ever added to it afterwards, nor indeed could be. The same voice, on the Mount of Transfiguration, reiterating the same great oracle, obviously intended it for His disciples, for it added, 'Hear Him.'

In general it may be safely affirmed that the *divine* Sonship of Jesus is the leading truth throughout the New Testament, particularly throughout John's Gospel; and that in our Lord's language,

CHAP. III.

Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

The Baptism
a culminating
revelation to
the Son of His
personal glory.

Matt. iii. 17.

Mark i. 11.

Luke iii. 22.

Divine nature
of Christ, the
leading truth
of the New
Testament.

CHAP. III. as rendered by John, the article prefixed to the
 Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. terms Father and Son is especially discriminative
 Exceptions. in this respect: *the* Father, *the* Son. But even in
 John's Gospel at least a passage or two may be
 pointed out in which the lower truth can be
 identified, such as chapter xvii. 21, 22, and 26.
 The love in which believers have a common
 fellowship with Himself and the Father, must
 necessarily be understood as arising from the
 human Sonship, since the divine must be ineffable
 and incommunicable. Another passage occurs,
 chap. xx. 17: 'Go to my brethren, and say
 unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your
 Father; and to my God, and your God.' In
 this passage the term 'brethren' at once deter-
 mines the common ground of Fatherhood between
 Christ and His disciples as being that of humanity;
 to which may be added the great argument of the
 latter clause, 'My God, and your God,' which is but
 an emphatic exegesis of the sense of the preceding
 Fatherhood.

It may be in place here further to affirm, that all
 those passages in our Lord's history in which His
 mere humanity is made prominent, should be inter-
 preted on the same principle. For instance, those
 which notice His seasons of private devotion; His
 going up 'into a mountain to pray,' and 'continuing
 all night in prayer to God;' His hymn of praise,
 in company with His disciples, at the Paschal
 Supper; His communion in the national services;
 and even His exercises of authority on two distinct
 occasions, within the precincts of the Temple.
 Perhaps also may be included the opening formula
 of the Lord's Prayer, 'Our Father which art in

heaven,' or those more familiar uses of the term Father in our Lord's ministry, *e.g.* 'My heavenly Father,' or 'your heavenly Father,' addressed to the disciples. Most of these passages certainly suggest to us the sense of Father as common to our Lord and His disciples. CHAP. III.
Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

One of the strongest examples of the lower use of the term is found in the utterance of the agony: 'Abba, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.' Such language is clearly applicable alone to the filial humanity, as it expresses that profound submission to the will of God which is the very sublimity of human virtue, but which is totally inapplicable to Him who in His higher nature was equal with God, and one with the Father. The same remark is obviously applicable to our Lord's exclamation on the Cross: 'My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' The Psalm from which it is taken is, like several others, descriptive of the humanity and its exercises, the Godhead being almost entirely withdrawn from view; a circumstance of great importance in the interpretation of these facts of the New Testament, showing us how strongly the doctrine of the filial humanity was put forth by the spirit of prophecy in anticipation of the evangelical history. The utterance
of the agony.

Matt. xxvii. 47.

The doctrine of the double Sonship is the key, indeed, to all the personal statements respecting Christ in the New Testament; some being understood in the higher, others in the lower acceptance, yet without any distinction of language or palpable note of difference. The very basis of this language and mode of thought is the double Sonship, which The double
Sonship, the
key to the per-
sonal state-
ments respect-
ing Christ.

CHAP. III. is not only common to the four Gospels, but is carried on through the Acts and the Epistles. It is sufficient to notice the very frequent formulas occurring in St. Paul's Epistles; *e.g.* 'the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,' and 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;' which cannot be referred immediately to His divinity, but must be interpreted by a backward reference to the Gospels themselves, such as the passage in John before noticed: 'My Father, and your Father; my God, and your God.'

Mark xiii. 32.
To be interpreted exclusively of the human Sonship.

There is yet one passage in the Gospels (Mark xiii. 32) so decisive in this direction, and otherwise so encumbered with difficulties, that it may be fitly adduced as a final selection, illustrating the opening verses of the Epistle. 'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.' To attempt to expound this passage by a reference to the force of the Hebrew verb, rendering it 'to make known' instead of 'to know,' is to strain its meaning beyond any safe warrant or licence of criticism; for in what sense is this applicable to angels? to disembodied men, or men living upon the earth at that time? or even to our Lord's own ministry, which either did or did not make it known as matter of fact? Least of all can this rendering suit the reference to the Father. The natural and proper sense of the words is obviously that which stands in the translation, supported as it is by our Lord's declaration (Acts i. 7), 'The times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power;' and also confirmed by the style and title of the Apocalypse — 'the Revelation

of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him.' The passage in Mark should therefore be expounded of the lower Sonship (commonly included in the designation of the higher), but the higher is in this instance excluded precisely as in the first clause of the second verse of this Epistle: the Son who is ranked with the prophets is not the same Son by whom 'God made the worlds.' In the one instance, the human Son is the immediate organ of utterance to the world in common with the prophets; in the other, the divine Son is put before us as the Creator of the worlds; yet they remain undistinguished. This, we apprehend, is the true interpretation of this passage, on which so much criticism has been unsatisfactorily expended. The human Sonship of Christ cannot be omniscient, and might therefore not be acquainted with the great secret of the Father. But it is a sufficient bulwark against Unitarianism, if we maintain the doctrine of the higher Sonship, to which all the divine attributes appertain in connection with the lower, to which the attributes of humanity only belong. We thus avoid doing violence to a plain testimony of our Lord's; in fact, perverting His own words, from an extreme jealousy to maintain the honour of His Godhead.

CHAP. III.
 Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

CHAPTER IV.

DOCTRINE OF THE SONSHIPS TESTED BY AN EXAMINATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES QUOTED IN THE EPISTLE.

HEB. I. 4-14.

THE doctrine of the double Sonship already propounded may now be properly tested by an examination of the several Old Testament Scriptures quoted in the first and second chapters of the Epistle. Before entering upon them, we shall, however, examine the fourth verse of the first chapter, by which they are prefaced.

‘Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.’

Ch. i. 4 refers to the human nature of Christ, since the divine admits of no comparison.

The phrase, ‘being made so much better than the angels,’ is obviously exegetic of the previous verse, ‘sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high,’ and it would have been more intelligible had it not been improperly separated from it. Assuming this, it is evident, (1.) That the supremacy here ascribed to the Son is not the same as that inherent in Him in His proper divinity: that dominion is expressed in the third verse, ‘upholding all things by the word of His power,’ and in the eighth by the declaration, ‘Thy throne, O God,

is for ever and ever!’ This sovereignty, being original and absolute, cannot be brought into comparison with any forms of creature sovereignty, but must clearly stand alone; so that to collate it with that of angels, as being so much better or more excellent than theirs, would have been to depreciate, not to exalt it. (2.) Further, the phrase, ‘the right hand of the Majesty on high,’ is clearly expressive of Mediatorial rather than inherent sovereignty, allusive as it is to the status of a prime minister, who derives his power entirely from the prince. It strictly describes an administrative position, in which the person possessing it has ‘no fellows,’ but in which he is not removed absolutely beyond the range of comparison with other principalities and powers within the same empire. He is immeasurably the chief, but still only an intervening power between the throne and its subjects. (3.) It hence follows that ‘the more excellent name,’ above that of angels, which He obtains ‘by inheritance,’ cannot be the name intrinsically divine. Besides, the question which follows, ‘To which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my son?’ would be devoid of meaning if it were understood as equivalent to the recognition of any angel as possessing divine attributes.

The conclusion, then, is, that THE NAME obtained by inheritance is a creaturely dignity, drawn not from the angelic hosts, but from the human race. The human nature is henceforth *personally constituent of Himself*, and accordingly we understand the inheritance of the name, Son, as ascribed to our Lord’s ENTIRE PERSON, human and divine. It is an inheritance derived to His human nature

CHAP. IV.

Heb. i. 4-14.

Mediatorial,
not inherent,
sovereignty
expressed here.

Christ assumed the
human nature,
not the angelic.

CHAP. IV. from its conjunction with the divine. This inter-
 Heb. i. 4-14. pretation is enforced by a reference to the sixteenth
 verse (ch. ii.): 'For verily He took not on Him the
 nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed
 of Abraham.'

'For unto which of the angels said He at any
 time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten
 thee? And again, I will be to him a father, and
 he shall be to me a son?'

We now proceed to the examination of the quotations of Old Testament Scriptures bearing on the doctrine of the double Sonship; but as these quotations are intimately related to each other, they will be best illustrated by a mode of interpretation which keeps their relation steadily in view. They are given after the Jewish manner, and are intended to direct attention to the subject-matter of each Psalm, not to a particular verse only. Thus, in the quotation contained in the fifth verse, we see that a reference is understood to the great theme of the second Psalm. The words, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee,' are so evidently Messianic in their application, that to restrict the term Son to the higher sense, as is usually done, is certainly to misinterpret the passage. This is obvious from the broader sense of the word with which the Epistle opens, the argument of the chapter, and the structure of the Psalm from whence it is taken. But beyond this, the words 'this day have I begotten Thee' are decisive against the higher view; for they destroy the Son's eternity, notwithstanding all attempts to show that 'this day' is a paraphrase for eternity. 'This day' is never used to signify eternity; but in Scripture, particularly in the Pro-

phets, it is uniformly used to signify an unknown but definite period of duration. It is commonly used to signify the Messianic age, or some section of it; by St. Paul, to signify the date of the Resurrection, and here, the date of the Incarnation.

CHAP. IV.
Heb. i. 4-14.

‘I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son,’ is the next quotation, and further sanctions this interpretation of the Sonship of the human nature. A brief reference to the history demonstrates that the human Sonship of the Messiah is the direct subject of promise by Nathan to David, and the divine only by implication.

1 Chron. xxii.
10 refers to the human nature of Christ: this only could descend from David.

The declaration stands as a promise to David and his house, and could not therefore bear upon the eternal and ineffable relation existing between the Father and the Son, but upon the Incarnation only. God was to stand to the seed or Son of David in the privileged relation of a Father. This promise, in its immediate fulfilment, appertained to Solomon, who was thus made a type of the Messiah, *i.e.* of His humanity. Besides, the promise itself was a futurity; and the relation here signified not then an accomplished fact, a consideration which must preclude all reference to a divine nature. In a word, the promise, taken in all its circumstances, must be held to be confined to the human descent of the Messiah, which alone could be matter of dynastic significance to David, though in his prophetic character he doubtless well understood that the higher truth of the Messiah’s divinity was included.

The second and seventy-second Psalms (both of them David’s own) corroborate and illustrate this view, since they were in all probability written after,

The Sonship and the royalty of the Messiah the subject of the 2d and 72d Psalms.

CHAP. IV.

Heb. i. 4-14.

and in consequence of, this promise of Nathan to David. In both, the royalty of the Messiah is the great theme of prophetic description; and in both, also, the Sonship is made prominent. Hence these Psalms are to be viewed as exponents of the promise in these two great leading features, and derive an additional interest when placed together in this light. The Son, in the quotation (from the second Psalm), is the Son of David and the Son of God. He is the Lord's Anointed, agreeably to the theocratic type, and is therefore said to be seated 'on the Holy Hill of Zion.' He is represented as the oracle of the divine 'decree,' which respects the nature and extent of His rule. The terms of it correspond with the theocratic type: He has the heathen for His inheritance. He rules with a rod of iron, *i.e.* over rebel subjects, and maintains His dominion with full integrity against every opposing confederation. The interpretation of this 'decree,' by the Son Himself, seems obviously to refer to the fulfilment of the promise, 'I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son.' This promise was ratified to Christ personally, as is proved by the evangelical history, by the genealogies, by the angelic message, and by a voice from heaven. On this ground, therefore, He prefers His claim to dominion under the beautiful form of a request made by a son to a father, at that father's own instance: 'Ask of me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance.'¹ The allusion found in Acts iv. 25 to

The Gospels illustrate the filial relation of Christ's humanity.

¹ The 72d Psalm runs in the same strain. The King is there described as the King's Son, *i.e.* the Son of David, to denote that He is the personage to be identified in the fulfilment of the prophecy. Here, too, the human side of the Messiah's person is the one ex-

the second Psalm, is of importance to our purpose chiefly for the prominence given to its Messianic structure by the Apostles. The doctrine of the divine Sonship seems entirely passed over, as if taken for granted; while the Christship of Jesus is dwelt upon with intense emphasis. Throughout He is paralleled with David in his royalty, and in his servant-like attributes.¹

‘And again, when He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.’

The quotation taken from the ninety-seventh Psalm is prefaced by the sentence in which the

CHAP. IV.

Heb. i. 4-14.

First-begotten
spoken of the
human Son-
ship.

clusively presented, while His empire is put before us as a scene of world-wide peacefulness, holiness, and love. ‘The whole earth is filled with His glory,’ *i.e.* with the glory of the God of Israel, when these wonderful things are brought to pass in the perfected empire of the Messiah.

Isaiah the 9th chapter, 6th and 7th verses, may be collated with these testimonies, and in confirmation of this doctrine of the Sonship. Verse 6 is very striking in this direction: ‘Unto us a child is born,’ etc. The words obviously refer to the great promise to David, and to the humanity of the Son as a descendant of his royal house; while the titles and prerogatives ascribed to Him in the same breath are descriptive of the Sonship in the higher sense: ‘Wonderful,’ ‘Counsellor,’ ‘The mighty God,’ ‘The everlasting Father,’ ‘The Prince of Peace.’ The word Father is not here expressive of personality, any more than ‘Prince of Peace;’ it is an official title, probably referring to that diviner geniture of human nature beyond that of Adam, of which He is the author in His incarnate character.

Verse 7: ‘Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David,’ is a compendium of the two Psalms before quoted, and is chiefly remarkable for the introduction of the clause ‘the throne of David,’ and its application by the Angel to Jesus (Luke i. 32), in anticipation of His birth, as the Son of God. It further shows how the sceptre of the Messiah over all nations is continually coupled with His Sonship from David, and the theocratic type exhibited by David as His sire. The whole doctrine is in truth given us by the Lord Himself, at the close of the Apocalypse: ‘I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.’

¹ (Acts ch. iv.) *Παῖς* is the term applied to Christ and to David in the same paragraph—verses 25, 27, and 30. As *παῖς* cannot

CHAP. IV. term 'first-begotten' occurs; it is also entirely
 Heb. i. 4-14. Messianic, as its structure shows. Hence 'first-begotten' or *πρωτότοκος*, though unquestionably used (Col. i. 15) for the divine Sonship of Christ, and as equivalent to *εἰκὼν* or *μονογενής*, is elsewhere used to signify the humanity also, or the Incarnate Son. It is so in the very same paragraph: 'Who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead,'—equivalent to *πρωτότοκος* (ver. 18). He is the 'first-begotten' as 'brought into the world,' and in His incarnate and Messianic state entitled to universal homage.¹

Elohim—ruling powers, angels or men.

The expression, 'Let all the angels of God worship Him,' put as the interpretation of 'worship Him, all ye gods,' is not intended to exhaust its meaning, but as setting forth that view of the Son's prerogatives most in harmony with the argument of

be taken in its primary sense, 'child,' in reference to David, neither can it be so taken in reference to Jesus, but in its secondary sense, servant—'Thy holy servant Jesus.' In this rendering we see the current of apostolic thought ran towards the *office*, not the *person* of Christ; for *παῖς*, rendered servant, is equivalent to Anointed or Christ, and this again to royalty, or the theocratic headship, of which David was the type. Thus, our Lord is *παῖς*, or servant, even in His glorified supremacy; for He is still but a viceroy, though of ineffable prerogatives, because His humanity is joined to and one with His divinity as the Son.

¹ Indeed, the term 'first-born' or 'first-begotten' is capable of yet wider illustration, taken from earlier Old Testament examples. It is applied, for instance, to the Hebrew nation, Exodus iv. 22: 'Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first-born;' and probably also accounts for the name of Israel, first applied to the patriarch himself, and afterwards to the people, his descendants. 'Israel, the prince of God,' imports the mystic name of primogeniture to be unfolded in the covenant eminence of his posterity, and finally in the person of Jesus Christ, and His spiritual seed, the Church. This view accounts for the quotation by Matthew (ch. ii. 15) of the prophecy of Hosea, as fulfilled by the return of the infant Christ out of Egypt: 'Out of Egypt have I called my Son,' *i.e.* my first-born, mine Israel or divine prince. If the historical allusion to the Israelites and the

these chapters. The only difficulty lies in the form of the quotation. It is taken from the Septuagint, and may have accorded with the text as it then stood—or, if not, in an equivalent rendering of ‘all ye gods’—since Elohim is here used as in another Psalm, quoted by our Lord, to signify ruling powers or magistrates. Or the words may be understood as comprising ‘the powers of the world to come,’ and in this wide sense gods or Elohim include angels; indeed, the reference here may be to angels rather than to men, both because the argument requires it, and because that homage due from men to Christ was long to be deferred, while that of angels was promptly tendered.

CHAP. IV.
Heb. i. 4-14.

‘And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits,¹ and His ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.’

These quotations from Psalm xlv., whilst they are remarkable for the explicitness of their statement respecting the divine and human natures of

Antithesis between the Son's inherent sovereignty, and His sovereignty as the God-man.

Exodus be anything more than a fancy in respect to the history of Christ, the relation on which the fulfilment is made to depend must be in substance what is now stated, *i.e.* the Sonship or first-born dignity of the Hebrew nation was really a type of the first-born dignity of the most illustrious of its sons in after times. Its fortunes were, therefore, in some sense made to foreshadow those of the personal Christ, as the true Israel or Prince of God, the first-born among many brethren.

¹ *Pneumata* should not have been rendered ‘spirits,’ but winds; for it is not the nature of angels which is described as being spiritual, but their agency. They are not made spirits in the sense of being

CHAP. IV.

Heb. i. 4-14.

the Messiah, are equally so for the antithesis which they exhibit between the original sovereignty of the Son as God, and the Mediatorial sovereignty which belongs to Him as the God-man. The eternity and righteousness ascribed to His government are declaratory of His *essential* prerogatives. They pertain to His dominion as it shall subsist when His Mediatorial empire shall have ceased, since His Mediatorial rule is but a section of His essential rule, and a measure for carrying it out to its final consummation.¹

‘The oil of gladness’ signifies the joy of that power to which He is elevated as the reward of His humiliation and sufferings. The phrase, ‘above Thy fellows,’ also clearly denotes His human or world sovereignty, and that its administration is especially directed to the enforcement of the love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity, on which His dominion is founded. His ‘straight rod’ or ‘sceptre of righteousness’ is emphatically brought out in the history of His kingdom.

A steady regard to the argument of the chapter, and in this quotation to the twofold view of the

created spirits, but in their appointments or modes of service. In this they are like the winds: these are great powers in nature, and angels are great powers in the economy of the universe. Our Lord even compares the agency of the Holy Spirit to the wind; it cannot, therefore, be considered as beneath the dignity of the Angelic Ministry to illustrate it in a similar way. The verse winds up with a second illustration, in exact keeping with it: ‘His ministers a flame of fire,’ or rather lightning; another wonderful agent in the kingdom of nature, and fitted to impress us with the awful energy and inconceivable celerity of angelic action.

¹ Θεός cannot be taken in the lower sense, as some have supposed; nor does the kindred reading, ‘God is Thy throne,’ avoid the difficulty, because the same attributes of dominion are ascribed to the Being whose throne God is said to be, as to God, *i.e.* He must wield the sceptre of God, and therefore, in the nature of things, must be God.

Messiah as the Son and the Mediator, removes all ambiguity from the doctrine of the Psalm, and the difficulty which would otherwise arise from the recognition of one Being as God in the beginning of the paragraph ('Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever'), and the recognition of another Being as God ('Therefore God, even thy God,' etc.) in the latter part. From this difficulty the New Testament doctrine alone can extricate us, which ascribes an essential divinity to the Son, with the personal supremacy of the Father.

'And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands: they shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.'

We may preface this quotation from the 102d Psalm by supplying an ellipsis, which harmonizes it with preceding introductory formulas: 'He saith.' Moreover, this quotation, like the former, is a Septuagint rendering of the Hebrew, which in this, as in many other instances, slightly differs from the strict rendering of the existing text. *Κύριε* is evidently thrown into verse 10 of the Epistle, from verse 24 of the Psalm, where it stands, 'O my God.' The Being addressed in the Psalm is the Lord, and also God, though here rendered by *Κύριος*. On the authority of the Epistle, as well as from the structure of the Psalm, the Being so designated is the Son. To Him eternity is ascribed—'Thy years are throughout all generations;' to Him also creation is ascribed

CHAP. IV.

Heb. i. 4-14.

Likewise to
those of the
102d Psalm.

CHAP. IV. (agreeably to the second verse of the Epistle), and
 Heb. i. 4-14. sovereignty over human life—‘Take me not away
 in the midst of my days.’ These are all ascriptions
 to the Son as divine; but verse twelve follows the
 usual order of transition from the higher to the
 lower nature of the Son, and also is explicit as to
 His Mediatorial supremacy: ‘As a vesture shalt
 Thou change them, and they shall be changed.’
 The Son creates as God, but He changes and
 re-fashions as the God-man. His eternity is re-
 affirmed in both natures after the upshot of these
 great works: ‘But Thou art the same, and Thy
 years shall have no end,’ obviously rendered in the
 closing chapter of the Epistle, ‘Jesus Christ, the
 same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.’¹

‘But to which of the angels said He at any
 time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine
 enemies thy footstool?’

David fully
 alive to the
 divinity of the
 Messiah.

This verse contains the quotation from Psalm
 ex., and is remarkable on two accounts: It is,
 first, David’s own testimony to the Mediatorial
 supremacy of the Messiah, and to the breadth of
 David’s prophetic knowledge of this mystery, yet
 still connecting these glories of the divine Son
 with the fleshly descent from himself. It thus
 stands remarkably in proof of the high spiritual
 views concerning the Messiah propagated by the

¹ The statements in this Psalm relating to Jewish restoration, include far more than the re-edification of Jerusalem and its Temple, since in these ‘the Lord is said to appear in His glory,’—a very pregnant evangelical intimation. Besides, the author of the Psalm declares his writing to be for another age than his own (v. 18), and to foretell the creation of a people for the praise of the Lord, which cannot be interpreted but of the Christian Church. Neither can the remarkable description of restorative agency in the following verses be ascribed to any but the Lord Christ.

prophets from the earliest times, and is to be regarded in the light of a protest against the secular and merely rational views of Him subsequently prevalent, which formed the great barrier to our Lord's acceptance by the Jews of His own age.

CHAP. IV.

Heb. i. 4-11.

Secondly, this quotation is remarkable for the use which our Lord Himself made of it in His last discourses in the Temple, in which He endeavoured to recall the Jews to the true prophetic faith, very especially David's own faith, respecting the Messiah, so strikingly opposed to the low humanitarian conceptions of Him then entertained by His enemies, who, it seems, only retained the half, and that the lesser half, of the ancient faith. They held the humanity, but had lost the divinity of the Messiah; and that lowered personal view of Him was accompanied of necessity by a lowered view of His prerogatives. His Mediatorial supremacy was lost sight of, as the Lord at God's right hand, and He was simply 'Messiah the Prince,' or national potentate, the glory of Israel, and the Lord of the nations, but not of the universe. In this view, however, it was impossible He should be David's Lord, while only David's Son. If the divinity be lost sight of, the force of the challenge is no longer apparent: 'To which of the angels said He at any time,' as unto this Lord, 'Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?'

Ps. cx. i.
quoted in
Matt. xxii. 41.

The humanity
only retained
by the Jews
in the days of
Christ.

'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?'

This verse, while it registers the answer to this question by asking another, opens to us a glorious view of the Angelic Ministry. Denying them any-

Nature of the
angelic mini-
stry since the
Ascension.

CHAP. IV. thing like parity with Christ in power, and even
Heb. i. 4-14. keeping out of sight their manifold orders and prerogatives, as intimated in the Scriptures of both Testaments, yet the ministry here accorded to them is probably the most exalted which their history developes, and one which, in a pre-eminent degree, conduces to their own blessedness. 'They are all ministering (or liturgical) spirits.' As previously explained (see ver. 7), this character includes them all; but, in this verse, a special direction of their energies to the welfare of the Church and the salvation of individuals is intimated. In the question, 'Are they not all ministering spirits?' the statement implied, that angels are promoted in their ministry as related to the heirs of salvation, so far from showing that they have any fellowship with Christ in the prerogatives of His kingdom, tends in the other direction, viz. to show that their promotion is the effect of their subjection to Him as the Lord at God's right hand.

NOTE.

Heb. ii. 1-4.

NOTE ON THE AGENCY OF THE ANGELS
UNDER THE LAW.

[For the sake of preserving the order of the Epistle unimpaired, the Exposition of the first four verses of the Second Chapter is inserted here,—though, as the reader will not fail to observe, it has no connection with the argument of the chapters between which it is placed.—EDS.]

‘Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will?’

The great peculiarity to be marked in these verses lies in the relation assigned to the angels in the delivery and administration of the law. This is contrasted with the sole administrative supremacy of the dispensation of the gospel ascribed to Christ. On this distinction hinges the weighty exhortation of the opening verse: ‘Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed,’ etc. This same verse intimates a parallel not fanciful, but real, between the first generation of Christians, and the generation of Israelites called to witness the scenes of Sinai and the wilderness. Both are represented as spectators and listeners, with respect to an order of things, wonderful and peculiar, as distinguished by responsibility, as it was by privileges. In truth, we may regard the concluding section of chapter twelve as here distinctly pre-intimated: ‘Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, but unto Mount Zion.’ The things described in this language mark the two great epochs of revelation, the law and the gospel—the one given from Mount Sinai, the other from Mount Zion. It is in direct reference to these two epochs, and the relations of contemporary people to each, that the

NOTE.
 Heb. ii. 1-4.

phrase is most forcible, 'lest at any time we should let them slip,'—*i.e.* suffer the impression of the great evangelical verities to fade away, thereby exposing its disciples to the danger of an open apostasy, as was the case with the Israelites in the matter of the golden calf. If this criminality and peril were something strange and terrible, *theirs* must needs be much more aggravated who should fall away from the word spoken by the Lord, or by the men supernaturally attested to be His emissaries to the world. This is the more apparent, when it is remembered that not law and polity, but SALVATION, was the glorious burden of the Christ and His Apostles. As it was a gift He only could bestow, so was it a doctrine which He only could broach.

This is the first note of pre-eminence in the gospel above the law. A second follows: 'God also bearing them witness;'—the mission of the Son was throughout attested by the Father, both during His human history and by the *descent* of the Holy Ghost upon His Apostles, in token of His enthronement and glory. A third completes these notes of pre-eminence, *viz.* the *gifts* of the Holy Ghost, including the external and authenticating miracles of His power, and the internal, spiritual, and saving operations of His presence. The gospel, in respect therefore to the mode in which it was given, stands immeasurably higher than the law.

In contrast with this, we have 'the law' introduced as 'the word spoken by angels,'—'stedfast,' as denoting that it was a rescript of divine authority, and that it had the force of divine law to which sanctions were annexed of adequate breadth and precision. This is descriptive of law as woven into a polity, and as a rule of government.

But why is it described as 'the word spoken by angels?' Does this apply to the Decalogue, or merely to the subordinate parts of the law? It is somewhat remarkable that the ministry of angels in the delivery of the law is altogether passed over in the *history* of that event, and that we are indebted for our information on this point to the prophetic Scriptures and to the New Testament: see especially Ps. lxxviii. 17; Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19.

It is also remarkable that the same word is employed in both passages, *διαταγῆς*, to denote the ministry of angels on this occasion. From this, it may at least be gathered that whatever may have been the precise nature of that ministry, this term may be held to describe it appropriately, and not to denote, as has been supposed, the order or disposition of the angels themselves. To receive the law through ranks of angels conveys no intelligible idea of their office at all, whereas *διαταγῆς* is very suggestive of some intermediate action of an angelic sort, as between God and Moses, to whom the law was given. It seems, therefore, pertinent to assume that the law, in the form in which Moses delivered it, was really disposed, arranged, and given by angels. In this sense, the law was the work of angels; in some mysterious manner, really and truly indited by them, in converse with the mind of Moses.

NOTE.

Heb. ii. 1-4.

This is not a singular doctrine, however: we meet with it in the Prophets, where the angels are represented in a special sense as the guardians of the Hebrew nation. One of them is called Michael your Prince; and the opening chapters in Zechariah are particularly suggestive on this point. There they are represented as keeping vigils over the glorious land, as fraying away the horns of the Gentiles, and as being profoundly concerned in the restoration of Jerusalem. Likewise, the Apocalypse is said to have been 'sent and signified' by an angel of Christ to 'His servant John.' This seems to have been so current a doctrine among the Jews, that almost every supernatural communication was referred to an angel. Thus, when the voice came from heaven, in answer to our Lord's 'Father, glorify Thy name,' some of the people said, 'An angel spake unto Him;' and again, when the dispute arose between the Pharisees and Sadducees, when Paul was arraigned before them, the Pharisees said, 'If an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.'

But, whilst it is undoubtedly a true doctrine that the law was 'ordained by angels,' it may be questioned whether this includes the law proper—*i.e.* the Decalogue. The herald trumpet which preceded it was undoubtedly angelic, but the utterances which followed were as undoubtedly

- NOTE. the words of God Himself. Indeed, the preface to them
 Heb. ii. 1-4. attests as much: 'God spake these words;' they are referred to as distinguished by this fact from every other
 Hos. viii. 12. portion of the law; and again, in Hosea, God identifies the Decalogue as the 'great things' of His law which He gave to them.

Moreover, the description given of the 'word spoken by angels' tells in the same direction, since it refers to a multitude of ordinances to the transgression of which temporal punishments were awarded. This looks more like a reference to the *details* of the law,—not to add that the penalties attaching to the moral law, the Decalogue, were of a far more terrible order, so that St. Paul calls it 'the ministration of death,' and, in another place, 'that as many as were of the works of the law were under the curse,' both which statements regard the Decalogue, and not the ceremonial law.

NOTE.

Heb. ii. 7-9.

NOTE ON THE PAULINE AUTHORSHIP.

The comparison drawn out between Christ and the angels in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. ii. vers. 7, 8, and 9, and the conclusions established by it, are strong incidental confirmations of its Pauline Authorship, since we gather from passages in the Epistles to the Corinthians, Ephesians, and Philippians, that this was a favourite topic with St. Paul. For instance, the phrase found in the 8th Psalm, 'For He hath put all things under His feet,' occurs, Eph. i. 21, 22, in connection with a train of thought strikingly similar: 'Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church.' What is this but another rendering of the verses immediately before us? So, in 1 Cor. xv. 27, the same passage recurs: 'And hath put all things under His feet;' and the same style of comment obtains there, which we observe here; for when it is said, 'All things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted who did put all things under Him.' The collation of these passages goes far to establish the common authorship of these Epistles. The universal supremacy of the Mediator is, in them all, the doctrine asserted and argued from this self-same Scripture in a manner thoroughly indicative of a plenary illumination on the sense of this prophecy. This remark is especially true with respect to the rendering of the phrase, 'all things under His feet,' which, in the Hebrews, is extended to signify an universe dominion over the creatures, and, in the Epistle to the Corinthians, is again so absolutely construed as to include all beings save God Himself. It is difficult to conceive that this phrase could have been so treated, but by the same mind.

This manner of dealing with prophecy itself implies a plenary inspiration; for while undoubtedly the Psalm is, on its own showing, Messianic, the interpretations thrown in of particular passages, as in this and the following verses,

NOTE.
Heb. ii. 7-9.

cannot be said to arise from the mere laws of exegesis. They are rather light brought to the passages than light arising out of them, and imply an authority in the breadth and specialities of their interpretation legitimate only in an inspired man. True, the elevation of man by the sway of the Messiah over the earth is patent enough from the structure of the Psalm; but this would not justify us in rendering the phrase, 'all things under His feet,' as declaratory of an *universe* rather than of a world dominion merely, still less would it justify us in interpreting this elevation of manhood by the Messiah in His own *Person*, rather than by His *rule* over men, least of all, in describing this rule as originating in the atonement, and as consisting in its administration. These addenda are, assuredly, of apostolic inspiration, and are among the last and brightest parts of the testimony of Christ.

CHAPTER V.

DOCTRINE OF THE SONSHIPS TESTED BY AN EXAMINATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES QUOTED IN THE EPISTLE.

HEB. II. 5-9.

THE subject of Messiah's empire is continued in the second chapter, beginning at the fifth verse. 'For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.'

It stands as a preface to the quotation from the 8th Psalm, and discloses to us particularly the world dominion of Christ. After all discussion as to the meaning of this phrase, 'the world to come,' nothing is really plainer than that it is expressive of the breadth and prospectiveness of the God-man's dominion. No other meaning can consistently be attached to the words, *οἰκουμένη μέλλουσα*, than the human world, or the world of the future. The entire strain of previous quotation, as well as argument, settles this.

The 'world to come' the human world of the future.

Throughout all the prophecies of a Messianic order, the one doctrine of world rule is singularly paramount. The higher doctrine of *universe* rule is perhaps scarcely more than vaguely intimated, and may be said to rest almost entirely on New Testament authority; but as to *world* rule, this testimony of Jesus is the very spirit

Christ's world rule explicitly stated, His universe rule only intimated.

CHAP. V.
Heb. ii. 5-9.

of prophecy. The phrase, 'world to come,' is undoubtedly meant to divide the world into two epochs—the pre-Messianic and the post-Messianic, the world of the past from the world of the future,—and to intimate, as will be noticed more fully, the concentration of all world power, from the epoch of the Ascension, in Christ alone. There was no *enthroned* Mediator through the ages of the past,—Christ's *humanity* was not then set on the right hand of the Majesty on high.¹ The non-subjection of this world of the future to the sway of angels should be taken in connection with verse 7, where man is said to be made, for 'a little while, lower than the angels.' The testimonies are antithetic: the man is first lower, then higher, than the angels.

'But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.'

Ps. viii. The
humanity
chiefly taught;
the divinity
only in the ex-
ordium and
conclusion.

This quotation from the 8th Psalm is very noticeable as bringing before us the human and secondary aspect of the Son's person; in truth, He is here described as 'Man,' or 'the Son of Man.'

Turning to the Psalm itself, we find that the supreme Nature forms only the exordium and the

¹ The world of the past was of necessity subjected to the sway of the pre-existing Mediator; but His man-rule, so characteristic of the ages of the future, necessarily awaited the issue of His human history. (See *Mediatorial Sovereignty*.)

conclusion: 'O Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!' These appellations undoubtedly express the divinity of the Son.

CHAP. V.

Heb. ii. 5-9.

'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast ordained strength,' is a clear pre-intimation of the issue of a sovereign ordinance, for the utter suppression of His enemies, strikingly characteristic of the Apostles and their ministry; *i.e.* He ordains that His all-subduing power shall work by means of the most insufficient and contemptible human agencies,—the utterances of mere babes are to be used for the accomplishment of the most stupendous work ever to be accomplished in the earth, *viz.* the perfect establishment of His own spiritual kingdom.

The second verse, then, is in perfect accordance with the first, as it exhibits the *means* by which His name is made excellent in all the earth.

The third verse of the Psalm carries us back for a moment to the divinity of the Son as the Creator: 'When I consider Thy heavens.' This forms the climax to the antithesis of the Incarnation. 'What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?' This stoop from the majesty of the Creator to the humility of manhood is the great evangelical mystery, and comprises that mindfulness of man and visitation of him intended by the writer.

Ps. viii. 5,
suggested an-
tithesis in
Heb. i. 4.

The fifth verse sets forth the condition of the Redeemer's humanity: 'Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels.' The expression obviously suggested the antithesis in verse 4 of the Epistle, 'being made so much better than the angels,' both expressions referring exclusively to

CHAP. V. *rank*, not to nature. The same verse furnishes a second instance in which the word *Elohim* is translated angels, suggesting to us the prevalent current of inspired thought in these same chapters as being that of a comparison, extended and variously particularized, between the dominion of Christ and that of angels. This humiliation is, however, followed in verse 5 by the antithesis of man glorified in Christ: 'Hast crowned him with glory and honour.' Before leaving the Psalm for the exposition of it in the Epistle, two things claim attention :

The humanity of Christ exists purely for the purposes of redemption.

(1.) That the Son's divinity is represented as the immediate cause of the elevation of the manhood; *i.e.* the purposes of the Supreme Nature rule the conditions of the creature nature,—manhood is what it is in Christ, purely for the purposes of its redemption. Thus, the expression, 'a little lower than the angels,' taken in its application to the history of the God-man, pre-intimates the most wonderful fact of that history, *viz.* the total absence of power or dominion, which marked the earthly condition of Jesus Christ. He possessed no principedom, either national or local, much less universal. He exercised no function of government in any degree, but placed Himself aloof (as if it were a ruling point with Him) from every species of power. 'He took upon Him the form of a servant,' not of a king. Thus, the history is literally a luminous fulfilment of the prophecy, 'a little while lower than the angels.' Further, the notices of dominion with which the Psalm closes are all to be construed in the same way: they are notices simply of the dominion of the manhood,

brought up by the Godhead of the Son to this pitch of supremacy. This train of thought remarkably falls in with that of the Epistle.

CHAP. V.

Heb. ii. 5-9.

(2.) A second point to be noticed from the Psalm makes it yet more plain that the human view of the Sonship is the one intended in the argument of the Epistle, since the description of human dominion in our Lord's person is obviously taken from that of primitive man, as given in Genesis. There, Adam is invested with full dominion over the creatures in the very same terms, as being the 'image of God,' or, according to St. Luke, as the 'son of God,' and, according to St. Paul, as 'the figure of Him that was to come.' In both the first and second Adam, the humanity is the filial representative of Deity; but in the latter instance, the ineffable mystery of a personal union with Him is superadded.

Dominion of the God-man, not the divine, illustrated by the Psalm.

Gen. i. 26.
Luke iii. 38.
Rom. v. 14.

It may not be overlooked that, when putting together the Psalm and the inspired comment of the Epistle, there is this difference between them, resolvable into the difference existing between prophecy and the fulness of evangelical doctrine, viz. that in the Psalm the divinity of the *Son* alone is presented to us as the ruling cause of the conditions of the manhood, while in the New Testament it is the divinity of the Father, or God; but it is obvious that the harmony between the prophecy and the evangelical doctrine is not in the least affected. One position is as precisely true as the other, and may be briefly illustrated by the double statement of the Gospels, that the Son was the author of His own resurrection, and that He was raised up by the glory of the Father; or by another, 'I and my Father are one.'

Double statement of Psalm and Epistle reconcilable by our Lord's 'I and my Father are one.'

CHAP. V. Leaving the 8th Psalm, and turning to the Epistle,
 Heb. ii. 5-9. we find that it supplies us with several most important testimonies with respect to our Lord's dominion.

Heb. ii. 6, 7, 8. 'But now we see not yet all things put under Him;' *i.e.* the universe, but particularly the world, which alone is open to our observation, is not yet answerable to the programme of this dominion. The facts and doctrines of the gospel stand almost alone and unsupported by the facts of humanity, taken on the widest scale. For example, the doctrine of the Messiah's supremacy over nations as such is very partially illustrated by their moral and religious condition. Society at large is far from being moulded after the evangelical model; as yet, individuals only show some approximation to the requirements of His religion. The laws, customs, manners, tastes, culture, and pursuits of men in general, are for the most part alien from His sceptre even now: how much more when this Epistle was written? As yet, facts can hardly be said to carry us further than the Testimony as the Apostles left it; nor the indications of finality to be much more distinct, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, than they were in the apostolic age. 'We see not yet all things put under Him.' The 'yet' of this declaration bears the weight of all intervening historic fact, without giving us much elevation of standpoint; experience and faith still are held together in equal measure, and tread with equal step.

The world exists for the purposes of atonement.

The ground of this unfinished state of His kingdom becomes apparent when we remember that the declared object of the Son's exaltation is *the administration* of Atonement. All other measures

CHAP. V.
 Heb. ii. 5-9.

are subordinate to this one, and are within certain degrees kept in abeyance till the purposes of grace in alliance with the Atonement, and its offices for the world, are accomplished. Thus, 'we see not yet all things put under Him,' is a declaration strictly antithetic to what follows, 'we see Jesus.' This double statement is exactly descriptive both of the New Testament economy, and of New Testament revelation. It is light within a given hemisphere, yet shading off into darkness unbounded and impenetrable. This is particularly true of the future progress and final issues of the kingdom of the Son. These appertain to the domain of faith merely, steadfast and sublime it is true, but entirely unaided by glimpses of the outlines, much less of the filling up. They are the things perpetually witnessed by the Holy Ghost, and are the glory of the Lord risen upon His Church, and its sun, which shall no more go down. Hence the unfinished kingdom is, in fact, the brightest augury of grace to the world; it is thrown forward into the immeasurable future purely by the sovereignty of grace, and in order that the Son may see His seed, prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord prosper in His hand.

'But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man.'¹ (Ver. 9.)

The prominence given to the suffering of death as the immediate ground of Christ's exaltation,

¹ The ninth verse will be treated at length elsewhere. It is cited here solely in its bearings on the doctrine of the Sonships, the argument on which it appropriately closes. [EDS.]

CHAP. V.

Heb. ii. 5-9.

The divine nature associated with the human through its career of humiliation. This only possible by self-ruled subjection.

fixes the human view of His person as the one most immediately and vividly before us.

But the entire career of the *manhood*, from humiliation and suffering to the monarchy of the universe, implies also a corresponding movement in the *divine* Sonship itself, since the Son (as a pre-condition to the assumption of humanity) is supposed capable of initiating creaturely relations not appertaining to his status as the divine Son. A creature He could not become, consistently with His sovereignty as the Son, save by self-ruled subjection to this state, which, according to St. Paul (Philippians ii. 6), entailed in the way of consequence all the after acts of which His humanity was the outward exponent. An impersonation with manhood could only follow this voluntary relation of the Supreme Nature to the one to be assumed, while all the acts of redemption, as they were afterwards developed, were the proper effects of this primary cause—the correlation of both Sonships in one person. The two natures in the one person are indissolubly bound together throughout the entire history of redemption. The Person of the Son, as human and divine, must be considered as equally concerned in the work of Atonement, and the glorification of the Son in His supreme nature, or in the ‘form of God,’ as St. Paul terms it, was as much an issue of it as the glorification of the manhood itself.

CHAPTER VI.

ATONEMENT—IN ITS RELATION TO GOD.

HEB. I. 3.

‘WHEN He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.’

It has been before stated that the groundwork of the Epistle is manifestly contained in this third verse; it is the text of the entire discourse,—the great doctrinal fount whose streams thence diverge into separate channels, but can be hardly said to derive anything from other sources. The Atonement is the grand correlative truth to the person of Christ, and it, as it were, interposes itself between that Person and His official glory; in consequence, that official glory, though in the most absolute sense regal, is essentially priestly. But as this priestly glory is the reflection of the one pre-eminent fact of Atonement, it is in place here to examine the nature of the latter, and to show its importance in the evangelical economy.

Atonement
the correlative
truth to that
of Christ's
person.

(1.) He is said by Himself to have ‘purged our sins.’ Perhaps the phrase is more correctly rendered thus: ‘After having made a lustration of our sins by Himself,’—the intention of the writer being to describe a *provision* for the purification from sin as made by Christ, not an *administration* of that

Having made
a lustration of
our sins, de-
scribes the
provision of
atonement.

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

provision, since the latter could only take place as the result of His being seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Doubtless, the phrase, as it stands, ‘when He had by Himself purged our sins,’ nobly expresses both the all-perfect nature and the issues of this provision; but the objection lies against it, that it is less conformable with the original than the rendering just given, less apposite to the scope of the writer, and certainly less in harmony with the legal ordinances, to which there is here a very marked reference. The law always distinguished between an ordinance and its administration: the ordinance was absolute and immutable, but its application was necessarily contingent on seasons and circumstances.

(2.) Again, though a word is used here signifying purification, rather than expiation of sin, and one which therefore expresses but a secondary and perfecting office of atonement, yet it is fully equivalent to *ἱλαστήριον* or *καταλλαγή*, because, in the mind of the Hebrew, atonement in the strict and proper sense was never separated from the work of purification. Atonement was an essential preliminary to the removal of legal defilements, which were supposed, ceremonially at least, to bear the nature and consequences of sins, and figured the great moral realities of sin and atonement in this, that by no other process than the divine prescription could these imputed evils be removed. The phrase, therefore, whether rendered as by the translators, or more closely to the original, is an unequivocal declaration of the doctrine of Atonement, and could not be otherwise understood by the Hebrew mind.

To the Hebrew, purification implied atonement.

(3.) The words ‘by Himself’ are of vast import in this connection, inasmuch as they pre-intimate, in passing, both the correspondence and the antithesis existing between the legal and evangelical dispensations, which are so divinely expanded in the body of this Epistle. It is meant to declare that Christ, personally and officially considered, took the place of all the personages and ritual institutes of the ancient religion. That, whereas Atonement and Lustration were systematically carried on in past ages by means of a priesthood and sacrifices divinely prescribed, these were altogether precluded by the person and office of the Son. Here the provision for the taking away of sin, its penalties, and its defilements, is made ‘by Himself,’ excluding all participation in these glories of Atonement and Salvation by other beings, whether higher or lower than man. These belong entirely to Christ. The meaning of the phrase ‘by Himself’ may be given in a single sentence: the Son ordained the law, but is Himself the gospel.

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

‘By Himself.’

(4.) Further, the expression ‘by Himself’ leads us to a profound conception of the nature and mystery of Atonement; for it is here obviously meant to direct our attention to the Atonement as an exhibition of the infinite personal sufficiency of the Son,—as an act wonderfully replete with the virtue of His own attributes. In order to understand this, it is necessary to keep very close to the tenor of the ascriptions here given to the Son, and to endeavour to form a full conception of the Atonement, as the proper issue of these. Nor should it be overlooked that the view of the Atonement here afforded by our Lord’s divinity is that

The doctrine of the Son’s person the key to the mystery of the atonement.

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

1 John i. 7.

Col. i. 14, 15.

Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

which marks the chief apostolic statements of it found in the Epistles; such as, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His *Son*, cleanses us from all sin;' 'In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature;' 'Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God,' etc. This last scripture may be regarded as the most profound and comprehensive statement of the doctrine of Atonement in the apostolic writings, not excepting even the one now before us. It is remarkable that here all the glories of the Son are accumulated in immediate connection with the Atonement and its proper consequence, His sitting 'at the right hand of the Majesty on high.' For instance, the Atonement is presented to us as taking rank with the works of the Son as the Creator and Upholder of all things, as in the passage in the Colossians, and in the opening chapter of St. John's Gospel. This is a very striking collocation:—the order is first creation, then providence, then atonement; by which order is intimated the introduction of the restorative element into the universe, not merely as a component of its moral perfection, but as included in the plan of its existence. This offers to us a great conception, and one in entire harmony with apostolic teaching. (See Eph. iii. 9, 10, and Col. i. 17.)

The Son's
sovereignty
the basis of
atonement as
of creation.

The SOVEREIGNTY of the Son should be carefully noted as the basis of Atonement. It rests on the will of God or the Father, to which our Lord Himself so often referred as the origin of His own mission from heaven to earth; but the Son, as

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

being Himself sovereign, 'in the form of God, and equal with God,' could alone translate the Father's sovereignty by the act of Atonement, as He had done by the fiat of creation, and the course of the universe. This idea of correlative sovereignty as much lies at the foundation of the doctrine of Atonement, as it does at the foundation of the universe itself. For, though the act of Atonement be specifically different from any other (as will appear), its first principle is the same, since the Being who accomplishes it must not be supposed to be subject to the obligations antecedent to moral actions as appropriate to creatures. On the contrary, His antecedent must be sovereignty, and His subjection must be voluntary. He must substantiate in Himself the two relations of sovereignty and subjection, not understood as contemporaneously exercised, but as successive. Obviously there are but two conceptions of sovereignty admissible, the one normal, the other exceptional. The one consists in the exercise of the prerogatives appropriate to sovereignty, the other in the sovereign exchange of these for the obligations of a subject-condition. The Son, as such, was capable of this wonderful change in His relation to the Father; and with a view of translating the sovereignty of the Father, by means of a subject-relation not essential to Him, but sovereignly assumed, into acts of interposition for creatures; which, though all manifestations of the subject-state, culminated in one,—the act of Atonement.

According to St. Paul, in the passage in the Philippians, this subject-state of the Son was not

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

The Son's assumption of humanity a sovereign act of His divinity for the purposes of atonement.

The 'merits of Christ' originate in the peculiarity of His person.

Christ's atonement involves substitution,

and substitution the imputation of judicial liabilities.

itself the act of the Incarnation, but a pre-condition to that event, without which the assumption of the servant-nature would have been impossible. The *exinanitio*, or 'making Himself of no reputation,' was an act, be it what it may, which appertained to the Son as being in the form of God, and may not be interpreted otherwise than as implying a change in His status as divine. Everything in the human and earthly history of Christ was but the moral as well as historical sequel to this event. The human nature became its visible exponent, and the offering of the cross its consummation. As sovereignty in the Son could alone be the basis of His subjection as divine, so this same subjection, with its human counterpart, originated what we are accustomed to call the 'merits' of Christ. They were more than acts of supererogation, or acts available for the benefit of creatures. *As it regards Himself*, they were the culminating exhibition of His perfections as the Son, which, in the nature of things, could only be brought out by their relation to the sphere of the creatures.

Atonement, as deduced from this higher view, is essentially vicarious or substitutional. This nature belongs to it, both on account of its being an expression of an exceptional state in respect to the Sovereign Being who undertakes it, and the moral condition of those in whose behalf it is undertaken: the one principle is the precise counterpart of the other. Something is done for parties not falling in with the strict requirements of law which they are unable to meet, and this something is done pursuant to a relation of the Lawgiver to His own law, which is not to be regarded as

purely normal.¹ Further, substitution must carry with it the imputation by the Father, as supremely sovereign, of whatever judicial liabilities may to Him seem congruous with this relation, not excluding the ideas of sin and penalty. On no other ground can it be feasible to exact retribution from a substitute, than as he is supposed to represent and take the place of the offender himself. In what this judicial exaction may have consisted, no creature is competent to affirm: it is so identified with the mystery of the infinite, as to make the attempt to scan it but an impious levity. Scripture itself is either silent on the subject, or intimates it in very general expressions, such as, 'It pleased the Lord to bruise Him;' or that, 'He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' The latter statement generalizes the entire process of atonement

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

Their nature
as indicated in
Scripture.

¹ Query—Whether the usual view taken of our Lord's obedience, viz. as a fulfilling of the law, is valid? It rather consisted in fulfilling the will of the Lawgiver Himself, as is stated in the fortieth Psalm,—I am come to do Thy will,—the law there mentioned not being the moral law in the usual sense, but the ordinance which required atonement. Had our Lord's obedience consisted in fulfilling the law, it does not appear what place would have been left for enduring its penalty. It was the law given to *Him*, not the law given to *us*. It was not an affair of law in the ordinary sense, but an office of sovereign will; and His obedience to law was only to law in this very peculiar sense,—only the obedience proper to One whose person was an absolute peculiarity, and His office absolutely unique. The direct course of law being interrupted by the Atonement, no sequence arising from that Atonement can partake of the nature of law. This constitutes the peculiar grandeur of our religion. It is the relation of a human being to Christ that is the whole of Christianity.

Notice the connection between atonement and evangelical religion,—not a religion founded in law, i.e. in obedience in a moral sense, but in faith. Justification is not an imputation of a legal righteousness, but of one of a sovereign and peculiar character, and one correlative to the Atonement. Obedience is the *issue* of this righteousness, not, as under law, the righteousness itself.

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

with great force. It describes the whole as a business of self-humiliation, arising out of the subjective state of the Son as man, which found its climax in the endurance of a death so infamous and revolting as that of the cross. It is most appropriately referable to the scenes commencing with the Agony and terminating with the Crucifixion, the whole of these being properly included in the work of Atonement, as they were undoubtedly the profoundest depths of our Lord's humiliation. This subject is wonderfully touched in an after chapter of this very Epistle: 'For though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.' Nor can we fail to see in our Lord's own words, 'It is finished,' an infinite emphasis, when they are understood as expressing the completion of the mighty undertaking that brought Him from His throne to His cross.

Atonement
not discover-
able by reason.

From this view of the passage, 'when He had by Himself purged our sins,' it becomes evident that the Atonement is no example of a moral administration considered in its normal form, and that it must never be looked at as if the righteousness of the procedure were patent from either the attributes or the moral administration of God. In the normal condition of His government, we behold everywhere exhibited the immutable footsteps of law, and the behests of a sovereignty which adheres without infraction to the established order of its purposes. This is ever characteristic of the constitution of nature, which is but a shadow of the higher glory of the moral kingdom; so that if we require a revelation to assure us that in the future the present order of things shall cease, much more may we

require the fullest testimony to the existence of an exceptional proceeding in what seems to us the immutable economy of the moral world. This, however, is precisely what revelation gives us, when it pronounces so strongly the doctrine of atonement, and certifies us that, not only for conserving the integrity of moral government, but also for the purpose of exalting it, the divine Administrator ruled His own sovereignty into a position of subjection to the Father, and thus gave birth to a new and surpassing regime, in which the glories of Grace were blended with those of Law. A much wider scope was opened out for the manifestation of the divine nature than otherwise would seem possible.

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

The great foundation and centre of this new and ultimate system of moral administration is the Atonement. As its very possibility could hardly have been a matter for finite conception, apart from a direct revelation, so when it is revealed we can only be entitled to argue respecting it on the premises divinely given, and with the best light we can receive on all the facts and conditions of it as they are laid before us. To leave out or to ignore any portion of these through prejudice or moral disqualifications of any kind, is to place ourselves in a false position. We either dress up an illusion of our own passion and misguided reason as a ground for rejecting the doctrine, or it is so partially rendered, even while admitted to be true, that we are embarrassed, it may be, in honest attempts to maintain it. That the principle of substitution, broadly taken, is inapplicable to a moral administration, and is contrary to the most ordi-

Therefore we can only argue respecting it from the data given by revelation.

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

nary political maxims by which society is regulated, is too patent to need proof, or even discussion. Law, in no sense, and in no field of administration, can recognise vicarious personages as answerable for the crimes or misdemeanours of others. Glancing therefore at the whole field of experience and the conclusions of reason, we should be bound to aver, that there is no finding of any data by which this great doctrine of Christianity can be supported, or any analogies by which it can be illustrated. It stands absolutely clear of all precedents and verisimilitudes, and must, from first to last, rest upon its own ground of divine testimony, alike independent of all subsidiary argument and unchallengeable by mere reason. Profoundly consistent with itself, this can only be detected by its own light; and though coming down to us in the form of a simple fact, obviously meant to serve the highest practical purposes, it still towers in immeasurable height, even to the throne of God, and for ever shrouds itself in 'the light which no man can approach unto.'

Human reason
can only operate
within
the boundaries
of fact and ex-
perience.

While conceding that reason can give little support to the testimony of revelation respecting the Atonement, we, on the contrary, concede nothing in respect to the validity of its speculations in opposition to it. Reason is competent to affirm or deny the truth of any question propounded to it, only so long as it confines itself strictly within the boundaries of fact and experience. These, from the nature of things, must be circumscribed, leaving intact fields of truth which it can no more penetrate and survey than we can gain access to worlds beyond our own. Hence, to deal with ques-

tions of pure revelation, as if mere human reason were UNIVERSAL reason, is to assume an office for that reason which it ought at once to disclaim as no less foolish than impious.

If we take the *à priori* or transcendental method of rising to these highest problems of truth, what is this, stripped of its pretensions and elaborate formulas, but an attempt to infer the objective from the subjective, *i.e.* to make the human mind a perfect mirror for the reflection of the Infinite? Even supposing this to a degree possible, yet the truth thus reflected may be so partial and inadequate, in respect to its great archetype, as to mislead us more fatally, on the very questions we seek to establish, than if we settled down into a condition of blank ignorance. It may be that just the very positions most confidently assumed as true are those which vitiate the entire process of speculation, and that the whole endeavour ends in the mere fabrication of a mischievous illusion. This has been notoriously the case in some departments of metaphysical speculation—for instance, in attempts to disprove the existence of matter; and it is at least as likely to be true in the field of moral and religious transcendentalism. Not to insist on the hazardous character of all dogmatism respecting the Divine Nature,—the relations and issues of the divine sovereignty, as developed in the creatures, are so little within our reach by the aids of analogy and experience, that to account them as all but intuitions, or responses of our own nature, implies a marvellous, and one might say, an infatuated, presumption. This is to challenge for reason the attributes and office of the Son of God,

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

Fallacy of claiming for it the office of universal reason.

Inadequacy of *à priori* reasoning when applied to the infinite.

CHAP. VI. as if *it* were 'the brightness of His glory, and the
 Heb. i. 3. express image of His person,' the revealer of the
 hidden Deity, and of the prerogatives of Omni-
 science.

The inductive
 method not
 more satisfac-
 tory.

Nor does the counter method of induction show
 itself more competent to solve the great problem
 fundamental to religion, when it would displace the
 doctrine of Atonement, and build up in its stead
 a system of naturalism. If reason mean anything,
 when applied to this matter, it must mean the settle-
 ment of obligations and duties on the basis of law.

For reason can
 only interpret
 law, not deal
 with anoma-
 lies.

If the administration of the universe be that of
 law, it is impossible that reason can go beyond the
 office of an interpreter. It cannot deal with the
 question of anomalies, or, in other words, sins
 against authority and order. It cannot guess,
 much less show, how these can be dealt with by a
 moral government without admitting the doctrine
 of penalty. With the doctrine of indulgence, reason
 can have nothing to do; it is altogether removed
 beyond its province, which is simply to interpret
 Law and its consequences. But what are these con-
 sequences? Are they limited to the present life
 of man? Are they future? Are they for good
 or evil, terminable or eternal? It is plain that
 penalties or evils, some of them voluntary, others
 involuntary, are the familiar attendants of human
 life. How are these to be reconciled with the
 doctrine of goodness? Faultiness, vices, anta-
 gonisms between conscience and passion, the way-
 wardness of the heart, the capriciousness of the
 will, the vassalage of the mind to sense, the ne-
 glect of religion, the omission of duty or its habitual
 repudiation, the faintness of desire after the highest

good, the death of devotion, or the struggles after virtue never attained,—such are the familiar phenomena of life ; and out of elements such as these a human being has to create his theology, his faith, and his prospects !

Now, if reason be the religion of law, the religion of mere intuition or sentiment must be something, if it be anything at all, infinitely in the rear of it. It is without principle, vague, dreamy, false. Such a religion cannot need an atonement, and can therefore well afford to dispense with it. Reason halts at the bar of law ; but sentiment, if it may be said to worship at all, and not rather to permit to itself a mere dalliance with Deity, worships the idol of its fancy, and lays itself open to the terrible accusation, ‘Thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thyself.’ Atonement, while the revealed counterpart of the religion of law, is emphatically God’s testimony against the religion of sentiment. The religion of atonement is destined to carry man infinitely beyond the religion of law, and to combine in itself the past and future of divine manifestation. Thus, truth in religion must ever be subjected to this test, and must flee as a shadow or abide as a substance.

CHAP. VI.

Heb. i. 3.

Inferiority of
the religion of
sentiment to
the religion of
reason.

CHAPTER VII.

ATONEMENT—IN ITS RELATION TO MAN.

HEB. II. 9, 10, 14, 15.

The facts of humanity the groundwork of atonement from the human side.

THE facts of humanity, ascertained by experience, and interpreted by revelation, constitute the groundwork of the doctrine of Atonement, looked at from its human side. These facts are, briefly put, the race-unity of man, as derived from a pair, divinely constituted its moral representative and head; and the imputation, as a consequence on the whole race, of the tendencies and results of their moral actions judicially considered. It is undeniable that the race-status of man, morally and physically regarded, is an inheritance, and not one of individual or even of collective choice. As far as this status deviates from a normal standard, and entails various classes of evils upon universal man, irrespective of individuality, it must be ascribed to a race-constitution acting in this very peculiar form, and revealing the strange fact, that, somehow or other, a first condition, either good or bad, was certainly transmissible, and was made to extend itself to every one of the species, as absolutely as physical conformation or mental endowment. It cannot therefore be controverted that human nature is affected by causes very remote from itself, except

Moral and physical status of the race matter of inheritance and not choice.

in its origin; that it has been dealt with in mass and not individually; and that individuality is to a large extent overruled by this constitution of things. This is what may be called a representative or federal system; its evidence lies in *facts* as well as in Scripture. It is to be specially regarded as the great principle on which the doctrine of Atonement rests; so that whosoever will assault this doctrine must approach it by a clear refutation of the federal principle on which it is based.

CHAP. VII.
Heb. ii. 9, 10,
14, 15.

Doctrine of atonement rests on a representative system.

But if this principle be established by fact, and be clearly interpreted by Rom. v., then the foundation of the doctrine of Atonement cannot be disturbed. This argument is fully developed in the *Mediatorial Sovereignty* (Part i. chap. 2), to which the author has nothing to add, but merely to call attention to it as here fundamental to his view of the Atonement; for if federalism affect the race in one aspect, why may it not do so in another? Why may not the same principle be inwrought into a restorative system, which is fundamental to a penal one, or one rendered penal by original fault? The very suggestion of this similarity, that one is just the counterpart of the other, scarcely needs elaborate argument; it is of itself light, while negative systems, on the contrary, involve the question in utter darkness. Such a system as inflicts punishment for involuntary evil, or rather makes evil itself involuntary, plainly cannot consist with justice, and still less with goodness, whose property it is to bestow happiness. Natural theology here must be utterly at fault, and Christian theology our only resort. A counter system, therefore, there must be turning upon the same axis, and involving

If evil be transmissible through a federal person, why not restoration?

This truth supplied by Christian theology only.

CHAP. VII. race-representation and race-substitution. Thus, federalism meets us on both hands much in the same way. Evil and antidote come absolutely in the same manner, and reach individuals simply as components of a race.

Christ the federal Head of the race. His humanity like that of Adam—*created*, not *derived*.

The human view of the person of Christ before adverted to, places Him precisely in the position which this system requires. As the Son of God, in the lower sense, He is the parallel personage to the Father of the race, as much created for this purpose as was Adam himself to be the Father of the race. Natural descent, even apart from moral considerations, could not have conferred this relation, but only the intervention of the all-creative prerogative, which freely determined to make the Second Man as the first, and to place Him in a similar position. This, indeed, is implied in the verses before quoted from Luke ii.: 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon Thee,' etc. Hence, so far as mere manhood is concerned, our Lord is the duplicate Adam, and possesses all the qualities requisite to bring into existence a countervailing race-system. Obedience is a set-off against sin, federally taken; and merit a set-off against penalty. In addition to this, the endurance of penalty may take off penalty from those federally liable to it, and procure its antithesis, righteousness, should it even do no more, putting them, all things considered, in the *status quo ante*, or even much in advance of this, by extending itself to men *individually* as well as federally. In fact, this is what is taught us in Romans v., which speaks of an 'abounding' gift of grace, which 'much more reigns unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Imputation of race-guilt, counter imputation of race-pardon.

Plainly, then, there may be imputation and accounting in this way as well as in the former; —it is but the counter application of the same principle, and, taken together, they may produce ultimately the most harmonious and surpassing effects.

CHAP. VII.
Heb. ii. 9, 10,
14, 15.

But though these may be the ascertained conditions under which atonement is *possible*, and under which its administration may be made universal and effective, it does by no means follow that these are the *only* conditions necessary to its existence, or that, taken by themselves, they would amount to more than a certain degree of feasibility. For (1.) Federalism, as well as individuality, is alike subject to the behests of law; it can only secure one class of results beyond those proper to an individual status, *i.e.* transmit a certain moral condition normal to the exercise of personal free agency, so that should federalism, in its personal applications, originally swerve from its coincidence with law, it would become necessarily defunct. (2.) It follows, therefore, that federalism, *considered from a legal point of view*, does not necessitate the existence of a counter system, in which law is set aside, and that it [federalism] may be adduced, not for evidence of such a counter system, but only as in harmony with it, when it is brought into actual operation, with respect to the human race. If this be true, then atonement, as being in no sense a legal provision for the relief of men, but entirely an extra-legal provision, cannot stand with law in its federal, any more than in its individual application: it is either something exceptional and the result of prerogative acting above law, or its

Federalism
furnishes only
the presumptive
ground of
atonement.

Federalism
acting by law.

Cannot, therefore,
imply a
system beyond
law.

Atonement,
therefore, the
result of prerogative
acting above law.

CHAP. VII.

Heb. ii. 9, 10,
14, 15.Law can know
nothing of im-
puted merits.

existence may be plainly disproven.¹ And (3.) That what are termed merits, *i.e.* the results of the obedience of a substitute, more especially those that come of penal suffering in the sinner's stead, are ideas entirely inadmissible under a legal system which recognises nothing but personal rewardableness or demerit. There can be no such thing as a transfer by imputation, from one party to another, of acts and benefits not belonging to that party, with a view of giving to such party a standing with God equivalent, or superior to that of a true personal righteousness. A method so indirect and circuitous is incongruous to the doctrines of law, and the decisions of mere reason; yet this is Evangelism, in its fundamental and distinguishing characteristic.

Atonement turns on the question, whether law exhausts the moral relations between God and His creatures.

From these considerations it follows that other conditions than those already named, and these much higher ones, must enter into this complex provision of atonement. Indeed, the whole case may be said to turn upon this,—*whether the moral relations existing between God and His creatures are expressed, and, as it were, exhausted by law and its offices alone; or whether the perfect programme of government admits of any reserve of anything above and beyond this dominion of law.* On the affirma-

¹ It is much to be regretted that these paragraphs stand unrevised by the author. Perhaps the following passages from the *Mediatorial Sovereignty* may help to elucidate them: 'Though the first man was the representative and head of all men, this fact could never have amounted to an abrogation of law in its application to his entire progeny, *individually considered*. . . . The moral condition of the agent could, indeed, be affected by the action of the first man, but however uprightness of nature be transmissible, it is certain the *employment* of this virtue must be a personal trust, and not a federal consequence.'—Vol. i. p. 70. [Eds.]

tive or negative of this question the doctrine of Atonement is decided. Should we receive implicitly the testimony of Scripture on the point, it is decided affirmatively, and nowhere more explicitly than in the tenth verse. 'For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.'

CHAP. VII.
Heb. ii. 9, 10,
14, 15.

This language is express, since it testifies that all religious systems, be they what they may, or views of Christianity not founded in atonement, are out of harmony with the character of God; they are unbecoming, at variance with it, and consequently essentially false. On the contrary, this very doctrine of atonement is in harmony with it; and this harmony is to be progressively developed, and consummated when the purpose of 'bringing many sons unto glory' is accomplished.

Beyond the views of God which Law is adapted to express, we admit two of kindred glory, fatherhood and prerogative:—the one the fountain of life, as it is of love; the other of rule, modified in accordance with it, and with the intent not of superseding, but of augmenting the glory of law itself. Fatherhood is the fount of atonement, as it is also of prerogative. The Atonement is therefore the issue of sovereign love, which, nevertheless, cannot express itself but in perfect keeping with government, as determinable by law. Such is, briefly, the view of this question on the higher side.

Beyond the relations of law there are those of fatherhood and prerogative.]

The Atonement the expression of sovereign love resting on grace and law.

The basis of atonement is therefore twofold: (1.) Grace or prerogative; (2.) Law, as the organ of government. On this showing, the *divinity* of

A divine person requisite to express this.

CHAP. VII. the Son as the author of atonement, is an absolute
 Heb. ii. 9, 10, pre-condition. Mere humanity can express nothing
 14, 15. beyond the range of law, place it where you
 will; another and a higher power can alone give
 expression to that sovereign love on which atone-
 ment depends. The reach of such a Being extends
 to the infinite: He can pass the realm of mere
 creature agency, yet, in combination with it, is
 able, by means of an atonement, to develop these
 reserved glories of the Godhead in a sublime and
 all-perfect system of human redemption.

The provision
 of vicarious
 suffering as
 singular as the
 nature of the
 person offering
 it.

(1.) From the foregoing discussion, it becomes
 plain that atonement, in the evangelical sense,
 implies the endurance of penalties by a substitute
 for parties actually offending; that such a sub-
 stitute is furnished in the person of the Son, in
 the double nature before explained; that this
 substitution, with all its penal accessories, is a
 matter altogether higher than, and exceptional to,
 any rule of government considered by itself; and
 that the entire provision is just as singular in its
 character as is the constitution of the Person in
 two natures, by whom it is offered.

Atoning death
 implies a mys-
 tery of suffer-
 ing unap-
 proachable by
 us.

(2.) Hence it follows that THE DEATH to which
 atonement is expressly ascribed by Scripture,
 while it does unquestionably include death in the
 physical sense, does in this case comprise an in-
 effable mystery of suffering peculiar to itself; that
 is, whatever is implied in death as a penalty, in its
 very possibility extending to the mind and moral
 nature, is really to be understood as included in
 it, though incapable of being approached by us,
 much less defined. An atoning death must, from
 its very nature, be separated from every other,

though, as a phenomenon, it might be nothing more. Hence, in this epistle, it is described as including 'sufferings,' leaving them unnumbered and unexplained. 'The Captain of Salvation was made perfect by these,' *i.e.* His office as a Saviour was completed by the office of the Cross. The very capacity of His nature for suffering was exhausted by this death, which was formally the exaction of the law-giving God, yet in this instance acting as the God of Grace,—ordaining that this should be the world's ransom, and that it should come within the power of a Being thus constituted to present this satisfaction to Him as the ground of His dealing with us. No mere physical endurance comprised in death, could have effected this, or given birth to the single expression, 'that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man.' The taste of death for every man as a sinner, or for the race as fallen, must have been that of a potion which no words can describe, no, nor yet the individual experience of mere death by every member of the race: the mysteries of penalty included in this one death, infinitely transcend them all.

CHAP. VII:
Heb. ii. 9, 10,
14, 15.

(3.) The 'glory and honour' with which Jesus is crowned, represent not merely the antithesis to His humiliation and suffering, but the result of these, His personal glory, personal honour, personal worship, together with the highest official prerogatives. He is Lord of the universe, but especially Lord of the world, of the dead and of the living, of the nations, and of the Church. His are the behests both of grace and justice, and His the great judgment of doom in the last day.

Glory and honour the antithesis and result of this suffering.

CHAP. VII. 'All things are put under Him,' and all things are finally to attest His sovereignty. Such is the statement of ch. ii. ver. 9. This, however, is but the divine correlative of atonement; in fact, the previous and after history of the Incarnate Son may be resolved into the history of atonement simply, foregoing and consequent. It is this which harmonizes the extremes of that history; and its unparalleled importance may be divined, but not comprehended, by this series of overwhelming facts.

'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.'

Power of the Atonement on the unseen world and the empire of Satan.

(4.) These verses, in connection with the ninth, afford us a glimpse of the wondrous power of the Atonement on the destiny of man in connection with the unseen world and the empire of Satan. They teach us that the virtue of the Atonement is all-sovereign there as well as here: in a word, that both sections of Satan's empire are undermined by it. They form the counterpart of our Lord's own declaration in John xii. 31, 'Now is the judgment of this world,' etc. In this passage the aspects of the Atonement on the human race are declared by Christ Himself; its proclamation and efficiency were to break up Satan's earthly empire in the long future of the world's existence: 'Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.'

'Power of death' more terrible than death.

By 'the power of death' we understand some-

¹ The verses from the tenth to the fourteenth will be found in the following chapters.

thing distinct from, and indescribably more terrible than death itself: that death, as the result of sin, is but initial; that it opens the gate to the realm of penalty with respect to the soul; and that its true power lies in the relation to what comes after it, not in the thing itself. This phrase, 'the power of death,' placed as it is here in intimate relation to the death of Christ, is sufficient to vindicate the view before given of the ineffable import of our Lord's death. As atoning, it must have comprised something far greater than itself; and on this its virtue to destroy 'the power of death' depended, otherwise the effect would have immeasurably transcended the cause. The 'power of death' here, then, is to be understood as descriptive of the empire of penalty, to which death, itself a penalty, stands in close relation. We are assured that the Atonement breaks this relation between death, physically considered, and its unseen train of penal evils. Instead of being the *first*, it is now the *last* enemy to a man redeemed, and there is nothing held in reserve, no purgatory impending over those who 'die in the Lord.' 'To destroy him that had the power of death' means to break in upon his death empire, so that the stream of departed spirits may take another road, and, instead of replenishing that fearful region, may be transferred to the bright realms of His sceptre who endured death for our redemption.

Verse fifteenth declares the *effect* of the dissolution by the Atonement of the connection between death and future penalty: 'And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage;' by which is meant, that the work of

CHAP. VII.
Heb. ii. 9, 10,
14, 15.

Atonement delivers from this 'power.'

Christian experience the counterpart of the dissolution of Satan's empire.

CHAP. VII. grace in pardoning and renewing souls through the
 Heb. ii. 9, 10, Atonement is the true counterpart of this dissolution
 14, 15. of Satan's power; *i.e.* the release, the future release, is now told to the heart of the believer; his conscience is pacified, his nature renewed, and his confidence in a state of rest after death is perfected. In this point of view Christian experience assumes a most impressive character; it is heaven's jubilee of the soul springing from the power of the Atonement over the future world, and the absolute supremacy of Christ even over the realms of penalty. This mysterious fact is proclaimed to men living in the world, but hastening out of it; and the gospel may be said to consist in the realization of this wonderful deliverance to them who were all their lifetime previously subject to bondage.

(5.) The completeness of the work of redemption by atonement is given in the tenth verse. Release from penalty is, so to speak, the groundwork or the very essence of salvation, abstractly considered; the 'bringing of many sons unto glory' is a far higher matter, and reveals the transcendent nature of the entire project of grace. It is this view which perhaps more strikingly reflects the grandeur of the Atonement than even its power of rescuing from penal doom. Both offices attest its character as a provision lying without and above the domain of mere law; but the one appears far more glorious than the other, inasmuch as it reveals 'the exceeding riches of His grace' in the dignity and the inheritance of the children, far beyond a mere provision for the accord of justice in the release from penalty. As referred to the Atonement, it signifies the infinite complacency of God in

Transcendent
 result of atone-
 ment, 'bring-
 ing many sons
 to glory.'

this work of His Son, which may be best expressed in the words of St. Paul, 'He that spared not His own Son,' etc.

CHAP. VII.

Heb. ii. 9, 10,
14, 15.

The relation between the divine nature and the Atonement as opened by verse 10 has been already noticed; it cannot, however, be too strongly enforced that this is a dogma of revelation to be received as an ultimate truth on which faith must rest entire, no reasoning being able to carry us further in this direction, any more than it can carry us to a demonstration of the divine existence. The divine existence, the divine nature, and the divine government are, unquestionably, those 'deep things of God,' which, if we are not besotted by presumption, we may be content very thankfully to learn from His own testimony. The import of the phrase, 'for whom and by whom are all things,' most certainly amounts to this—that as all things are by the power of God, all things are also swayed by Him for His own honour and glory; that His government cannot but be a translation of His nature; that He is His own interpreter to His own creatures of His own character and designs; and that all His beneficent and holy arrangements with respect to men turn upon atonement and its offices.

Relation of the divine nature to atonement (ver. 10), an *ultimate* truth of revelation undemonstrable as the divine existence.

Divine government a transcript of the divine nature.

The 'Captain of Salvation' is a grand title accorded to Christ (as a kind of antitypal Joshua), reminding us of the peculiarity of His achievements as altogether obtained by endurance and suffering. He has a most entire sympathy with man, whose whole nature is reflected in Him—not merely in its innocent frailties and sources of sorrow, but in the deeper mysteries of sin-bearing and penalty. Within this wonderful sphere of His

CHAP. VII. personal suffering universal man is included; and
Heb. ii. 9, 10, these experiences are actually called forth in the
14, 15. history of every separate saint from his adoption to
his last breath, in succouring him on the road and
in the warfare of life, in training him for duty,
and lastly in bringing him to glory, after the ac-
complishment of a course of discipline through
various suffering, made perfecting by His own
sufferings as leading to, or comprised in, the
Atonement.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HUMAN SONSHIP THE GROUND OF THE SONSHIP OF BELIEVERS.

HEB. II. 11, 12, 13, and 16.

‘FOR both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee. And again, I will put my trust in Him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same. . . . For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.’

In these verses the filial relation of disciples to God is directly connected with the doctrine of the human Sonship of Christ. It is perhaps of little consequence to the interpretation of the expression ‘all of one,’ whether we refer it to a common Fatherhood of Christ and His disciples, or to their community of nature; either will suit the argument, but the latter is perhaps to be preferred. Brotherhood may depend, it is true, upon a common fatherhood, but it is perhaps more properly

CHAP. VIII.

Heb. ii. 11, 12,
13, 16.

The *human*
Sonship the
ground of the
communion of
nature be-
tween Christ
and believers.

referred for its origin to a common nature. It is, however, to be especially noticed that this recognition of brotherhood by Christ is made matter of great condescension: 'He is not ashamed to call them brethren.' This declaration is in proof that the incommunicable Sonship appertaining to Him would of necessity disallow of such a relation, taken by itself, not merely with men, but with all creatures whatsoever. It is equally in proof that the human Sonship, its true personal correlative, bridges over this gulf, and opens such a communion of nature between the Son and human beings as makes this condescending recognition not inappropriate, especially when it is further considered that this communion of nature is made conditional to a communion in redemption, and in its prospects, so loftily opened in the preceding verse.

'I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee.' Further, this verse not only declares the true doctrine of the Church as consisting of the brethren, and the ineffable office of the Saviour, in His headship of its devotions, but the doctrine of adoption, or the declaration of the Father's name to the 'brethren.' The manner in which this statement is made is declarative of the fact that the filial status, as implied in the declaration of the Father's name to the brethren, is a direct issue of the Brotherhood existing between the Son and His disciples, and consists in the reflection of His human dignity as the Son upon them, in virtue of this communion, *i.e.* they are 'all of one.'

This view is sustained by other passages equally

explicit; for example, John i. 12, Gal. iv. 5.¹ In these passages the grace of Sonship bestowed on disciples flows directly from the Incarnation, or in other words, the human Sonship is correlative to the divine. The adoption, thus considered as an act of the Father, is directly based upon this fact, and is an honour specifically conceded to believers, as His testimony, and the glory of His Son personally considered. This view somewhat modifies the ordinary one, which attaches this honour rather to the *work* of Christ than to His *person*; whereas, while both are included, we give special pre-eminence to the latter. In truth, this seems self-evident, for adoption is a determination of *rank* rather than of salvation, abstractedly taken, and is therefore more properly a reflection of the personal rank of the Redeemer than of His office.

CHAP. VIII.
Heb. ii. 11, 12,
13, 16.

The Person,
rather than
the work, of
Christ the
ground of
adoption.

Verse 13 is an added testimony to the same effect: 'And again, I will put my trust in Him. And again, Behold I and the children God has given me.' In order to perceive the true bearing of these quotations on the argument, it is necessary to turn back to the 8th chapter of Isaiah, from whence they are taken. The section from the 11th to the 18th verse inclusive should be studied; in fact, the whole chapter concerns the Immanuel, and the fortunes of the nation, as bound up with Him, and should hardly have been separated from ch. ix., which, down to verse 8, is obviously a continuation of the same subject. The section in ch. viii. (ver. 11) opens with great significance: 'For the Lord spake

Isa. viii.
11-18, ix.
1-8, relate to
Immanuel and
the fortunes of
the Jewish
nation.

¹ 'But to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.'

'That we might receive the adoption of sons.'

CHAP. VIII.

Heb. ii. 11, 12,
13, 16.

Isa. viii. 11,
The 'Lord'
the Son.

thus.' This 'Lord' is, in the light of the quotations in this Epistle, obviously the Son, who is said to have instructed the prophet not to adopt the watchword of his time, 'the confederacy,' nor to yield to fear, that is, of national invasion, the very plea, be it remembered, advanced by the Pharisees in the council for putting our Lord to death. Verse 13th says, 'Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, let Him be your dread;' *i.e.* embrace the mission of the Incarnate Son, irrespective of political consequences, and in devout simplicity. Such was plainly the national duty as respects Jesus of Nazareth. Verse 14th contains a solemn forewarning of the consequences of another line of conduct, as well as a promise truly characteristic of the Saviour's office: 'He shall be for a sanctuary,' *i.e.* a refuge in the impending national overthrow, 'but for a stone of stumbling' to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Rejection of
the Jews con-
sequent on
their rejection
of the Incar-
nate Son.

Verse 15th is evidently that from which our Lord took His memorable declaration in the Temple, immediately previous to its abandonment: 'Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken;' *i.e.* the rejecters of His claims shall thereby be placed in the condition of persons stunned or mutilated by a fall, who are readily made a prey of by their enemies. This fastens the national overthrow immediately upon the rejection, and may be taken as the germ of our Lord's great prophecy concerning the event of Jerusalem's destruction.

Verse 16th, 'Bind up the testimony,' etc., does not perhaps so much refer to the preservation of this prophecy evangelically expanded, as it fore-

tells its limited reception by the disciples, as distinguished from the nation. By the nation it would be ignored, by the disciples it would be cherished, and thus a strong line would be drawn between the disciples and the mass of their unbelieving countrymen. This was historically true.

CHAP. VIII.

Heb. ii. 11, 12,
13, 16.

Verse 17th is that from which the first extract is taken in the Epistle: 'and I will wait upon the Lord,' etc. As verses 11th and 13th open with a declaration of the Son's Godhead under the titles of 'the Lord,' and 'the Lord of Hosts,' so verses 17th and 18th conclude with the declaration of His filial humanity. He speaks of His disciples, the companions of His human career, and of His testimony and law as imparted to these. He speaks of His determination to wait upon the Lord (here undoubtedly to be understood of the Father), 'that hideth His face from the house of Jacob,' *i.e.* who is prepared to reject the nation of Israel for unbelief, to cast them off from being His people. As His human messenger, and as the consequence of His abortive mission, He represents Himself as waiting upon the Lord, and looking to Him at this solemn crisis, both for the fulfilment of His judicial purpose towards the nation rejecting Him, and for the fulfilment of His purpose in respect of His own personal deliverance and glorification. This language is undoubtedly expressive of Christ's human character and condition, and is but an example among a multitude of others to the same effect found in several of the Messianic Psalms, one of which was quoted against Him by His enemies when on the cross, 'He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him.' Throughout the Messianic

Isa. viii. 11
states the di-
vine nature,
vers. 17 and
18 the human.

CHAP. VIII. Psalms the expressions of trust are very remarkable, as evincing the perfect humanity of Christ, and that the condition of that humanity is substantially that of our own, or, to use the expression of the 17th verse of the Epistle, 'it behoved Him, in all things, to be made like unto His brethren.'

Heb. ii. 11, 12,
13, 16.

Verse 18th, 'Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me,' abridged in the Epistle [v. 13], declares that Himself and the children given Him 'are for signs and wonders in Israel;' *i.e.* His nativity, character, ministry, death, resurrection,—together with the phenomena of His Church, on and after the day of Pentecost,—comprised by far the most wonderful series of divine manifestations ever vouchsafed to that privileged people. The power and office of miracle were exhausted, and they were left without excuse for their unbelief, or gainsay to impending judgment. Here, too, we trace in the form of expression the origin of an evangelical phrase often recurring in John's Gospel as the very words of Christ: 'They whom Thou hast given me.'

The only peculiarity worthy of special remark here is the epithet 'children' bestowed upon the disciples. This is not inconsistent with the brotherhood previously recognised, but rather adds completeness to the notion of human identity between the Lord and His disciples, while it perfects our conception of the doctrine of adoption. The term 'brethren' simply implies a community of nature, in which our Lord's only distinction is that of being the first-born: the term 'children' is an addition to this, for it signifies a derivation of their nature from His; they are not only His brethren, but His

family. If this term 'children' here amount to anything more than a conventional or figurative designation of disciples (which it must do if we take in ver. 14, ch. ii. of the Epistle¹), their relation to the humanity of the Lord is made intelligible by the federal doctrine of Rom. v., grounded on the human Sonship of Jesus, and expressed, 1 Cor. xv. 47, by 'the second man is the Lord from heaven.'

CHAP. VIII.
 Heb. ii. 11, 12,
 13, 16.

Christ the federal Head of the Church because He imparts His humanity to His people.

On this showing, the whole of His redemption consists in the power to impart His humanity to His people—first, in the restored moral image of God, and finally in the glorification of the body itself. The Christian doctrine of the Resurrection is, in fact, only the reproduction in the children of the perfected human image of the divine and human Saviour. It has no foundation whatever in the original scheme of human nature, but in the higher type of it exhibited by the Lord incarnate. Thus Isaiah's expression, 'the everlasting Father,' has a sublime significance as a title of Christ; since His humanity stands in an eternal relation to, and correspondence with, 'the children' as His progeny, and also, as His 'brethren,' His 'bride,' His 'body.' These terms all express one thing, viz. the origin and communion of one nature between Christ and His people. The Father adopts as His children the children of His Son; they are regarded as His children because of their origin from and communion with Him in whom He is 'well pleased.' The entire relation is a mere grace throughout, yet the methods of this grace have their relevancy to fact; in other words, grace and truth are never separated.

Terms brethren and children not contradictory.

¹ 'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same.'

CHAP. VIII. The fact here is the origin and relations of a nature common to Christ and to His people: they are children; they are therefore the sons of God, and as the sons of God, to be brought to His glory.¹

Both divine and human nature stated in vers. 11 and 14 of the Epistle.

To the foregoing discussion a final remark may be added, viz., that as ver. 11 brings both these doctrines of the Sonship together, so this conjunction is repeated in ver. 14: 'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same;' since, in this place, the act of assuming humanity is explicitly ascribed to the Son. That is, the Incarnation was the act of the divine Son bringing into personal oneness with Himself the creature-nature, and that nature the perfect transcript of the children's. Of this nature, flesh and blood are the palpable constituents, but not the only ones. They are here, however, specified to distinguish humanity from the nature of angels. This is made prominent in ver. 16: 'He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.' Here, therefore, we have another instance of the manner in which the two natures are distinctly introduced and blended in the person of the Son. The term 'children,' here made emphatic, has its true correlative in the filial nature of the Redeemer's humanity. The nature to be redeemed is thus specifically represented in the Son, and His relation to it thus perfected.

¹ The adoption thus stated may be illustrated by a human example. It is taken from Gen. xlviii. 5, 'And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born to thee in the land of Egypt before I came to thee into Egypt, are mine: as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.' Thus John xvii. 10, 'And all thine are mine, and mine are thine; and I am glorified in them.'

CHAPTER IX.

THE DIVINE AND HUMAN SONSHIPS THE GROUND OF CHRIST'S RULE OVER THE CHURCH.

HEB. III. 1-6.

'WHEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.'

These verses contain another example of the doctrine of the correlative Sonships here applied to the government of the Church. The angelic parallel is exchanged for the human. The course of the argument descends from angels to Moses, to Melchisedec, and finally to Aaron the high priest. The Hebrew Church is designated as the 'holy

The divine and human Sonships as affecting the government of the Church.

CHAP. IX. brethren: 'brethren,' not chiefly by descent from
 Heb. iii. 1-6. Abraham, but by their relation to Christ; 'holy,'
 not by a ceremonial purification, or a national
 separation from Gentilism, but by the evangelical
 sanctification affirmed in the eleventh verse¹ of the
 preceding chapter, and divinely amplified in pas-
 sages of the chapters following. They are 'par-
 takers,' or partners, 'of the heavenly calling,' *i.e.* of
 a calling apart from any nationality, territorial
 distribution, or the ordinances of a secular policy.
 The conversation or citizenship of the 'holy
 brethren' is in heaven,—a noble description, truly,
 of the New Testament Church! This new spiritual
 commonwealth is invited to consider, to study, and
 to comprehend 'the Apostle and High Priest' of
 their profession, 'Christ Jesus.' Here the Son is
 described by His human and official titles; He is
 also paralleled, likened, to Moses in his servant-like
 virtues of fidelity and acceptableness.

Apostle and
 High Priest
 official titles.

Parallel be-
 tween Moses
 and Christ as
 Apostle.

(1.) Moses was the great apostle of the ancient
 faith on which the Hebrew Church had rested
 through many centuries. Visited and commis-
 sioned by the Angel of the Covenant in the land
 of Midian, his apostolate was inscribed with the
 glorious name, 'I AM THAT I AM;—say unto the
 children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.'
 The seals of his apostleship were the miracles in
 Egypt, the legislation of Mount Sinai, and the
 wonders of the Desert. He was the minister of
 God for the delivery of the law in all its parts, and
 for the rearing up of the ecclesiastico-political
 system of the Hebrews, every portion of which bore

¹ 'For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all
 of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.'

indubitable evidences of a divine original. Hence, he is here compared to the builder of a house, and that house a world-wonder. By the term apostle, in its double application to Christ and to Moses, we understand not a prophet merely, but a law-giver; not one who delivers a body of truth, which may be successively added to or superseded, but truth which has the completeness and fixedness of a law, or system of laws, incorporated in a people, and exhibited to the world. An apostle is a *sovereign* person immeasurably elevated above the ordinary rank of prophets, or even above that of New Testament ministers; he is the fount of authority and of religious truth. Others may develope or administer, but the 'apostle' only can *originate* law, and give a standard of truth to a people or to the world. This description is applicable to Moses, to Christ, and also to His apostles, but with that differing eminence which places the Son immeasurably above either.

CHAP. IX.
 Heb. iii. 1-6.

Again, Moses was the high priest of his nation as well as its apostle; in both offices Aaron ranked second to him. Aaron was not his peer, though his elder brother. Moses discharged the functions of the priesthood before Aaron was appointed. Afterwards, those functions, separated from himself by divine appointment, were by him delegated to his brother in that express and formal manner, which as much signified his superiority to Aaron as Melchisedec's blessing on Abraham showed his superiority to the great patriarch. Thus Moses was not merely a precursor but a type of Jesus Christ in his apostolico-regal and priestly glories. Both law and grace in their foreshadowings came

As High
 Priest.

CHAP. IX.
Heb. iii. 1-6.

The parallel
itself exhibits
the human
Sonship.

The Son's
divinity de-
clared as
Builder of the
House.

to the Church in the wilderness; but to the Church at Jerusalem, and to the general assembly of the faithful throughout the world, they came in their truth and fulness by Jesus Christ. This is Christ's house as distinguished from that of Moses, whose glory was as much inferior to His as the work is inferior to the workman, or the creation is inferior to God. The very fact that there is a typical parallel here run between Moses and Christ, shows the prevalence of the human idea of Christ in this passage, as in former passages it was shown by the comparison with the angels. The 'faithfulness,' too, ascribed to Moses and to Christ in common, must alike be regarded as a *servant* virtue; since to ascribe it to God, in the sense of fulfilling duties or engagements, would imply the blasphemy of His owning a superior, and responding to exactions.

But while the humanity is very distinctly asserted in this noble passage of parallelisms, the divinity of the Son also is declared with equal explicitness; for what else can be meant by a comparison between the builder and the house, than that between a cause and an effect, a work and a workman?—a comparison obliging us, in this instance, to make Moses himself, or the people together with him and represented by him, the house, while the Builder of the house is Christ. This can only apply to Him in His pre-existent glory as the Jehovah of the Hebrew nation. This conclusion is established by ver. 4, 'He that built all things is God,' in which the doctrine of the third verse is presented in an absolute form; but it is utterly without relevancy to the argument that Christ was counted 'worthy of more glory than Moses,'

unless it be true of Him as the Son, that it is He that built all things, and that He is therefore God.

CHAP. IX.

Heb. iii. 1-6.

Ver. 4. The argument from design.

Indeed, the argument in ver. 4 is the common one from design, on which so much dependence is placed in the argument for the existence of God. It amounts to this, that our reason and experience assure us, that for every effect in the form of art, intelligence and power are inferred as its cause, and that it would be absurd to ascribe any such phenomena to chance. This same reason, therefore, educated as it is by experience, naturally applies itself to the structure of the universe (particularly to our own world, as the one most open to us), in which power and intelligence are obviously exhibited on the most stupendous scale. We therefore infer a God in the one case as truly as we infer a man in the other; and, to be consistent, Atheism is reduced to the inanity of denying the latter, if it deny the former. The divinity of the Son as Creator is therefore in this place re-affirmed, and is simply the doctrinal reiteration of the second verse of the first chapter: 'Hath spoken unto us by His Son, by whom also He made the worlds.' It is rendered all the more striking by its position in this parallel between Moses and Christ, since it is less wonderful to dilate either on the divine attributes of the Son or the human virtues of the Christ, apart, and as separate beings, than to exhibit them as meeting in one and the same person. The God and the Man, the Son and the Servant, He that built all things and He that is builded as a creature, are qualities and relations all combining in Him whose name prophetically was called WONDERFUL.

The union of the two natures more wonderful than either separate.

CHAP. IX.

Heb. iii. 1-6.

Both con-
cerned in the
government of
the Church.

The application of these various perfections to the government of the Church forms the climax of the argument for the greater glory of Christ over Moses. He is the proprietor of the house, not the servant, as Moses was. 'He that built all things' as God, rules over the Church as God-man, or as 'the Son,'—a title which here obviously includes both natures, since the Church over which He presides is an acquired and not an original possession, elsewhere called 'the purchased possession.' 'House' here is equivalent to household or family. The figure is probably taken from the temple, which, with its courts and many mansions, was a striking type of the great spiritual temple of the Church, variously denominated, but essentially one.

The govern-
ment of the
Son spiritual
and personal.

The relations of this house to Christ as the Son are in ver. 6 set forth as entirely spiritual and also eternal. The 'confidence' and 'the rejoicing of the hope' cannot be considered as corporate qualities, or as bearing any analogy to the structure of the ancient Church. They arise out of a *personal* relation to a *personal* Christ; and their retention and fruit-bearing are made essential to the ultimate enjoyment of the relation itself. But while this language implies the possible forfeiture of individual inheritance in the house or family, that house or family itself is declared to be eternal—the 'end' here merely signifying the close of the earthly, which prefaces the endless and the perfect, estate of the Church.

The relations
of the law to
the gospel.

The aspect of the law towards the gospel is also here introduced, and is fraught with suggestion. The faithfulness of Moses as a servant very mainly con-

sisted in the thorough trustworthiness of all his doctrines and institutions as divine commandments, delivered with the view to a future and more perfect economy of religion than his. The law was but a preamble to the gospel—an outline, a shadow, to pre-intimate to intervening generations of the favoured people that other and higher discoveries were in store, enabling them to anticipate in some degree the nature of those discoveries, and to identify them, whenever they should be made, as developments of pre-existing doctrines. This much is undoubtedly implied in the teachings of the fifth verse. They demonstrate to all who hold the authority of the New Testament, that the Pentateuch is of unchallengeable verity as a history, and is bound to the evangelical dispensation by a divine precognition and order of revelation.

CHAP. IX.

Ileb. iii. 1-6.

CHAPTER X.

THE REST.

HEB. III. 6-19 ; IV. 1-13.

‘BUT Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear His voice.’

‘How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him?’—ii. 3.

This description of the Church supremacy of the Son is equivalent to the doctrine of ch. ii. 3, and should be connected with it as belonging to the same course of thought and form of practical appeal: ‘How shall we escape?’ ‘The Lord’ in the one passage is clearly the ‘Christ’ of the other, the ‘Son’ who is ‘over His own house;’ and the exhortation not to neglect ‘so great salvation’ is enforced by the consideration that it was spoken by the Lord, and not by angels. To let the words ‘slip,’ and ‘to neglect salvation,’ are equivalent expressions; they describe the same condition of mind, and are addressed to the same class of persons, *i.e.* to the Hebrew Church. The 7th verse, therefore, is simply a resumption of the same appeal: ‘Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear His voice.’ The following part of this chapter, together with the whole of ch. iv., is to be regarded as the same argumenta-

tive appeal, founded on the supremacy of Christ over the Church, and on the conditional prospect of final salvation, as ascertained by this relation between Christ and His house.

CHAP. X.
Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

Viewed in this simple and obvious aspect, this section affirms these vital doctrines:

- (1.) The legislative authority of Christ within the Church, and the form of its administration.
- (2.) The required obedience.
- (3.) The contingent recompense.

(1.) Under the New Testament economy the Christ is the enthroned Lawgiver of the Church, as Jehovah was of the congregation in the wilderness. What the Law was to the Israelites, as there delivered by the Lord through Moses and his assessors, that the gospel is to the Christian Church, as delivered by Christ and His apostles. Whatever 'abounding' of grace may be affirmed respecting the latter over the former, whereby it 'exceeds in glory,' is not to be understood as *superseding* the dominion of law, but rather as making law more comprehensive and effective. Sin is, therefore, just as much a possibility under the one economy as under the other, and with sin, forfeiture of privilege and standing with God; while this sin and forfeiture may end in the aggravated penalty due to those who neglect 'so great salvation.' These propositions are obviously included in the historic references here introduced in the quotation from Psalm xcv., and in the argument of the Epistle founded on both; for, had there not been an identity of relation existing between the Lawgiver of the Old, and the

Christ the lawgiver of the Church, as was Jehovah of the congregation.

Proved by historic references.

CHAP. X.

Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

Peculiarly co-
gent as ad-
dressed to
Jews.

Wherefore,
as the Holy
Ghost saith,
'To-day, if ye
will hear His
voice.'

To-day, inti-
mating the
perpetual force
of the law.

Lawgiver of the New, dispensation, from which similar obligations and similar treatment could ensue, the entire argument must be pronounced a fallacy, and the conclusion null and void.

Further, this argument is rendered yet more cogent by the recollection that the persons addressed in the Epistle were Jews, presumed to be familiar with the facts of their own history, with the doctrines of the Pentateuch, of the Psalms, and of the Prophets, and with their own intimate relation, even lineally considered, to the kingdom of the Messiah. They were the descendants of the people of the wilderness so strongly charged with apostasy in the language of the Psalm, and on this ground, as well as on others, made to feel the exceeding force of the warning, 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief' (ver. 12). In verse 7 the teaching of this Psalm is expressly ascribed to the Holy Ghost, as in the following chapter (ver. 7) it is ascribed to David; while its insertion here as the basis of an argument for fidelity to Christ, must be admitted as proof that this doctrine of the Old Testament is really and fully translated into the New, and by the same authority. 'To-day' is here equivalent to the entire duration of the Old Covenant and its institutions, conveying to us the significant intimation that these primitive utterances of God, particularly those from Mount Sinai here directly referred to, abide in perpetual force, and are addressed to every successive generation of people, as truly as to the first, without the least diminution of authority or rightful power of impression. Such was the force of the law, and such is the

force of the gospel; each has its perpetual Now, its 'TO-DAY.'

CHAP. X.

Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

'Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.'

The required
obedience.

(2.) In verse 8 the dispositions to obedience are inculcated, and the failure of divine truth in accomplishing its ends is not made to rest upon its indistinctness or ambiguity, but upon the refractoriness and indifference of those summoned to listen to it. To harden the heart by voluntary habits of indolence, by insensibility, and bias to evil, is to disqualify the most privileged people from profiting by their position, and to convert them into the most provoking and incorrigible rebels. The description to this effect in these verses is a compendium of the history of the Pentateuch, of exact truth and wonderful intensity. The 'provocation,' the 'day of temptation in the wilderness,' extending through forty years; the probation of the divine character by varied operations, both of grace and vengeance; the incessant vexation, speaking after a human manner, which their crimes occasioned; and the solemn judgment passed upon their character from the evidence of their behaviour during this long trial,—are declarations which, considered as inspired, are deeply condemnatory of the people to whom such favours were vouchsafed, and of that human nature in general which so much needs the remembrance

CHAP. X.
 Heb. iii. 6-19;
 iv. 1-13.

Exclusion of
 the Israelites
 from the Rest,
 strictly typi-
 cal.

Christian ad-
 mission to it
 conditional.

of these fearful precedents of human turpitude to fortify it against similar or even more aggravated apostasy in later times.

The penalty of exclusion from the promised rest (vers. 11-15¹) cannot be taken in any other sense than as an example strictly typical, and therefore of New Testament force. It is not mere deprivation of privilege or lowering of status that is intended: these penalties had been incurred before, but by the intercession of Moses they had been condoned. The penalty here was to that generation nothing less than an absolute disinheritanee, not to be reversed on suit or amendment, but rendered final by an oath. Hence ver. 14 makes the participation in Christ conditional on holding 'the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end, while it is said to-day;' *i.e.* the Christian rest is as much made contingent on obedience to the end as was the Hebrew rest on the obedience of the people in the wilderness. Thus, ver. 13, 'Exhort one another daily,' is language suitable to an emergency,—to the decision of a great stake, the casting of the die of destiny. The reminders are to be, not once, or now and then, but daily, and of Church obligation, as if every man were made his brother's keeper: 'lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;' nothing being more easy and fatal than to accept the lessons of temptation when

¹ 'So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; while it is said, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.'

they appeal strongly to the frailties of the heart or to the exigencies of position.

CHAP. X.

Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

Verses 16 to 19¹ seem intended to express very emphatically the strict righteousness of the punishments inflicted on the people in the wilderness; that those punishments were far from being hastily inflicted, or of condign severity in earlier instances, but, on the contrary, that they closed a long career of trial and a commensurate career of disobedience, which proved them to be utterly incorrigible rebels, and totally unfit to further the purposes of their deliverance from Egypt. The language of ver. 16, 'For some, when they had heard, did provoke,' seems intended to intimate that in that case, as well as in many others, the good and the bad stood together, though not in equal proportions. The word 'some' is not meant to express a few, as our rendering seems to intimate, but rather an indefinite multitude, for these 'some' are evidently put in opposition to the whole mass of the people led out of Egypt by Moses. The history clearly supports this view. It could not be that the 'all' in the latter part of the verse, who were exempt from rebellion, respected only the two individuals, Caleb and Joshua, mentioned in the history. The line of division seems rather to run between the fully adult portion of the people and such as were under age at the time of this declaration: these were not numbered among the men of war when the census was taken,

Rendering of
the word
'some.'

¹ 'For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He grieved forty years? *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.'

CHAP. X.
 Heb. iii. 6-19;
 iv. 1-13.

The mixed
 condition of
 the congrega-
 tion shows the
 voluntary na-
 ture of its
 transgressions.

and therefore, as minors, if for no other reasons, were exempted from the decree of exclusion, as they were from the lists of conscription.

This mixed condition of the same congregation is here appositely introduced to show, that the sins and provocations of those ultimately punished were purely voluntary, and chargeable only on the human 'heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;' and that there were no such hardships in their probationary condition, whatever these might be, as to render their sin inevitable, or in any degree to extenuate it. The sin and the punishment exhibited the most perfect correspondence; for that sin was the disobedience of unbelief, induced by a cherished habit of complaint—itself the fruit of deep disaffection to the divine rule, and productive of such a mental feebleness and dislike of effort as disqualified them to cope with difficulties, or to dare duty, however arduous, in simple reliance on the help of God. Canaan was the only alternative to the wilderness, and to refuse the one was to choose the other; hence ver. 19: 'So we see they could not enter in because of unbelief.' This closes the historical part of the argument.

3. The contin-
 gent recom-
 pense.

(3.) Its application in ch. iv. is resumed.¹ The prospective 'Rest' here is dilated upon as common to the Jewish and the Christian Church. The gospel also is common to them both, *i.e.* the joyful

¹ 'Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as He said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.'

tidings of this rest of God. Faith is set forth as the leading principle of obedience under both dispensations, and as the basis of all revealed religion, as in ch. xi. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith, not a set of dogmas or intellectual speculations, is the principle underlying all religious education, the true fount of religious power and of religious character. The religious man is the man of faith.

CHAP. X.

Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

Verse 3 lays down the identity of prospect between the Christian disciple and the disciple of the older dispensation: 'For we which have believed do enter into rest.' The meaning of this phrase is not that faith actually introduces the disciple into the 'rest,' but that it opens up the rest to him, puts him in the way of it. Further, it is implied that this Christian rest was foreshown in the Hebrew rest, and that there was a community of purpose between the calling of the Hebrew people out of Egypt and the calling of the Christian people by the gospel, since on no other ground can we understand why the quotation from Psalm xcv. is introduced in this connection. It is true the quotation relates to the prospects of the Hebrew people in David's day, not in the day of Moses; but this is an additional argument for the exactness of the correspondence between the Hebrew and the Christian rest, since it is in evidence that the Spirit of inspiration instructed David to record this typical correspondence, and to urge upon the people under David's rule, and by David's instruction, the duty of a cordial and thorough obedience to their ancient law. This subject is continued in the remainder of the third verse down to the ninth; the course of

CHAP. X.

Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

The Sabbath
the primitive
type of the
'Rest.'

the argument being in the same direction, viz. to show the still prospective nature of the rest of God.

For this purpose (in ver. 4) the Sabbath is introduced.¹ It is uncertain whether the quotation, 'God did rest the seventh day,' is taken from the Decalogue or from Gen. ii. 2. The point of importance to notice here is the manifest collocation of the Sabbath with the finished work of creation, and the argument thence arising in favour of its *primitive* institution, since it would have been puerile to have introduced the Sabbath with this preface, 'although the works were finished,' had it been really first instituted in the wilderness. Neither would it help the argument for the finality of God's 'rest' to have placed the rest of the Sabbath lower down, and so much nearer to the 'rest' of the promised land, thus destroying the *primitive* type and substituting a double Hebrew one in its stead.

To this it may be added, that the Christian doctrine being a world-doctrine, as distinguished from a Jewish one, is better matched by a primitive, and therefore world-doctrine of the Sabbath, than it could be by one merely national and temporary. The Christian rest is simply the world Gospel, not that of a particular people, and therefore seems to require a world type as its true antecedent. The purpose served by the introduction of the Sabbath here is to show that, as an institution commemorative of the Creation, its rest had been already entered by the pious of all preceding generations. The 'rest' of the promised land had

Already enjoyed from the early ages.

¹ 'For He spake in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works.'

also been enjoyed for centuries before the time of David, yet still, in the fifth verse, the rest of God is spoken of and quoted from David's Psalm [xcv.], as the boon of the future: 'If they shall enter into my rest.' This, too, is in evidence that the doctrine of a future life was familiar to the Hebrew people, and that the sanctions of religion were not merely secular, as understood in David's time, but that the loyal obedience to God, to which he exhorted them by the authority of the Holy Ghost, rested on the broad ground of immortality and retribution. This renders the quotation from David doctrinally apposite; whereas, had religion rested on the national basis alone, the Psalm itself would have been unintelligible to David's people as an exhortation to secure a *promised* rest, while it could not have been introduced to press an argument in favour of fidelity to the obligations of Christianity.

We omit for the present all reference to ver. 6, which is usually a difficulty with commentators, and proceed to examine vers. 7, 8, 9, and 10.

'Again, He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.'

The formula 'again' (in the Epistle to the Hebrews oft recurring) always denotes a fresh example in proof of a previous doctrine. In this sense it well

CHAP. X.
Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

95th Psalm
unintelligible
on the secular
theory of the
Hebrew faith.

The formula
'again.'

CHAP. X.

Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

Verses 5 and
7 separate
quotations
from 95th
Psalm.

coheres with ver. 5, 'If they shall enter into my rest,' which clearly refers to the 'rest' of the promised land, while ver. 7 as clearly refers to the rest of God or of a future life, but still related to the 'rest' of the land of promise as its antitype. This appears to be the true reason why emphasis is laid on the word 'to-day,' and on the appended comment, 'after so long a time.' For to what purpose is this comment introduced, but in order to prove that there was another and a higher rest in existence than that to be entered from the wilderness, *i.e.* 'the rest' proclaimed by the prophets as the great heritage of the Church from the foundation of the world, foreshadowed by the Sabbath and by the land of promise?

That this is the gist of the argument is manifest from vers. 8 and 9: 'For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day;' *i.e.* if the rest of Canaan given by Joshua had fully met God's intentions with respect to His people, it is impossible that another and distinct 'rest' should have been exhibited to them as a motive to piety in an after time; hence the language of the ninth verse, 'There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.' It is the conclusion established by a distinct course of argument from the Old Testament, and contains two things of importance:—

Doctrine of a
future life al-
ways held by
the Church.

First, That from the beginning of the world a future life of glory had been distinctly held forth to piety, in the form of promise or typical institutions; and,

God has had a
people in all
ages.

Secondly, That from the beginning of the world that promise had always been to some extent

accepted, and that in all ages God had had a people. Hence the only question of vital import to be settled now, and when this Epistle was written, is, Who are the people of God, and, consequently, the heirs of this promise? The ninety-fifth Psalm settled who they were in David's time. They were the truly obedient to the teachings of the law and of the prophets; in later times they are the disciples of Christ: 'We which have believed do enter into rest' (ver. 3), *i.e.* are entitled to this rest. The whole gist of the Epistle is to settle this question beyond all controversy.

CHAP. X.

Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.God has had a
people in all
ages.

Ver. 10, 'For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His,' is designed to show in what the nature of the future glory consists. The phrase, 'his rest,' may either mean God's rest or His people's rest. If taken in the latter sense, it asserts that the future life is an exact antithesis to the present, and that it is built upon the issues of the present, considered as a probationary epoch. 'Works' are here to be taken in the most extensive sense, not merely for Christian works strictly and properly so called, but for the general strife and travail of life. The 'rest' excludes all these: it is simply their fruit. Life is reproduced; but in another and higher form, as a perfect mirror of the past and a retributory counterpart of that which was but initial, yet the seed of the ripened harvest of life eternal. If it be true that the man who enters 'his rest has ceased from his own works, as God did from His,' this cannot signify less than a complacent fruition arising from a perfect understanding of the nature of the past. It must largely

Verse 10 states
the nature of
a future rest.'His rest'
may be (1)
man's rest.

CHAP. X. consist in vast intellectual comprehension of the
 Heb. iii. 6-19; relation of that past life to an epoch of the divine
 iv. 1-13. government, necessarily pre-conditional to that
 never-ending status of perfection, in which all the
 glories of the divine character shine forth with
 unclouded ray.

Or (2) God's
 rest.

But if the phrase 'his rest' means God's rest (as is likely), this, taken with the latter clause of the verse, 'as God did from His,' gives us a view still loftier; for it intimates a certain correspondence of the stages of humanity to the development of the divine nature. As far as these are open to us, they show an alternation of creative work with what, in the comparative sense, may be called cessation: there are working periods and resting periods in the history of His creation. Physical productions are made subservient to moral results. A finished system, including the universe, in which all His perfections and His nature may ultimately rest with complacent satisfaction, is more reasonably ascribed to God than one which argues His perfections from unlimited operation implying unfinished work, in which case, in the sense of Sabbath-keeping, His nature bears no analogy with that of creatures.

Ver. 6. Argument as stated in authorized version incomplete.

We return to verse 6. 'Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief.'

1. The objection to it, as it stands in the authorized version, lies in the incomplete form of the argument it professes to initiate. There are two declarations: (1) 'Seeing (or since) therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein;' and (2) 'They to whom it was first preached entered not

in;’—both these require some other, in the form of a conclusion, or the argument is broken off in the middle—a supposition not in harmony with inspired teaching.

2. The verse itself is without any perceptible connection with ver. 5. The inference of the sixth verse, ‘It remaineth that some must enter therein,’ is hardly a cogent one from the statement of the fifth, ‘If they shall enter into my rest,’ or ‘they shall not enter into my rest,’ much less is what follows, ‘They to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief’ (ver. 6); for this last clause of the verse is clearly identified with the history, which undoubtedly shows that the Jews were excluded from ‘the rest’ because of unbelief, but does not establish the conclusion that ‘it remaineth that some must enter therein.’

Verse 6 also is clearly irrelevant to ver. 7: ‘Again he limiteth a certain day.’

The difficulty has been generally mitigated, though not removed, by enclosing verses 7 to 10 within a parenthesis. It seems, however, both simpler and more satisfactory to insert ver. 6 before ver. 11. This is really its proper place, from its manifestly logical connection: ‘Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief,’ ‘let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.’ This connection is perfect; it removes all ambiguity from the course of the argument, and all necessity for the use of a parenthesis between verses 7 and 10. Indeed, it is so obvious, that the conjecture must be deemed probable that

CHAP. X.
Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

Conclusion
stated in ver.
6 not drawn
from ver. 5,
nor related to
ver. 7.

True place of
ver. 6 before
ver. 11.

This probably
its original
place.

CHAP. X. this was its original place, and that the arrangement
 Heb. iii. 6-19; has been injured by some early error of transcrip-
 iv. 1-13. tion. Instances of this sort not a few may be
 gathered from the Old and New Testaments.

How, then, reads the verse in the connection proposed? It reads as an argument enforcing the exhortation of the first verse, drawn from the whole of the preceding discourse concerning the temptation and the rest. The unbelief mentioned in ver. 6 recurs in ver. 11 as an example to be shunned and strenuously resisted: 'Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest;' *i.e.* to be of the number mentioned in ver. 6, who are said 'to enter in,' and not of the disobedient mentioned in the same description, and again in ver. 11, as those who 'fall after the same example of unbelief.' Thus the correspondence between verses 6 and 11 is seen to be entire: the one is actually dovetailed into the other. The inference from the continued existence of the 'rest' provision from age to age undoubtedly is, that some enter therein, and that in the divine foresight such overture was not unavailing; but that, whilst many neglected it, others would certainly accept it.¹

Rest provision
 existed from
 the beginning.

It is apparent that this obvious mode of interpreting the sixth verse coincides both with matter of fact and with the argument of the discourse. As to the fact, it simply exhibits a summary of the history of the Church under the law and the gospel;

¹ Hence, though our translators ought not to have inserted 'must' in the passage as a true rendering of the original, they have less diverged from an implied doctrine in the phrase than they seem to have done; for, though necessity, in the sense of predetermined decree, be inadmissible, yet the relation between the rest provision and the requirements of human nature is so broad and intimate as to justify us in asserting that given results will follow.

for from the beginning there have always been those who have used their privileges and those who have abused them. As to the argument, the fact itself is most cogent in favour of final perseverance in the profession and works of the Christian faith.

CHAP. X.

Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

For example, taking verse 1 of the chapter, 'Let us therefore fear,' etc., while there was no danger whatever that the entire Hebrew Church should apostatize from Christianity to Judaism, there was very eminent hazard of a portion of it giving way; indeed, the Epistle asserts that some had already fallen, and it was obviously written to arrest the mischief. Such is the construction of verse 1: 'Any of you should seem to come short of it,' *i.e.* exhibit an example of apostasy after the manner of your fathers. The expression '*seem* to come short' is not to be interpreted as an apparent instead of a real coming short, but of such an open and palpable dereliction from the path of duty as should make an adverse judgment with respect to their prospects undeniably true from the very letter of the Christian faith. The defection was overt and cognizable beyond doubt, just as much so as was the defection of the Israelites who murmured against Moses, and refused to advance at God's command towards the land of promise.

Danger of coming short of it a motive to perseverance.

The relation of this whole discourse (commencing with the 7th verse of the 3d, and ending with the 13th verse of the 4th chapter) to the Church Sovereignty of Christ, is as manifest as it is impressive. To quote a prophetic phrase, 'This is the law of the house.' As the King of Israel, Christ gave law to the people in the wilderness, by His 'servant Moses,'—as the 'King set upon the holy hill of

Chap. iii. 7 to chap. iv. 13 teaches the sovereignty of Christ over the Church in all ages.

CHAP. X.
 Heb. iii. 6-19;
 iv. 1-13.

Zion,' He gives law to His Church throughout the world. To His voice, as recognised by the Holy Ghost, the people of David's time were summoned to give audience. Between the two dispensations of the Old and New Covenants, intervened that of prophets, expository of the one, and preparatory to the other. Under these several epochs of rule, His Rest has ever been set forth to His people as the prize of their high calling; while, with the advance of revelation, we mark a corresponding advance in the spirituality and compass of religious obligation, and even in the terrors of penalty. Hence the all but alarm language of verse 11, 'Let us labour therefore,' reminding us of our Lord's own words, 'strive,' or agonize, 'to enter in at the strait gate, for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.'

'For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.'

We have here the climax of this most consecutive and forcible appeal: 'For the word of God is quick and powerful.' The author, after considerable lapse of time, and careful reconsideration of this passage, is unable to offer a truer exposition of its terms and scope than he has given elsewhere. He therefore introduces, without apology, an extract from his work on *Mediatorial Sovereignty* (vol. i. p. 99):—'Heb. iv. 12 is a New

Testament reflection of Old Testament scriptures. The force of the collation lies partly in the structural resemblance between the Old Testament passages and this from the New, and partly in the historic and doctrinal unity existing between them. For the first,—if it be necessary to hold the doctrine of a personal Word at all, as contained in the former class of scriptures,—it seems we can hardly deny that the passage in Hebrews is susceptible of the same interpretation. For while it is not to be maintained that any one of these scriptures may not be interpreted otherwise, it does seem clear that the admission of a personal sense is equally appropriate to the last-mentioned scripture with them all; and it is remarkable that in no other passage of the New Testament can any description of the “word of God” be pointed to at all akin to this; it stands by itself, and, as it would seem, is meant to be a kind of reflection of, or counterpart to, this class of Old Testament passages. Like them it partakes of the characters of indefiniteness or double meaning; while it draws out those more highly appropriate to a *person* than to a word. “The word of God is quick,” or living, powerful, in action like the piercing of a sword, “a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart;” *i.e.* life, power, and moral judgment are ascribed to it; and, indeed, unless a transition from a word to a person be admitted here, the same ‘word’ is said to scrutinize all creatures, and that it is with this ‘word’ that all creatures have to do. But this notion of a transition seems to spoil the climacteric nature of the description; and is, moreover, improbable, from the double consideration that it

CHAP. X.

Heb. iii. 6-19;
iv. 1-13.

CHAP. X. could not be the Apostle's intention to enforce on
 Heb. iii. 6-19; *Hebrews* the doctrine of the divine omniscience
 iv. 1-13. but as it was an attribute of the Word; and that
 to the Word, rather than to God, in the peculiar
 New Testament sense, appertains the *judicial* as
 well as the gracious administration of the Church.

‘These considerations make it difficult to believe that personality is excluded from this description; mere personification of the literal “word”—the alternative to this interpretation—being inadequate to the import of the description, considered as a *whole*. . . . There is a supposed parallel between these Hebrew Christians and their progenitors under the Law; and their temptations and dangers in both cases are supposed to arise, not only from the same general causes, but from their having to do with the *same Being*. The quotation from the 95th Psalm is full in proof of this, for it immediately relates to their conduct under probation, and recognises in the Being who said, “When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works,” the Lord of the New Testament Church.”¹

¹ See also the two apocalyptic descriptions of Christ, Rev. i. 16, xix. 13.

NOTE.

 Heb. iv. 4.

NOTE ON THE SABBATH.

HEB. IV. 4.

‘FOR He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works.’

In addition to the argument previously advanced for the primitive institution of the Sabbath, the following observations are added:—

(1.) The ground of observance of a seventh day in the Decalogue bears on it no Hebrew peculiarity whatever. It is just as cogent a ground for Sabbath observance to the whole human race as to the Hebrew people, resting as it does on the assumption that Jehovah the God of Israel is the only true God, and the only Creator of the world. This is plainly catholic ground, and its denial would involve the blasphemy of His being but a local and tutelary Deity, to whom the rest of mankind owe neither recognition nor fealty.

The fourth commandment not Hebrew but primitive.

(2.) The *covenant* character of the Decalogue by no means invalidates this conclusion; it only implies that to the Hebrew people the Sabbath was a national ordinance, a formal article of stipulation, so to speak, to which they pledged themselves by their acceptance of this covenant. Hence the dissolution of the covenant and of its national obligations cannot in the least affect the validity of the Sabbath, as resting on an older law; it merely unlooses this particular form of obligation.

Covenant character of the Decalogue does not invalidate this.

(3.) The assumption that the Sabbath is merely a Hebrew ordinance is founded on a wrong view of the Decalogue itself, which is not merely a national code, but essentially a world code. Not one of its articles can be appealed to as bearing a local or temporary character; they are a rescript or summary of religion itself. Surely the prohibitions of polytheism, idolatry, of dishonouring parents, swearing, theft, murder, adultery, are not Hebrew ordinances, but the common law of humanity? If so, they are as old as the world, and the collocation of the Sabbath

The Decalogue a summary of primitive religion.

NOTE.

Heb. iv. 4.

with them is in proof that it likewise is one of the articles of primitive religion, of which the Decalogue is but an abridgment.

Mission of the
Hebrews to
restore primi-
tive religion.

(4.) This view of the Decalogue is corroborated by a recollection of the purposes for which the Hebrew people were called out of Egypt, disciplined in the wilderness, and settled in the land of Canaan. These purposes involved nothing less than the formal restoration of the primitive religion of the world. They were to be a divine testimony to the divinity of Jehovah, as the Creator of the world, and a protest against the apostasy and guilt of the nations around, in substituting other divinities for Him, and in doing service to them which 'by nature were no gods.' This was God's testimony, and it was to be held forth to the nations in a grand national form, by a people selected for that very end. Hence they might not improperly be called as a nation the early Protestants of the world. Their religion was most expressly Monotheistic, and their national integrity was guaranteed on this basis alone. The infraction of the covenant, fatal to its integrity, was the sin of idolatry, which, with its accompanying deluge of crime, had ripened for destruction the nations in whose land they were to dwell. The institution of the Sabbath appears peculiarly forcible in this connection. It was a professional badge of their obligation to maintain their loyalty to their faith, and a leading measure for securing it.

The Sabbath a
badge of this
obligation.

The application of this argument to the Christian Sabbath is easy and obvious. There was no room for the *formal* re-institution of the Sabbath in a religion not essentially national. It could only be re-edited as a *Church* ordinance, and could only be restored to its nationality when the religion of Christ should come to be nationally recognised. This consideration, while it goes far to account for the absence in the New Testament of a formal republication, is made still more convincing when referred to the institution of the Sabbath as part and parcel of the primitive law of the world. For why should that be formally re-instituted which has never fallen into disuse, or has in no previous age whatever been formally

Not formally
re-instituted,
because never
abrogated.

annulled? Even by men, fresh legislation to suit new wants of society surely does not imply the abrogation of constitutional principles previously settled, or even of particular statutes, unless their abrogation be formally declared. Why, then, should it be imagined, that Christianity has cancelled the ordinance of the Sabbath, because it is in certain capital respects a great advance on the earlier religion of the world? Undoubtedly, it may and does comprise much more than this, but as certainly it cannot comprise *less*. Hence, the manner in which the New Testament deals with this question is just what we ought to have expected. It does not treat all previous revelation as a nullity. It does not re-enact the statutes against polytheism and idolatry; against theft, murder, forgery, and the like; but does it therefore abrogate them? It takes for granted that the primitive religion of the world is irrevocable, whilst it makes its notices of the Sabbath entirely to correspond with this assumption. For instance, when our Lord uttered His great declaration, found in Mark (ch. ii. vers. 27, 28), it plainly assumes the perpetuity and world-wide nature of the Sabbath: 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.'¹ The language of this double aphorism is of itself sufficiently explicit; but its full lustre, as a declaration of the pristine and universal institution of the Sabbath, is brought out by adverting to the obvious fact, that our Lord meant it to be an authoritative interpretation of the Sabbath law, directed against ecclesiastical and traditional interpolations. This vindication of its integrity is far more forcibly presented by going back to it as a primitive and race ordinance, than by looking at it merely in its national aspects, since, undoubtedly, there were specialities in the form of the law as delivered to the Hebrew people, which did not belong to it in its primitive and race character. What follows this authoritative declaration, 'Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath,' is most momentous. It corroborates the per-

NOTE.

 Heb. iv. 4.

Our Lord assumes its perpetuity, and declares the law of its observance.

¹ According to some modern notions, the word Jews should have taken the place of man in the passage; but even on this restricted basis, the latter aphorism is still inapplicable, that the Jews were made for the Sabbath.

NOTE.

Heb. iv. 4.

This the
earliest Chris-
tian authority
for Sabbath
observance.

Alteration of
the day a later
act of Christ's
prerogative.

petuity of the Sabbath, and gives us the law of its future observance. It, as we take it, determines at once the true position of the Sabbath as a part of Christianity. The institution as primitive, and as Hebrew also, is subject to the legislation of Christ as Lord, *i.e.* as Redeemer. This declaration is in proof that His Lordship is exercised over the Sabbath only administratively; indeed, the occasion itself is in evidence that no controversy existed between Him and the national authorities on the validity of the Sabbath, but only on the law of its observance. In this instance, we see the first exercise of His prerogative in this direction, in determining the innocency of His disciples in plucking the ears of corn. Regarding the Sabbath in the light of this scripture, its future observance seems a direct consequence. It is also the authority for its final designation as the LORD'S day: 'For the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath.' This is an earlier and broader ground than that which assigns it merely to the day of the Resurrection. The alteration from the seventh to the first day of the week, in memory of this great event, should be regarded as a distinct act of legislation respecting its *observance*, rather than as the original act of the Lord's prerogative. He was Lord of the Sabbath from the very date of His Messiahship, as is proved by the scripture just quoted; and the appointment of the first day as His Sabbath ensued, because the day of His resurrection was in fact the date of His new creation, the Church. There is reason to believe that this re-institution of the Sabbath took place on the very day of the Resurrection itself, since we mark the singular recurrence of Christ's visits afterwards as seventh-day visits.

In all probability, the Sabbath, like Baptism and the Supper, was an ordinance of Christ, entirely foregoing and separate from the revelations of the Holy Ghost, and should be numbered among the things 'pertaining to the kingdom of God' settled by our Lord in His intercourse with the apostles during the forty days previous to the Ascension. He was about to disband and scatter the only nation which, for untold centuries, had retained this great primitive institution of the world; elsewhere it had perished utterly, in

common with every other article of true religion, in the great deluge of polytheism. Further, this nation was never again to be restored under that covenant which formally guaranteed the observance of the Sabbath; henceforth, in the disowned and scattered condition of the Hebrew people, it was only to linger with them as one among the many traditions of the past, exerting no influence for Sabbath restoration on the world. This singular fact is undeniable, that while Judaism, previous to the age of Christianity, exerted a very considerable influence among Gentile nations in favour of the Sabbath, since Christianity came, this influence has been altogether defunct, proving that it depended upon the national integrity of the Jews, and therefore could have no existence after that nationality had ceased. The Sabbath cannot be restored apart from Christianity, without restoring a rival Sabbath, a national in opposition to a world Sabbath.

NOTE.

Heb. iv. 4.

Influence of the Hebrew Sabbath perished with Hebrew nationality.

In this, then, we perceive a wonderful example of the prescient power of the Author of Christianity, and an exercise of His prerogatives in beautiful accordance with it. Before He destroyed the only conservative power of primitive religion in the world, He transferred to the custody of His Church its great primitive institute. The light was put into a new shrine, and the holy fire, as it were, removed from a doomed altar to one of indestructible perpetuity. This was a grand augury for the future of the world, and itself a prophecy of the universal spread of the Christian religion. The Sabbath was to be restored to the world purely by means of the Christian Church, and to become its last universal light, preserved through all intervening periods of darkness, until the world's beginning and the world's end should complete the circle of its existence in its first and last Sabbath-day.¹

Its influence to be restored by the Church.

Doubtless, it was a temporary embarrassment, that the Christian Church began its course with a double Sabbath; but this was inevitable, so long as Jewish institutions remained in force; yet, thus early, the two Sabbaths exhibited very great differences. There would be seen the national

Co-existence of the Jewish Sabbath and the Lord's day.

¹ See last chapter of *Mediatorial Sovereignty*,—‘The Kingdom of the Father the Sabbath of the Universe.’

NOTE.

Heb. iv. 4.

Contrast between them.

Difficulties attending its first observance account for indistinctness of ancient testimonies on the point.

Sabbath, with its stiffness, pomp, punctiliousness, and mechanical routine; and by the side of it, the quiet, simple, unearthly consecration of the Lord's day to worship, to fraternal intercourse, and to works of charity and religion. It would bear no traces of external legislation, or consignment to mere bodily exercises, which profit little. It was no heavy yoke, encumbered by no ceremonial, but free, spiritual, holy, and heavenly, as the religion which authenticated it; in a word, its observance was voluntary and spontaneous, pleasant in association, and fruitful in blessing. Disowned by the world, it was the more precious to the Church, though in primitive times its observance must have been attended by many inconveniences and sacrifices. Indeed, its thorough observance, in many instances, must have been impracticable, as in the case of slaves, soldiers, or civil employés. These early surroundings of the Christian Sabbath go far to account for the comparative indistinctness of ancient testimonies as to the mode in which it was kept. In primitive times, it must have been very much restricted, or rather cut off from its social correlatives. Afterwards, when Christianity was widely spread, its corruption also had made a corresponding progress; so that when the Church came to be acknowledged throughout the Roman empire, its condition was such as almost totally to preclude any true appreciation of or practical compliance with the divine ordinance. It is likely that its observance was of that heterogeneous and superficial sort which marks its modern aspects in countries only nominally Christian, but especially in those still subject to the dark sway of mediævalism. Indeed, its true character was only imperfectly understood in the age of the Reformation, and is still much perverted by the extremes of a Judaizing severity on the one hand, and of a Church-dispensing laxity on the other. It is obvious that the glory of the Christian Sabbath is only developed, just in proportion to the progress of an intelligent evangelical piety; and that, until this shall become far more prevalent in the world than it is, these distortions of the Sabbath may be expected to hold their ground.

CHAPTER XI.

PRACTICAL DISCUSSION—‘ELEMENTS.’

HEB. v. 11, 12; VI. 1-3.

IN order to preserve entire the unity of the several topics under discussion, and especially that of the PRIESTHOOD (extending through the first ten verses of the 5th chapter, and omitting chapter vi., continuing as far as the 22d verse of the 10th chapter), it is appropriate here to break off from the 13th verse of chapter iv., and to recommence with the 11th verse of chapter v. The verses following, with the whole of the 6th chapter, form a separate practical discussion.

‘Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.’

Third hortatory section begins chap. v. 11, continues through chap. vi.

It is a remarkable feature in the structure of this Epistle that the current of doctrinal statement is more than once interrupted for the sake of delivering the most forcible exhortations arising out of the truths previously set forth. The first example of this kind occurs in the opening of chapter ii., the second in chapter iii., verse 7, the third we are about to consider, a fourth is found in chapter x., verse 22; and these are multiplied as the Epistle progresses toward completion. This may be taken as an indication of some importance

CHAP. XI.

Heb. v. 11, 12;
vi. 1-3.

These digres-
sions charac-
teristics of
St. Paul's
thought.

in the question of its authorship; for, if it cannot be said that this treatise agrees precisely with the structure of all St. Paul's Epistles, yet it does so in a very remarkable manner, still more, perhaps, with the style of St. Paul's thought, which is characteristically digressive. The difference is to be accounted for chiefly by the more extended and systematic form which this Epistle presents. Indeed, one is inclined to think that the staple of the Epistle (or treatise, as it may rather be called) may be more correctly, perhaps, ascribed to St. Paul than its form. The doctrines are his, but the form may be the work of another, subject to his immediate supervision.

Chap. v. 11
accords with
chap. iv. 11,
which closes
second horta-
tory section.

But to return. The exhortation in the 11th verse of chapter iv., 'Let us labour therefore,' is in full accord with the exhortation in the 11th verse before quoted; both are expressive of a degree of disquiet and dissatisfaction with respect to the state of the Hebrew Church. 'To fall after the same example of unbelief,' is a liability associated with this language of rebuke, 'seeing ye are dull of hearing,' and are become such as 'have need of milk, and not of strong meat.' The non-progressive state of the Hebrew Church, in respect to spiritual and doctrinal acquisition, if nothing worse, is in these verses strongly affirmed, and made the ground of serious, though not of exaggerated apprehension. Supposing this Epistle to be one of the latest of the inspired canon, it may be adduced in evidence that this primitive and apostolic Church was not, on the whole, in a flourishing condition thirty years after the day of Pentecost. The bulk of its earliest members were

then doubtless gathered into the Rest spoken of in the 4th chapter,—perhaps the greater part of the apostles were to be numbered with them,—and in the main a new generation had risen up, not in all respects worthy of the past.

CHAP. XI.

Heb. v. 11, 12;
vi. 1-3.

Epistle addressed to Church at Jerusalem.

That verses 11 and 12 could have been addressed to the primitive Church in its glory, is a supposition disproven by the ‘Acts of the Apostles;’ while the phrase, ‘When for the time ye ought to be teachers,’ is in proof that instead of the Church at Jerusalem being the focus of evangelical wisdom, and a sort of normal institution for the instruction of provincial or Gentile Churches, as it ought to have been, it rather itself stood in need of a reinforcement from without; and that already a bringing back of a torch from a distance to the primitive seat of light, was the necessity of the time, and the object of this Epistle. ‘The first principles of the oracles of God’ are spoken of as things to be reconsidered and pondered anew, as if there was a danger of their being sapped by the condition of the living Church, or, to use the language of chapter ii., ‘We ought to give the more earnest heed,’ instead of a laxer adhesion, ‘lest at any time,’ whether of persecution or of indolent rest, ‘we should let them slip,’ as running water from a leaky vessel.

‘The first principles of the oracles of God’ comprise the elements of Christianity, samples of which are given us in verses 1 and 2 of chapter vi.¹ They are called ‘the foundation of repentance from dead

‘Principles’ elements of Christianity specified in verses 1 and 2.

¹ ‘Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.’

CHAP. XI.
 Heb. v. 11, 12;
 vi. 1-3.

'Faith' not in
 Theism, but
 in the mission
 of Christ.

works,' *i.e.* the abjuration of mere ritualism and the formalities of law, once in force but now defunct, and hence called 'dead works.' By implication, therefore, the profession of Christianity meant the repudiation of these as the essentials of religion. The intermixture of Judaism with Christianity, which was the bias of the age, was fatal to the integrity of the latter, save as a temporary compliance for *national* reasons, not for religious ones. To this 'repentance from dead works' is added 'faith toward God,' which, in this connection, certainly cannot mean the doctrines of Theism (for that foundation had been laid ages before in this people), but faith in God, as the author of the mission of Christ.

'Baptisms' of
 water and the
 Holy Ghost.

To these fundamentals are added the 'doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.' The article here of a double baptism should be taken to include the baptism of water and of the Holy Ghost, since these two are the only baptisms recognised by the New Testament. The earlier baptism of John and of our Lord Himself were but initial ordinances, entirely superseded by the post-resurrectional ordinance of water and of the Holy Ghost. It is befitting the evangelical history to rank the baptism of the Holy Ghost among the 'elements' of Christianity, because this baptism was announced from the beginning both by John and by the Saviour, and because, historically considered, this baptism inaugurated apostolic Christianity. From the Acts of the Apostles also (ch. xix. 3) we gather that the baptism of the Holy Ghost was so fundamental a doctrine of Christianity,

that no person could be said to have been really baptized into its profession who was ignorant of it. It was the capital distinction between the teaching of the Forerunner and that of the apostles. This interpretation of the doctrine of baptisms is confirmed by the article following, 'And of laying on of hands,' since we learn from the Acts that this baptism of the Holy Ghost was *commonly* conferred by the laying on of the apostles' hands.¹

The article of 'the resurrection of the dead' is put in the same category of 'elements' or principles. It was the master-fact on which Christianity rested, first, and chiefly, in respect to Christ Himself; second, and in consequence, in respect to the resurrection of the human race. This is patent from numerous passages in the Acts and the Epistles, particularly 1 Cor. i. 15, where the whole subject is argued and illustrated in St. Paul's noblest manner. No person could therefore be a candidate for Christian baptism and its profession of faith who was not absolutely grounded in this truth.

The article of the general judgment completes the series, which culminates with equal sublimity and force; it is almost uniformly set before us, throughout the New Testament, in a similar connection, and demonstrated by similar arguments. Our Lord thus associated the Resurrection with the

CHAP. XI.

Heb. v. 11, 12;
vi. 1-3.Baptism of
the Holy
Ghost among
the elements
proved by
what follows.Doctrine of
Resurrection
among the
elements.Also, doctrine
of the general
judgment.

¹ This was a speciality, indeed, in the manner of bestowment, and related only to the impartation of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost by the apostolic ministry; while even in this sense the ordinance was not absolutely requisite, the first Gentile converts, according to Acts (ch. x.), receiving even these miraculous endowments by Peter's preaching, not by the imposition of his hands. For the essential purposes of the Christian life, and in perpetuity, this ordinance of imposition of hands was entirely ignored; and the modern use of it, except as a symbol of conveying office, is therefore only superstition.

CHAP. XI. Judgment; nor did St. Paul in the presence of the
 Heb. v. 11, 12; veriest Pagans deem that he had delivered to them
 vi. 1-3. even a bare rudiment of Christianity without laying
 emphasis on the fact that God had appointed a day
 in which ‘He will judge the world in righteous-
 ness.’ This enumeration of articles is not to be
 taken, however, as absolutely complete: not a
 single Church doctrine is introduced, and the
 articles are fewer than those contained even in
 what is called the Apostles’ Creed. Hence the in-
 ference is, that they are meant merely as speci-
 men truths of this order, given with a view to
 distinguish them from the more recondite doctrines
 of Christianity or its higher mysteries, particularly
 those which form the staple of this Épistle.

‘Elements’
 specimen
 truths, not a
 complete list.

These to be
 distinguished
 from recondite
 doctrines.

CHAPTER XII.

PRACTICAL DISCUSSION—GROWTH AND PERFECTION.

HEB. v. 12-14; vi. 1.

‘WHEN for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.’

Both the elementary and the higher truths are put before us as ‘the oracles of God,’ an appellation which determines alike their plenary inspiration, their finality, and their perfection. The term is applied by St. Paul to the Old Testament revelations. These from the beginning were recognised among the Hebrews as communications from God: their scriptures were ‘oracles’ even among a people originally favoured with oral communications, with continuous prophetic utterances, and the Urim and Thummim of the High Priest’s breastplate. No less authority and directness are claimed for the New Testament oracles by their authors, and by

‘Unto them were committed the oracles of God.’
—Rom. iii. 2.

The same authority claimed for New Testament oracles as for Old.

CHAP. XII. the primitive Church. This is generally assumed, Heb. v. 12-14; but often explicitly taught; in fact it was an obvious inference from the relation the New Testament bore to the Old, to say nothing of the absurdity of supposing that the last and perfect teachings of Heaven could in any sense be bereft of the distinguishing characteristics of the earlier revelations. The form of instruction in these verses almost instinctively reminds us of 1 Cor. iii. 2: 'I have fed you with milk, and not with meat,' etc. In both instances the figure and the terms employed are the same, and also the instruction mingled with reproof. It therefore affords another example, very incidental it is true, but not the less convincing, that St. Paul was, as to its substance at least, the author of this Epistle, and that his thoughts and phrases were perfectly familiar to the writer.

Doctrine of
'perfection'
peculiarly
Pauline.

Evidence in the same direction is also to be taken from the doctrine of 'perfection,' chapter vi. verse 1.¹ This is most patently a Pauline doctrine. See 1 Cor. ii. 6; 2 Cor. xiii. 9, 10; Phil. iii. 12, 15; Eph. iv. 13. In these passages the word 'perfect' is used in two senses: (1.) For the maturity of the Christian nature; (2.) For the consummation of the Christian warfare. It is in the first of these senses that the word occurs here, and in all the other instances save one. It is obviously equivalent to the phrase 'of full age;' *i.e.* perfection signifies Christian manhood, as distinguished from Christian childhood. As stature, mental development, culture, and fitness for all the offices of life,

¹ 'Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.'

distinguish the man from the child, so qualities analogous to these distinguish Christian manhood from its mere childhood: the one is robust, the other tender; the one may not even be a sciolist, while the other may be accomplished in the science and the arts of life; the diet of the one is milk, of the other meat—strong meat; the one is a nursling requiring diligent foster care, but the other ‘by reason of use’ has his ‘senses exercised to discern both good and evil.’ Hence Christian perfection, as here laid down, is the result of progressive, steady advancement in the grace and doctrine of Christ. As it is analogous to growth and manliness in nature, it cannot be understood of any merely spiritual state at an early stage, suddenly superinduced upon the regenerate nature. It rather includes the perfection in ‘love’ of which St. John speaks, than is included in it. The apostolic use of the word here certainly comprises much more, viz. a condition of the Christian nature and character which results from extended knowledge, as well as from sanctified feeling. In a word, it signifies the due proportion of all the graces and virtues of the Christian nature, brought out and tested on the field of experience. It is important to hold this broad doctrine of Christian perfection in distinction from partial views of it, which, like all other mere *ex parte* statements, has its dangers arising from its contiguity to error. Perfection is here characterized as a practical thing, and as essentially progressive. It is the normal increase of the living power of the Holy Ghost in the human soul by the nutriment of evangelical truth,—the antidote against apostasy and unfruitfulness.

CHAP. XII.

Heb. v. 12–14;
vi. 1.Christian
perfection the
result of
growth.Includes *all*
graces and
virtues.

CHAP. XII.

Heb. v. 12-14;
vi. 1.

The 'word of
righteousness'
the sole means
of its attain-
ment.

'Perfection'
the embodi-
ment of God's
ideal.

Growth a
fundamental
law of Chris-
tianity.

The office of evangelical truth, in leading disciples unto perfection, is here made supreme, one might almost say exclusive. The 'word of righteousness,' in verse 13 (a noble paraphrase for the gospel), is both the nourishment of the child and of the man, the milk and the meat of the Christian life; or, to change the figure, the principles or elements of the doctrine of Christ comprise the foundation—its higher truths, the perfect edifice of the Christian scheme. The temple of salvation includes both. Perfection is but the embodiment of the ideal or pattern of God, symbolized by that given to Moses, and to be wrought out in the spiritual temple of sanctified manhood. This is the representation of the first verse of chap. vi.; and to this we must look as the true evangelical doctrine of perfection, on which so much has been written.

It is of equal importance, not only to understand, but to apply it to churches and ministers as well as to individual Christians. The doctrine is too generally lost sight of, though emphatically apostolic, and the very gist of the inspired Epistles. Nothing can be plainer than that this law of progress from childhood to maturity is 'the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.' In this respect it is entirely peculiar, inasmuch as it is the dispensation of an eternal plenitude of God to the human soul, and, as such, essentially expansive and indefinite. Hence, to ignore or neglect this great law of progressive and mature life, is to abstract from Christianity its distinguishing glory, to reduce and to attenuate it to comparative decrepitude, to rob it of its power over individuals and churches, and, consequently, of its aggressive might upon

the world at large. Like a law in nature, if resisted, its reaction is deteriorative and penal, sickness and disease ensue in some form or other, and decay and dissolution are in the train of its consequences. Evangelical truth, to exert its full power over individuals and communities, must be profoundly studied, and become an all-plastic force within them: it must be their world by way of eminence; they must live, move, and have their being in it. It must be their standpoint for looking at all exterior questions and objects, it must rule absolutely their judgments and sympathies, and be the palladium they are prepared to defend unto the death. There is a dogmatism which, however sincere at by worldly or sceptical minds, is no empiricism of a sect nor watchword of fanaticism, but rather a reciprocation of the divine intent in bestowing a revelation, and a transcription of that nature which made God man, and the Lord Himself a martyr to His own truth.

Evangelical truth is a treasure for the world, containing the measures and means of its restoration,—facts more marvellous than the most fertile legends of superstition, and of immeasurably greater import than all the oracles of science. The degree and manner which characterize the treatment of divine truth in the Church and in the world from age to age, is the true test of the prevailing animus which exists toward religion itself. It is the index of the moral barometer of society, telling the state of its atmosphere, the courses of its currents, and the prognostics of its changes. These cannot be collected from any general facts so well as they may be by observing

CHAP. XII.

Heb. v. 12-14;
vi. 1.Like a law of
nature, if re-
sisted, its
action penal.Treatment of
divine truth
an index of
the state of
the Church
and the world.

CHAP. XII.

Heb. v. 12-14;
vi. 1.Historical
proof.

Modern scepticism not to be combated by elementary teaching.

how the mind of an age stands affected to the word of God. The neglect, or the superficial regard, which even in primitive times opened the way to its corruption, by Gnosticism, by Jewish interpolation, or Pagan assimilation, slowly, but certainly, issued in the long and dreary reign of mere ecclesiasticism, and afterwards in the darkness and tyranny of the Papacy. In more recent times, the word of God, variously assailed, chiefly by free-thinkers, philosophers, and lukewarm believers, has been feebly defended by a Church but half awake to the nature of the contest and the momentousness of the interests it stands pledged to maintain. The war has commenced and raged oftentimes amidst much seeming disparagement, and been pressed with a boldness, pertinacity, and various erudition, seemingly ominous as to the issue. But whatever other lessons may be suggested by past events, or by those of the present time which concern this struggle, one at least is very patent, viz. that 'babe'-churches and 'babe'-ministers are in no condition to cope with the adversary; that nursery diet and nursery leading-strings are inopportune as preconditions for encountering the giant onslaughts of what is called 'modern thought.' Too long has the Church reposed on the mere antecedents of revival and public recognition, on the mere assumption of its having the truth on its side, and on the commonplaces of a threadbare evangelism, or on a statement of the 'elements,' not 'left,' in the apostolic sense, for the doctrines of 'perfection,' but for the mere discursiveness of sentiment and reflection, or for practical themes without any evangelical correspondences.

These remarks, though somewhat general, are, nevertheless, the practical gist of this most important scripture, which, with many others, is meant to be an antidote to certain states of the Church, or phases of Christian life, bearing in themselves the auguries of what are apostolically called 'perilous times.'

CHAP. XII.
Heb. v. 12-14;
vi. 1.

It is certain that the mere superficial extent of Christian profession, or Christian exertion, or the correlatives of these, which are reflected in the civilisation and sentiments of times and peoples, are not necessarily vouchers for the soundness and progress of the Christian cause. On the contrary, they may be associated with unmistakeable omens of declension and relapse into the apathy of former times. Evangelical truth, in whatever degree it becomes inoperative, failing to expand, and assimilate its disciples, is practically lost. Its absence creates a vacuum but too speedily replenished by forms of antagonism, themselves the penalties of unfaithfulness to so high a trust, and, in many cases, the harbingers of at least a temporary reprobation.

General pro-
fession of
Christianity
not necessarily
a sign of pro-
gress.

CHAPTER XIII.

PRACTICAL DISCUSSION—OF IRREMISSIBLE SINS.

HEB. VI. 3-9.

‘FOR it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.’

Two classes of
apostates.
First not irre-
coverable.

Two classes of apostates are recorded in Scripture, one consisting of those who had indolently, or by means of the ordinary temptations incident to humanity, slidden off the foundation into a condition comparatively negative, yet still highly sinful. These are not regarded as irrecoverable: the ‘foundation,’ mentioned in the first verse, it was possible to lay again, though under great disadvantages. There was no bar or ban interposed to this work by divine authority, or by the constitution or letter of the gospel itself: the sin of lapse was not unpardonable, should they be ‘renewed again unto repentance.’ This class includes backsliders from the Christian profession through all ages and conditions of the Church.

But the second class here mentioned was made up of persons utterly reprobate, since God's allowance of their restoration is denied, and it is put down among the impossibles of the gospel. The description given of them is most forcible, both as to their religious state, and their after fall from it. They are said to have been 'once enlightened,' *i.e.* largely instructed in the Christian doctrine, not persons to be ranked as novices, or such as were groping their way into light, but without success. To be 'enlightened' implies much more than this, since it is the word commonly used in the Epistles to signify persons 'taught of God.' Further, 'they have tasted of the heavenly gift.' This is a clear description of the evangelical life, and shows that the previous illumination was not merely doctrinal, or something which might exist apart from a work of grace in the affections. To 'taste the heavenly gift' is to be divinely percipient of the spirituality of religion, in opposition to the purely natural man who is without this spirit of discernment, and to whom the things of God are 'foolishness.' 'To have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost' is a further note of the evangelical state. In the earliest preaching of the apostles it is characterized as the great distinction of Christian disciples, and it may be understood here as including both the ordinary and the miraculous endowments of the Divine Spirit. Thus the description, so far, is entirely of those who are Christians in the full sense in which the apostles describe the primitive Church.

CHAP. XIII.

Heb. vi. 3-9.

Second utterly reprobate.

What follows (verse 5) is, if possible, stronger in the same direction; for it implies that these persons were not perfunctory and transient converts to

CHAP. XIII. Christianity, since if the phrases, 'have tasted the good word of God,' and the 'powers of the world to come,' do not mean continuous, and, up to a certain time, progressive experience of the Christian life, they amount to little more than a solemn tautology; but, viewed in this light, they are eminently descriptive of the main characteristics of a true profession. To 'taste the good word of God' means to relish and enjoy evangelical truth—to feast on it, as from the dainties of a daily board. To 'taste the powers of the world to come' is to be introduced into the realities of the kingdom of Christ, and the very joys of heaven, *i.e.* to become conscious of a new and sublime order of things springing out of mediation and the dispensation of the Spirit, comprising, as it were, glimpses and fruitions of the new heavens and the new earth as antagonistic to the mere realms of sense and its surroundings; the world that is, and was, but which, strictly speaking, has no future, fades and melts away, when evangelical vision fills the soul, as a mere shadow before the zenith sun. Thus interpreted, this world is but a prophecy of the world of the future, while, otherwise, it is but an enigma which defies solution.

Nature of
their sin, Heb.
x. 29.

To the attainments of these characters is added a description of their sin: 'They crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.' This is sufficiently expressive of its enormity: the description is, however, further extended in chap. x. 29, in which these same persons are said to have 'trodden under foot the Son of God, to have counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and to have done despite unto the

Spirit of grace.' Putting both descriptions together, they set forth the *ne plus ultra* of apostasy. 'To crucify Christ afresh' can hardly mean less than to consent to the judgment of His adversaries, to their blasphemies and cruelties in putting Him to death; and 'to put Him to an open shame' is an obvious reference to the peculiar indignities of a death by crucifixion. They are regarded as parties to the event, and made to rank among the personal enemies of the Redeemer. To tread Him under foot seems to express further indignities, *i.e.* those to which a corpse may be subjected—so hateful as to be denied the decencies of sepulture, and to be left unburied for the purpose of indulging in the brutal gratification of mutilating the remains, as the two witnesses are said to lie in the streets of the spiritual Sodom. Thus our Lord is not deemed worthy, by these diabolical apostates, of even the honours of a martyr, or of those due to suffering innocency. His very blood is accounted unholy, that is, as the blood of a criminal; while the Spirit of grace is, as it were, personally insulted as having borne witness to an impious imposture.

No language can exceed these representations in depicting an open and wanton apostasy. It probably alludes to some set form, or forms, of abjuration which finished the apostasy of these backsliders, and which bound them to a public side-taking with the known adversaries of Christ. This makes the offence peculiarly a Jewish one, and one belonging to the time and circumstances of the primitive Church, though not excluding the possibility of its reiteration in the history of Jewish families through any subsequent age down to the

CHAP. XIII.
Heb. vi. 3-9.

This sin peculiar to the Jews.

CHAP. XIII.

Heb. vi. 3-9.

Twin sin to
that against
the Holy
Ghost.Matt. xii. 31,
32.

present. Hence it is not a sin to which Gentile converts would be liable; they, having no national or family affinity with the Jewish people, could not be historically guilty of, or implicated in, the death of Christ. Thus viewed, this sin seems to be the twin sin to that against the Holy Ghost described by Matthew, but there are certain differences between them. The sin against the Holy Ghost is plainly interpreted as the blasphemous imputation of miracles by the hand of Christ to Satanic collusion with Christ Himself. It was a malignant and impious construction, in respect to their origin, put upon these 'mighty works,' when their character demonstrated them to be divine. This was blasphemy and despite to the Spirit of grace. It is, however, remarkable that the clear definition of the sin against the Holy Ghost is distinguished from sin against the Son of Man; that no sins committed against His person and claims as the Messiah bore the irrevocable sentence of judgment upon them. Even the crucifixion was not an unpardonable crime, much less were any of those under-currents of discussion which preceded it, and which, as leading to this consummation, were deeply charged with guilt. Nor does it follow that the blasphemy afterwards cherished and exhibited by our Lord's enemies, placed them beyond the reach of forgiveness.

Apostasy the
ground of its
turpitude.

The damning power of the sin described in this Epistle plainly consisted in the added turpitude of *apostasy*. It could not be committed, in this peculiarly malignant form, by any but disciples—not by outsiders; so that, were it to be denied that the descriptions in verses 4 and 5 appertain to true

Christians, and are to be applied to professors merely, the whole gist of the offence is taken away, and, consequently, the ground of the irremissibility of the sin. As far as it appears, there are but two sins by the New Testament pronounced irremissible,—both of them peculiar to times and circumstances at the outset of the gospel,—both absolutely damning, but differing in one important particular, viz. the *condition of the offenders*. The sin against the Holy Ghost was the sin of outstanding people; the sin described in this chapter, on the contrary, is the sin of disciples. This last is probably what is called by John ‘the sin unto death,’ for he expressly excludes it from the offices of intercession, which might redound to forgiveness. All other sin, though characterized by him as unrighteousness, is, nevertheless, not ‘sin unto death,’ i.e. sin which absolutely consigned to retribution—the ‘death’ retribution of a future state.

CHAP. XIII.

Heb. vi. 3-9.

1 John v. 16.

But if other sins beside these were sins unto death,—that of Judas, for instance, who betrayed his Lord; of Ananias and Sapphira, who lied unto the Holy Ghost; or that of Hymenæus and Alexander, whom Paul said he ‘delivered unto Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme,’—yet all these partook of the same characters of speciality. They were committed by persons in such privileged positions as could be shared by none after the apostolic age, and they were visited, as one might say, by penalty of prerogative, whether exercised by our Lord Himself, or by His apostles, but which devolved on no successors.

Examples of
‘sin unto
death’ under
the Mosaic
law.

But the most comprehensive view of this important question is, like many others, derived from

CHAP. XIII. an examination of the Mosaic law. In the Pentateuchal history, repeated examples occur of the 'sin unto death' committed by the Israelites, as in the instance of Korah, Dathan, and the two hundred and fifty men who offered incense, and of Aaron's sons smitten in the Tabernacle itself. Counter instances are also numerous, *i.e.* of the sin not unto death, as in the matter of the golden calf, where the penalty was reversed by the intercession of Moses; of the plague stayed by the censer of Aaron; and the bite of the serpents healed by the uplifting of the brazen serpent. These are examples in point agreeing with the doctrine of this chapter.¹

The law contained no provision for 'presumptuous sins.'

Further, offences against the Decalogue are also 'sins unto death,' and hence the Law is called by St. Paul the 'ministration of death;' while the cases scattered up and down the pages of the Pentateuch, in which death is threatened to the offender, are almost innumerable: 'That soul shall be cut off from his people.' In truth, this broad distinction between venial and mortal sins runs through the entire law, which made no provision by sacrifice and rites of absolution for the relief of *presumptuous* offenders: its provisions extended only to the condonation of the sins of ignorance and infirmity. Presumptuous sins are denominated by the Psalmist, 'the great transgression,' from which he prays that he might be delivered. This twofold aspect of the law toward crime is introduced in

¹ It must be borne in mind, in these three instances, that the sin in its nature was a sin unto death: they are cited here in proof that such sins were never remissible by any legal ordinances, but solely by the offices of atonement and intercession apart from these. [Eds.]

the 26th, 27th, and 28th verses of the 10th chapter of this Epistle, and for the purpose of showing that the gospel itself presents, to a certain extent, an analogy with it. This was evidently in the writer's mind when penning verse 26: 'For if we sin wilfully,' *i.e.* presumptuously, like these apostates, 'after we have received the knowledge of the truth,' agreeably to vers. 4 and 5, chap. vi., 'there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins;' *i.e.* these apostates were precisely in the position of a similar class under the law for whom no provision by sacrifice remained. 'They died without mercy under two or three witnesses;' so here, there remained no more sacrifice for sin, *i.e.* they were utterly precluded from any further interest in the sacrifice of Christ; their sin passed beyond the range of atonement, and they were bound over 'to judgment and fiery indignation,' which should devour them as adversaries.

CHAP. XIII.

Heb. vi. 3-9.

Analogy, in this respect, between the law and the gospel.

It would seem that the reservation of certain offences for punishment, under the gospel, few and peculiar though they be, was at once designed to attest the exceeding riches of its grace, and yet to show that prerogative was not utterly given up. Nor can this be construed as in any degree lessening the extent and all-sufficiency of the Atonement; since the design of it was not to supersede the application of law, or to invest sin with impunity, but to render its remission consistent with the divine holiness, and with the stable order of a moral government. In this view, the proscription of particular sins is only an extension of the law of conditions in general, which is but another word for limitations; and, in this instance, the proscrip-

The riches of grace administered by law.

CHAP. XIII. tion lies not against outstanders, or the world, but
 Heb. vi. 3-9. against fallen members of the Church. To main-
 tain the contrary, would be to prostitute the doc-
 trines of grace and atonement to unholy purposes,
 to absolve men from all conditions of obedience,
 and to make the final non-punitiveness of sin a
 presumption, if not a certainty.

*Nature of
 Mosaic penal-
 ties account
 for their num-
 ber.*

*Penalties of
 the law tem-
 poral, those of
 the gospel
 spiritual.*

It remains only to notice the distinction between the penalties of the law and of the gospel, which goes very far to account for the multitude of examples of mortal sin found in the former, and the few exceptional cases found in the latter. Law penalties were temporal penalties, at least proximately, and for the most part they belong to the *political* constitution of the Hebrew commonwealth as a Theocracy. They imply an exceptional order of things never extended beyond that people, and altogether inapplicable to Christianity, which is a purely spiritual system, not complicated with any nationalities, or limited to any section of the human race. Hence it is impossible that its sanctions should be temporal, or that a death-penalty, in the ordinary sense, should form a part of its administration: its sanctions belong only to the spiritual world; and the death which it threatens, as the penalty of sin, is, in fact, a re-affirmation of the original penalty of the Adamic law, with the super-added terribleness of the damnation awarded to the neglect or rejection of the provisions of the gospel.

The death-penalties of the law did not of themselves exact more than the forfeiture of bodily life, or the infliction of grievous national judgments: hence Jerusalem is said to have received of

the Lord's hands 'double for all her sins;' *i.e.* the penalties threatened in the Pentateuch had been exacted in full measure, and nothing but persistent national impiety could induce God to carry them further. In this instance, punishment was atonement in the same sense as chastisements may be so regarded. But this view of penalty is entirely precluded by the gospel; and because it is so, the prerogatives of mercy are carried to their very utmost limit, guarded only against abuse by the threatening of the one extreme penalty, death. Thus viewed, our Lord's words, 'All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men,' are invested with a profound interest, for they amount to the publication of a new law of absolution infinitely more free and extended than that of Moses. The words of St. Paul also look in the same direction: 'And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.'

CHAP. XIII.

Heb. vi. 3-9.

Gospel law of
absolution
more extended
than the
Mosaic.

Acts xiii. 39.

Verses 7 and 8 contain an appropriate and powerful illustration, drawn from agriculture, of the doctrines previously laid down: 'For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.' This language beautifully describes what may be termed the cycle of nature, by means of which God works for the production both of food and ornament on the earth. On the one hand, we have the smiling field, or the bounteous garden, the soil, the tillage, the rain, the plants;

CHAP. XIII. this order of things which originates with God,
 Heb. vi. 3-9. and bears the richest traces of His wisdom and
 benevolence, is also represented as reflecting His
 blessing; as the Psalmist says, 'the Lord shall
 rejoice in His works.' He is by no means indiffe-
 rent to the result of this cycle of action: as it
 reflects His blessing, so does it receive His smile;
 it is His Sabbath in nature, His rest. 'But
 that which beareth thorns is rejected;' we have
 the sterility, anomalousness, unsightliness of a
 field remaining desert under culture, the rain, the
 seed, the tillage, the seasons,—all are abortive;
 labour is mis-spent, and the husbandman cruelly
 disappointed. Instead of 'blessing,' he is ready
 to 'curse' his field, to gather into heaps the
 accumulated rubbish of the season, and to con-
 sign the whole to the flames. The gist of this
 double description lies in the course of Providence,
 and in the application of labour by man, common
 to the barren and the fruitful field: its force would
 be destroyed were it a mere comparison between a
 field under culture and a field in a state of nature.
 It is intended to show that the difference in the
 results between one field and another is due to the
 difference of soils only, and that they have all
 other advantages in common.¹

Teaching that
 equal advan-
 tages do not
 secure equal
 results.

It is national imagery; the Pentateuch and the
 Prophets abound in it; see particularly Isaiah v.
 1-7, xxxii. 12, 13. The former is an example
 strikingly in point here. The vineyard is planted

Similar teach-
 ing in the
 Prophets.

¹ It may, perhaps, be allowed that the figure thus viewed is meant to shadow forth the history of the primitive blessing and the curse,—Paradise as it was before the Fall, and Paradise as it was after the Fall,—and that the great moral of the story in Genesis is perpetuated and enforced in the very physical varieties of the earth's surface.

and prepared for fruit-bearing, at every expense, yet it brought forth wild grapes. Then follows the complaint of the owner, and his sentence upon it: 'Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard . . . I will lay it waste . . . there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.' This is, moreover, the lesson from the barren fig-tree, cursed by the Saviour with perpetual barrenness, and suddenly withered from the roots. This national imagery is here applied to the Christian Church, not to the Jewish nation. At the time when this Epistle was written, the blessing and the curse held portions of the same territory: there might be seen in it the beauty of holiness, and the fruitfulness of charity, stedfastness in doctrine, and endurance of suffering, but with this also the barrenness of backsliding, and even the blasphemy of matured apostasy,—on the one hand, the blessing which foretells salvation, and, on the other, the curse to be consummated in perdition.

CHAP. XIII.

Heb. vi. 3-9.

Here applied
to the Chris-
tian Church.

CHAPTER XIV.

PRACTICAL DISCUSSION—SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

HEB. VI. 9, 10.

‘Beloved,’ expressive of a new social feeling created by Christianity.

‘BUT, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.’

The frequent interjection of this epithet ‘beloved’ is a peculiarity in the New Testament writings; and it is the more remarkable, because it cannot be traced in the Old Testament, and could not, therefore, be an old nationalized appellation turned to a new use. Mere national consanguinity, resulting from derivation from a pair, failed to mould the Hebrew mind to that loving sense of fraternity which would free such an appellation from the charge of cant. Accordingly, it never obtained national currency; it is, therefore, in proof that Christianity actually created a new social affection in harmony with its doctrine of brotherhood, and as the result of its adopting and regenerating grace. In truth, the whole mystery of its healing and harmonizing power on the field of humanity, so wonderful in itself, and so remote from all the influences of civilisation and culture, lies in the force of this one principle, to which expression is

given in this one word 'beloved.' It lent a charm to the entire social economy of Christianity, set it forth as the most wonderful phenomenon of humanity, and gave it such a breadth and intensity of genuine philanthropy as leaves far behind the very ideal of Communism itself.

CHAP. XIV.

Heb. vi. 9, 10.

It is to be remarked here, also, how thoroughly, in this form of address, the force of the motives both of hope and fear is recognised. 'We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.' This, also, is an example of the general style of scripture thought and expression; it recurs in the Pentateuch, where the blessing and the curse were constantly associated. They were to be spoken from opposite hills by the tribes when they entered Palestine, and to be engraven on separate monuments looking each other in the face. The same order of thought and expression runs through the Psalms, in which the curse and the blessing often alternate in separate Psalms, and even in the same. A fine example of this occurs in the 37th. It is the very essence of the Book of Proverbs, in which pairs or duplicates of character and destiny perpetually recur. This verse exhibits a gush of affection common to the apostolic writings, toning the mere language of authority, even when that authority was inspired.

Motives of
hope and fear
recognised
both in Old
and New
Testaments.

'Things that accompany salvation' are spoken of—literally, the things 'having,' or 'holding,' salvation, *i.e.* its infallible criteria, evidences of its reality personally considered. It suggests to us that there are things appertaining to the Christian profession inseparable from it, and also things of

CHAP. XIV. sinister import, or of no import at all, and that to
 Heb. vi. 9, 10. distinguish between these is a vital part of Christian wisdom.

‘For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.’

Ver. 10 gives
 criteria of a
 genuine profession.

This verse specifies what these evidences are; they are seen in the working power of a genuine profession, as distinguished from a formal or doctrinal adhesion to the faith. Further, it is a practical test, only indirectly including doctrinal elements. The *work-test* of Christianity is here made prominent, even rather than its experiences. These are implied, but work is defined. It is hard work, for it is called ‘work and labour,’ toil, business-like action—the real staple of life-occupation. It is also love-labour, not legal exaction, not the product of fear, nor a mere tale of duty, a something which must be done for fear of consequences, disgrace, and ruin. Christianity sets forth the noble principle of love-labour, and, consequently, of free labour—labour largely spontaneous, untiring, and over-abundant. Love-labour is obedience to the law of impulse and delight; it is the opposite of task-work, and undertakes, therefore, things which otherwise would have been deemed impossible, perhaps not so much as thought of. Love setting in upon the soul from God, through Christ by the Holy Ghost, is nothing less than omnipotence transferred to creatures, a real fellowship in that power by which God renews the world and illuminates all the terrible lines of the curse. Love triumphs where law is powerless, and creates a

paradise where law with its penalties can only perpetuate destruction.

CHAP. XIV.

Heb. vi. 9, 10.

Ministry to
the saints.

The particular form of ministry commended here is one of vast importance to the exhibition of the genius of Christianity to the world, as we gather from both the Gospels and the Epistles. It is the 'new commandment' in its noblest operation, and is selected by our Lord, in His own prediction of the Judgment, as the one test of a true disciple distinguished from a false one, and as the explicit ground of final reward: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' The effusion at Pentecost of this benevolent, self-sacrificing spirit on the Church, was a far more marvellous proof of the power of the Holy Ghost than the gift of tongues, or all miraculous gifts put together. 'Neither said any that ought of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.' All private property became Church property. Hence originated the Diaconate, male and female; hence the collections among the churches even in distant Gentile countries for the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem; and hence was derived the perpetuation by St. Paul of that gem of our Lord's teaching, which, like many others, would have perished, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' In this light, our Lord's own words are to be regarded as a prophecy soon wonderfully fulfilled (Mark x. 29, 30): 'There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this present time, houses, and

*Spirit of the
Primitive
Church more
marvellous
than its gifts.*

CHAP. XIV. brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children,
 Heb. vi. 9, 10. and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to
 come eternal life.' Thus 'the things which accom-
 pany salvation' are set forth here as 'ministering
 to the saints'—the giving and receiving being
 mutual in the Christian community. They are
 identified with our Lord's own testimony just
 quoted, and the reward is, 'in the world to come
 eternal life.'

Western
 habits and
 society un-
 favourable to
 this spirit.

Modern society and Western habits, in many
 respects so different from those of Oriental and
 ancient countries, whilst they undoubtedly modify,
 are in no little danger of extinguishing this capital
 branch of Christian ethics—this very soul and
 crown of the Christian profession. But as Chris-
 tianity is not an affair of an age or country, but
 of time and the world, this fraternal spirit cannot
 be suffered to languish, not to say die out, save
 by withdrawing from the world the most powerful
 practical element for its conversion. It must be
 perpetuated in every Christian community in some
 spontaneous and yet very palpable forms, apart
 from express institutions such as the Papacy main-
 tains, or the evangelical profession must suffer by
 comparison, and its glory be dimmed; while even
 the things 'that accompany salvation,' person-
 ally considered, are, according to this scripture,
 not very distinctly exhibited. To this only it
 may be added, that the good works so frequently
 mentioned in the New Testament, as peculiarly
 appropriate to the Christian profession, do not
 expressly mean the consistent exhibition of Chris-
 tian morals generally, but works of charity, the
 acknowledgment of a far higher standard of

Christianity
 includes much
 more than
 Christian
 morals.

humanity than the world can show, and beyond this the appliances of affection within the Church which at once reveal the divinity of its life, and make it a real home and family. This is Christianity.

CHAP. XIV.
Heb. vi. 9, 10.

CHAPTER XV.

PRACTICAL DISCUSSION—DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN STATUS AND CHRISTIAN WORKS.

HEB. VI. 10-12.

‘For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.’

Christian reward only
given for work
done for God.

Before dismissing the tenth verse, it is requisite to point out the ground of Christian recompense for works of love showed to the saints. These are represented as being done in honour of the name of God,—‘showed toward His name,’ and therefore entitled to His rewarding cognizance. This suggests to us at once the ruling motive in all really evangelical acts of charity, distinguishing them from mere acts of humanity, sentiment, or culture, much more from mere systematic administration of relief. The godliness of the motive is the prime characteristic of these works, their fraternal tenderness comes next. Were it not so, according to the doctrine of this verse, no place for their direct rewardableness would exist. They are acts done for the name of God, prompted, it is true, by fraternal yearnings, but primarily offerings unto God. This entitles them to His reward; so that

to suppose Him to pass them by as unrewardable is just as impossible as to suppose Him unrighteous. This is placing the doctrine of reward on a strong, and, as it would seem to some, on a rather unevangelical, foundation, unless we were to interpret the word 'unrighteous' in the sense of ungracious, which in this instance may not be done. Neither is it necessary, since the broad doctrine of Scripture, both in the Old and New Testaments, is, that God deals with men according to their works, *i.e.* according to their deserts; and that acts of grace on His part, however free and transcendent, do not interfere with, much less obliterate, the application of the principle of justice in His dealing both with the righteous and the wicked.

CHAP. XV.

Heb. vi. 10-12.

Men judged according to their works, a doctrine of Scripture.

This truth, here assumed as indisputable, accounts for the passing way of putting forth this most momentous doctrine.

It seems that, in order to clear this somewhat complicated subject from difficulty, we are required to distinguish between *the state and condition* of men, and *the acts, or classes of acts*, which are the products of these. The former, with respect to the disciple, should be regarded as purely the creation of grace, entirely shutting out the application of justice, and the idea of recompense. It is probable, perhaps demonstrable, that salvation, as set forth in the New Testament, is directly limited to this, since we are forbidden to doubt that dying persons, or persons in any way disabled from the performance of works, have as certainly their *salvation* made good as those who have abounded in them. Mere salvation, therefore, it

Distinction between the status and actions of men.

Status, *i.e.* salvation, the creation of grace.

CHAP. XV. is plain, does not include the idea of reward, or of
 Heb. vi. 10-12. an administration of justice. Faith, prayer, watch-
 fulness, christian morals, consistency, are the in-
 separable concomitants of the bare Christian status.
 These seem all appropriately included within the
 sphere of salvation, evangelically understood. But
 beyond all this, there is a sphere of *works*, of
 appointed duties, of manifold services for religion
 and the truth, of vast extent and profound interest.
 It should not be forgotten that our Lord bears rule
 over a kingdom; that this kingdom includes various
 offices, grades of men, and forms of service; that it
 is a high field of holy competition, and that en-
 dowments and opportunities are scattered through it
 with proportionate responsibilities. It is on this
 ground that the doctrine of the parable of the
 talents rests, and also the doctrine of the final
 judgment as administered by Christ. The *child*,
 by the grace of adoption and sanctification, implies
 the Christian status; the *servant* endowed with
 gifts, and a sphere of action more or less impor-
 tant, the Christian character: the one shows us
 mere grace in operation to create the agent, the
 other the works of that agent carried on and
 perfected. There are, therefore, but two sides of
 the evangelical constitution—the one cannot exist
 without the other, but they do not always coincide
 in the extent of their manifestations and of their
 practical breadth. This distinction is illustrated
 by our Lord's representation of the last judgment,
 for He there recognises the difference of status
 between the righteous and the wicked, as a pre-
 liminary to a judgment upon their works. He
 then deals with them respectively on the ground

Christian
works the
result of this
status.

Distinction
between status
and works
illustrated by
the last judg-
ment.

of their works as the issue of that status truly, but as a matter entirely distinct from it,—‘every man according to his works.’ Thus the status is but the basis or condition of the judgment itself; the works are respectively treated as the immediate ground of individual adjudication, not the status.

CHAP. XV.

Heb. vi. 10-12.

1. This distinction throws light upon what would otherwise be obscure, viz. the immediate perdition or salvation of individuals after death, which looked at by itself, would seem to render a future judgment unnecessary: the judgment seems passed already. The difficulty, however, disappears, if we understand that perdition and salvation include only the status, not the works of individuals—the works stand over, but the status is a fact. This shows that the status itself is incomplete, and foretells the final judgment as its proper counterpart, and that in no case, as yet, whether with respect to the righteous or the wicked, can rewards and punishments have been administered—they necessarily await the judgment of the great day. Against this distinction it avails nothing to cite the mere letter of Scripture where it lays down the terms of the general judgment, because these must be necessarily interpreted according to the principles of the judgment itself. A large portion of the human race—children, insane persons, or those saved on death-beds—cannot be directly the subjects of judgment at all; it is the status, here represented as the preliminary judgment, which alone concerns them.

At death
status only
determined,
works stand
over.

2. Further, this distinction enables us to see clearly what the province of justice is within the economy of grace. As far as men are individually

CHAP. XV.

Heb. vi. 10-12.

Under an economy of grace, justice deals with works as the criterion of status.

concerned, or even the race, the economy itself rests upon a vicarious or representative righteousness. Still, there must be a sphere left open for the declaration of a *personal* righteousness, originating in the former, but yet the award of law; otherwise, justice can have no place in this form of government. Justice has to do with works simply as a test or criterion of a status, good or bad, and therefore with works in all their variety of character as well as of detail. No solid argument could be advanced in favour of penal retribution which denies the application of justice to rewards also. As penalty is meted out to particular crimes as the issue of a corrupt status, corrupt by abuse and not by misfortune, so rewards are, in like manner, meted out by justice to works of piety and virtue as the issues of a status originated and perfected by the grace of redemption. Justice, as the presiding principle of law, fills this entire sphere of the Mediator's kingdom, and is just as definite in its office as is the domain of grace itself.

Rewards and punishments both essential and arbitrary.

3. The distinction here set up furnishes us with more definite notions of the nature both of rewards and punishments. These have in common a double characteristic, *i.e.* they are both essential and arbitrary—essential as regards the status, arbitrary as it regards the administration of rewards and punishments. They are something superadded to the status, and determine the *condition* of the agent, abstractedly taken, as something separable from it. The status in each case bears in it the nature of penalty or of recompense, it is true, inasmuch as virtue and wickedness imply conditions of exist-

ence in themselves adverse to, or in harmony with, the divine nature. But these would exist were there no government, formally considered, nor any system of rewards and punishments appended to such a government. The appointment of a general judgment is decisive as to the fact of such government, and that it is to be upholden by so direct a personal administration as will place every individual for ever in punitive or rewardable relations with God, in exact proportion to his ascertained character under it. From this view it follows that both rewards and punishments are things superadded to mere status, and that, with respect to the former, they must be held to consist in distinctions of honour and degrees of glory, as between one redeemed human being and another, placing some immeasurably in advance of others, very much after the manner in which human society is now constituted. This seems to be the doctrine of the parables before referred to, the doctrine also of the passage, 'Ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' Again, it is included in our Lord's reply to the mother of Zebedee's children, 'To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.' Hence it may be concluded that the blessedness of the future life is drawn from two sources, *i.e.* from the status and from the works, and that it is indefinitely modified by these two elements, as the one or the other may in individual cases have preponderated. By way of distinction, though not of separation, it may be said there is the heaven of the child, and there is the heaven of the servant.

CHAP. XV.

Heb. vi. 10-12.

The status of
virtue or
wickedness
essential.

Reward or
punishment
arbitrary, *i.e.*
matter of gov-
ernment.

Rewards differ
in degree, as
shown by the
parable.

Matt. xix. 28.
Luke xxiii. 30.

CHAP. XV. 'And we desire that every one of you do show
 Heb. vi. 10-12. the same diligence to the full assurance of hope
 unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers
 of them who through faith and patience inherit the
 promises.'

These verses are remarkable as setting forth the true principles of evangelical perseverance.

Nature of
 evangelical
 'diligence.'

It should be universal instead of partial, comprising every one of the disciples of a particular community.

It implies an equal momentum in the direction of duty; no abatement, much less intermission, is to be thought of. Diligence, literally rendered, is delight; agreeably to the language of the original, it is study: both the Greek and Latin words rendered diligence, therefore, may signify together pleasant study, healthful yet absorbing occupation, the maintenance of a rule of life once for all settled and plied to the very end, as congenial with existence, and no more to be parted from it by alien intrusions, than wisdom is to be banished by folly, or the dignity of manhood to be exchanged for the inanities of brute life. St. Paul puts this great doctrine before us under the figure of a race: 'Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect, but I follow after,' etc. The same figure recurs in the 12th chapter of this Epistle: 'Let us lay aside every weight . . . and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.'

Same doctrine
 in chap. xii. 1,
 and Phil. iii.
 12.

It includes the full assurance of hope. Perhaps *πληροφορία* may be here referred to the condition of a ship on its voyage, having all its sails bent and filled with a favourable wind, rapidly but steadily wafting it on its possibly lengthened voyage in the

direction of the desired haven; at least the figure is countenanced by verse 19. Thus, 'the full assurance of hope' is the heavenly inspiration which fills the soul in its course of evangelical action; it is its charter and its guidance, its impellant force of heaven-born desire, and the secret of its buoyancy on the sea of life. Its counsels and its resources are both human and divine. It is not superseded but helped, not taken out of the world but kept in it, harmonized with all seeming contradictions, and superior to all creature forces antagonistic to it. Its day-star is hope, bringing with it flashes of transport, and a heaven by the way.

CHAP. XV.
Heb. vi. 10-12.

Power of evangelical hope.

'That ye be not slothful' is an admonition suggested by diligence. It tells us of besetment incident to all, the symptom of decay, and the condition of corruption, which, like an insidious disease, steal away the strength of Christian manhood. Slothfulness makes every duty irksome, indisposes to cross-bearing and inconveniences of every kind, seeks the smoothest path, the lightest burden, the mere play and holiday of profession. Every virtue is a starveling, every act a minimum or a semblance rather than a reality. Decrepitude and death are not far in the rear, and a crown once bright and enticing has slid like a meteor from the sky, and becomes hidden in the mist of feeble vision or worldly passions. On the contrary, 'faith and patience' are the guides to the land of promise, and the qualities that ensure possession. 'Faith,' as well as 'patience,' is here taken as a practical power, not a profession or a mere belief. The semblance of both is often found in other spheres of operation, ensuring eminency and success wher-

Fatal results of slothfulness.

CHAP. XV. ever they are conspicuously embodied. In their
 Heb. vi. 10-12. highest forms, however, they are Christian principles; they mould the Christian temper, while that temper reacts for their perpetual invigoration, thus constituting that all-conquering soul which finally overcomes, and rests in the eternal fruition of the promises.

Summary of
 the doctrine of
 evangelical
 perseverance.

Thus, the doctrine of Perseverance, as gathered from this Epistle, may be expressed in this summary: Founded on the provisions of grace, it is the 'building up' to perfection, by an unintermittent course of duty, both the Christian state and character, yet a 'perfection' including constant progression 'unto the end.'

This doctrine does not preclude the possibility of final failure, but its probability is diminished in proportion to the acquired stability and advance of the disciple, in some instances reducing the chance of failure perhaps to the minimum of a mere hypothesis, though in others, where natural temper, circumstantial difficulties, or superficial or immature religion meet, hypothesis widens seriously into the perils of at least a temporary, if not a final, apostasy. Irrecoverable apostates there were, according to the testimony of this chapter, in the apostolic age, and moreover, recoverable ones; whilst those who were neither one nor the other are addressed as persons still in a condition of trial, subject to hazard, and therefore to be plied with those motives to perseverance peculiarly evangelical.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

HEB. VI. 13-20.

‘FOR when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore 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.’

The collation of these verses, and those which follow, in support of the argument for perseverance, proves that the writer of the Epistle understood the Covenant with Abraham as substantially evangelical. If this were denied, it would follow that the introduction here of the narrative, from Genesis xxii., verses 16 and 17, would amount to nothing more than an appropriate quotation to show how faith in that particular instance, rewarded by a promise, should stand as an example of the faithfulness of God in fulfilling whatever promises He has made to His people. But there are three objections to this: the first is, That any other recorded Old Testament example would have answered equally well; secondly, That in certain aspects the quotation would not have been apposite; and thirdly, That the following argument, turning on the two immutable things, would have been entirely out of

The Abrahamic covenant evangelical.

Argument showing that on this ground only is the quotation of force here.

CHAP. XVI.

Heb. vi. 13-20.

place. The force of the second objection is proved by the language of verse 15: 'So, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise;' for this certainly cannot mean that the promise quoted in the previous verses was the reward of Abraham's faith and patience, exercised up to the time of the promise. To 'obtain the promise' is not to be interpreted of receiving the word of the promise, but the thing contained in the promise, or, to use the language of verse 12, 'to inherit the promise.' Since this is indubitably the meaning of verse 15, we are not referred backward to Abraham's life for its fulfilment, but forward. Moreover, the chapter (Gen. xxii.) contains the last record of Abraham's life, religiously considered, and there is, therefore, no account extant of the patriarch's living to enjoy this promise as the reward of his faith and patience; nor, in the nature of things, was it possible, if we look to the terms of the promise itself. It must, therefore, necessarily be referred for its fulfilment to the future life,—in other words, the promise is essentially evangelical.

The proper light in which this promise is to be viewed, is to regard it as the summary of all preceding promises made to Abraham, and that, as standing last in the order of time, it is appropriately confirmed by 'the oath,' the final seal of God's faithfulness. For, not to draw attention at length to the fact that the promise was the sequel, to the great typical transaction on Mount Moriah, it will be evident from a glance at the previous issues of promise given at different periods of Abraham's life, that they were essentially evangelical. We have St. Paul's authority for this interpretation, as well as

The great promises to Abraham evangelical.

the letter of the text. All nations were to be blessed in Abraham and his seed, and he was to become, by this covenant, 'the father of many nations,' *i.e.* of 'all nations,' or, as St. Paul renders it, the 'heir of the world.' In truth, the covenant which included the natural seed of the patriarch, together with the gift of territory and of future nationality, was but an appanage to the Great Covenant, and was to be considered as only standing to it in the relation of a providential appointment of means to an end. The blessing here spoken of, which, like the first blessing bestowed on Adam, was that of an innumerable progeny, relates directly to the spiritual seed, and still awaits its largest fulfilment in the conversion of all nations to the Christian faith.

CHAP. XVI.

Heb. vi. 13-20.

Rom. iv. 13.

National promises subordinate to these.

But the question obviously here occurs, How does such an interpretation of the promise apply to the future life of the patriarch himself? How may it be supposed that the vast multiplication of his spiritual progeny, implied in this blessing, could affect Abraham himself? The answer seems to be returned by the light of the previous doctrine of reward. This doctrine allows of a vast advance on the qualifications of mere *personal* holiness and fitness for communion with God. In the case of this patriarch, it would seem that 'his exceeding great reward' consists in his relation, through his human fatherhood of the Christ, to an innumerable multitude of redeemed men, partly his natural, partly his spiritual seed; that this relation really extends itself to the future life; that it is continually on the increase; and that it is a grand source of honour and felicity to Abraham in the kingdom of

Abraham's 'exceeding great reward' arises from his special relations to redeemed humanity.

CHAP. XVI. heaven. Perhaps the recognition of this truth, Heb. vi. 13-20. obviously contained in the promise, gave birth to the exalted conceptions of the Hebrew people respecting the honour of their descent; and to those fine expressions of our Lord in the Gospels: 'He saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom;' 'And they shall come from the east and the west and the north and the south, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.'

Application of this doctrine to those rendering eminent service to the Church.

Nor is this doctrine singular; it lies at the foundation of the reward of great public services and the promotion of great Christian interests. We trace it in the apostolic writings, particularly in those of St. Paul, in which he obviously dwelt much on these perpetuated relations between himself and his converts: they were his joy and his crown in the day of the Lord. The same truth is also the noblest incentive to ministerial zeal and fruitfulness, and one of which no true minister can be utterly devoid. In the examples of pre-eminent men, signally gifted, and successful in retrieving religion after decay, and spreading its influence through nations, whether in ancient or modern days, we see the Abrahamic blessing reproduced in wonderful vividness, deepening the conviction that the covenant 'confirmed by an oath' still contains the two immutable things.¹

'Formen verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.'

The addition of the oath to the covenant, in this instance, is the crowning proof of its evangelical

¹ This beautiful application of the doctrine of reward admits of still wider detail in the fellowship of families, or natural fatherhood perpetuated on spiritual principles. It extends to sanctified friendship, and to spiritual services rendered to others, greatly heightening the joy of the final lot.

character, since this form of confirmation stamped it with absolute perpetuity, and made it, to use Scripture language, 'the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.' By the covenant thus confirmed, Christianity is registered as absolutely uncancellable by divine decree; it is 'the kingdom which cannot be moved,' though all other things may be shaken. This is a capital distinction between the gospel and the law; the latter was not confirmed by an oath, neither positively nor by implication. A reference to the text of the covenant shows this: The law ranked in the mere providential order of means, the gospel was the end; the law therefore perished when its days of service had expired. This, it is the great scope of the Epistle to prove; but if it had been confirmed by 'the oath,' it must have run on with Christianity itself, and the early Judaizers would have been justified in their views, and in their opposition to St. Paul. Even the vexed question of circumcision could hardly have been settled as it was in favour of Gentile exception, could it have been shown to appertain to the evangelical covenant as a sign or seal. But St. Paul proves that this covenant existed before the rite of circumcision was instituted in the person of Abraham, and that therefore it could not be a *sine quâ non* for entering upon possession of that covenant. Historically, the Abrahamic covenant was a Gentile covenant, and made national only in respect to its temporal appendages, which in due time were to be separated from it. It was in its range within Abraham's natural progeny, that circumcision became the covenant sign. Room was thus left for the

CHAP. XVI.

Heb. vi. 13-20.

The gospel confirmed by oath, because perpetual; the law not so confirmed, because temporary.

Circumcision a sign of the national, not of the evangelical, covenant with Abraham.

CHAP. XVI. future unfettered expansion of this primitive covenant; the natural seed had in their nationality ceased to belong to it.

Heb. vi. 13-20.

‘Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath.’

We have here opened to us the wonderful condescension of God, in tendering His ‘oath’ as an addition to His ‘promise,’ as if, as we should say, to offer further security for its fulfilment, though His promise itself was entirely sufficient. ‘The heirs of promise’ are here declared to be Christian disciples, in opposition to the natural descendants of Abraham, who, on that ground merely, could not ‘inherit the promise’ of their great father, but only by faith in Christ, the one condition common to them and to the Gentiles. The promise of which they are heirs is plainly that of ver. 14, and consists in being numbered among the multitude of the patriarch’s spiritual progeny, and in being made partakers with him of the kingdom of heaven. The expression, ‘blessing I will bless thee,’ means, exceedingly or superlatively I will bless thee, just as ‘multiplying I will multiply thee’ means indefinite multiplication, or as the expression ‘a multitude which no man can number.’ As the number is beyond count, so is the blessing beyond measure. The promise is boundlessly affluent in good, denominated, though not explained, as ‘life eternal.’

The promise to be inherited contained in ver. 14.

‘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.’

This verse connects these 'two immutable things' with the 'strong consolation' of disciples, certainty being the obvious correlative of greatness. Thus the reality and the grandeur of religion are equally exhibited in the gospel covenant. Its foundations are as deep and strong as the very nature of God, while its superstructure is proportionately glorious. This matches human aspiration and human exigencies with wonderful completeness, being just as powerful a cordial for the human heart, amidst all its diverse and often terrible exercises, as God Himself could prepare for it. 'Immutable things' are brought into immediate contact with a nature frail and fluctuating, and set in contrast with the conditions of human life so mournfully vain and shadowy. These 'immutable things' are here likened to the fortress which environed the refugee from the eager pursuit of the man-slayer, or the good holding-ground for the ship's anchor, to prevent it drifting upon the rocks when tempest-tossed. The fortress is unassailable; the ground in which the anchor is cast, 'sure and stedfast.' This ground, however, lies beyond the range of the world; the anchor enters the ground 'within the veil,' *i.e.* the 'immutable things' are at present veiled things, yet soul anchorage is cast within them,—a noble image of the soul at rest in assurance while tossed and strained by the force of all immediate surroundings. Thus the position is a safe one, and one of 'strong consolation,' though the veil itself is not yet passed, nor the shore of life actually touched, nor the scenes of the invisible and the eternal entered upon. This anchorage of the soul is made good by the

CHAP. XVI.

Heb. vi. 13-20.

The 'two immutable things' the 'promise' and the 'oath.'

The refuge and the anchor images of security.

CHAP. XVI. 'Forerunner.'¹ He alone brings it into immediate
 Heb. vi. 13-20. contact with 'immutable things,' and holds absolute mastery over all relations between the visible and the invisible, between discipline and perfection, between life and death, and between the lowliness of man and the grandeur of his destiny.

The Fore-
 runner insures
 these to the
 believer.

¹ 'Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil : whither the Forerunner is for us entered.'

CHAPTER XVII.

PRIESTHOOD—ITS RELATIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE SONSHIP.

HEB. II. 17, 18; IV. 14, 15.

THE final application of the doctrine of the Sonship respects the doctrine of the Priesthood of Christ, a subject which, having been touched upon in chap. ii. 17 and iv. 14, 15, is formally opened in chap. v. This is to be accounted the great, and we may say *original*, theme of the Epistle, since both the doctrines of the Sonship and of the sovereignty of Christ are found diffused through most parts of the New Testament, while the doctrine of the priesthood is peculiar to this portion of it.¹ This is a fact in itself strongly suggestive, and is of great force in proof of the inspiration of the Epistle (if not of its authorship), inasmuch as it obviously gives completeness to the revelations of the New Testament, supplying precisely that branch of truth otherwise unaccountably lacking. It is the doctrine of the *priesthood* of Christ which establishes fully the antitypal relation of the gospel to the law; it throws back its light with wonder-

Doctrine of
the priesthood
peculiar to
this Epistle.

Doctrine of
the priesthood
necessary to
bring out the
relation of the
law to the
gospel.

¹ Properly speaking, sovereignty and priesthood are two distinct, but not separate, phases of mediation. Hence the transition from the sovereignty (vers. 12 and 13) to the priesthood of Christ (ver. 14) is really not an irrelevant one.

CHAP. XVII. ful power on the scheme, and even the details of
 Heb. ii. 17, 18; that great institute. But for the Epistle to the
 iv. 14, 15. Hebrews, the light thrown upon the Law by Christianity would be partial and unsatisfactory. Many of its most precise and significant ceremonies, deposed from their rank as types, would dwindle into national customs, — venerable, indeed, from their origin, and most important as badges of Hebrew nationality, yet, nevertheless, as much done with after that nationality had ceased to exist, and as thoroughly isolated from the future of the world as other ancient things, which all in turn have given place to new and more appropriate developments in the history of man. But for this light of the priesthood on the law, one great ligature, binding together the Old and New Testaments, would be wanting. The relation thus established by this Epistle between the law and the gospel would render it one of vast interest to the Hebrew converts, wonderfully adding to the dignity of the law, and rendering it imperishable, while it placed Christianity also in a more striking light, as but a spiritual development and application of their great national institute. In this point of view, while the old economy, prospective as it was of something to succeed it, could not fail to be terminable by its very constitution, it yet became rich in materials for truthful illustration of the Christian system in its most vital parts. For instance, this system must have its priesthood, or it could not cohere with the law in which this idea was radical; at the same time, it carried out the great doctrine of atonement taught in the law to its proper official and spiritual results. It thus gave a much broader

Illustrations
 of the Chris-
 tian system
 in the law
 very striking
 to Hebrew
 converts.

view of Christianity than could be taken in its absence, and revealed its entire self-consistency, its perfection, its independence of Judaizers, and the entire spirituality and catholicity of its church system.

CHAP. XVII.

Heb. ii. 17, 18;
iv. 14, 15.

Apart from the Epistle to the Hebrews, we fail to observe either the typical antecedents contained in the law, or the fulfilment of some striking prophetic testimonies concerning the Messiah's priesthood; for instance, Isa. lxi., Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12, 13, not to quote again Ps. cx. 4. Undoubtedly, there are certain pregnant testimonies of prophecy in favour of Messiah's priesthood, though they are, beyond comparison, fewer than the testimonies in favour of His royalty. But they cannot, on this account, be ignored without doing violence to the harmony of prophecy, and without dropping an important testimony in favour of the New Testament itself. The Epistle to the Hebrews should therefore be regarded as *the* portion of the New Testament which directly recognises this prophetic branch of truth, and which gives it its final and authorized expansion. All the other writers of the New Testament unfold the theocratic office of the Messiah: they can scarcely be looked at truly in any other light. Our Lord's Forerunner dwells on this: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand,' *i.e.* the theocracy ushered in and established by the mission of Jesus of Nazareth.

Apart from this Epistle the fulfilment of the prophecies of Messiah's priesthood would have remained obscure.

The theocratic office of the Messiah taught elsewhere in the New Testament.

Our Lord Himself walks on the same road. His titles, 'Son of Man,' 'Son of David,' His parables, His general ministry, and His miracles carry us no further; they all concern the kingdom, none the priesthood. Twice did our Lord exercise

CHAP. XVII.

Heb. ii. 17, 18;
iv. 14, 15.

authority in the temple itself; but He never demanded the priestly stole or ephod; never offered a single sacrifice, or filled and waved the golden censer before the veil; nor did He once, as a priest, bless the people. He frequently taught in the temple, but never ministered; He allowed the children to cry 'Hosanna to the Son of David' in the temple, but He never appears so much as to have mingled with the priests, or in any way to have hinted that they were the representatives of Himself. He said of the temple only, not of the priesthood, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up again.'

Christ's
silence re-
specting His
priestly office
suggests that
His royalty
stood first in
the divine
order.

These facts are full of significance: they amount to a divine programme as to the development of Christianity; that its regal character, in the person of its Founder, and in its relations to the Jewish people, stood first in the divine order; and that in the after ministry of His apostles this same regal character was to obtain priority, and to establish itself in the convictions of His disciples ere the relations of the Messiah to the priesthood and to the temple system could be brought out. This fact, corroborated by the whole New Testament, historical and doctrinal, establishes the Epistle as a late and a completing revelation. It is a subject of great importance, evincing that the date of New Testament revelations was determined by a principle of order in the Divine Mind, and not by anything like casuality; they had a fitness to times and seasons, to the capacities of people to understand them, and to their relations to the present as well as future conditions of the Church. It is obvious that the doctrine of type and antitype, in

its application to the Old and New Testaments, was, in the nature of things, a final, not a primary teaching. At first these truths were unnecessary, and even impracticable. Rudiments must be begun with, because the disciples were 'babes,' not of 'full age,' as it is stated in chapter vi. 'We speak wisdom,' says the Apostle, 'amongst them that are perfect.' 'I have many things to say unto you,' says Christ, 'but ye cannot bear them now.'

CHAP. XVII.

Heb. ii. 17, 18;
iv. 14, 15.

The doctrines of this Epistle could not be popular doctrines, nor could they have been promulgated at an early period in Jerusalem and in Palestine without producing a violent reaction against Christianity, and perhaps endangering its very existence. It would have been charged with, and hunted down as, anti-nationalism; its apostles would have been proscribed; and its infant churches completely disbanded. In addition to their own meetings for worship and edification, attendance on the national forms seems to have been a general custom with the apostles and first Christians. They thus avoided giving offence: they stood to the great rudiments of their religion, and were willing to brave all consequences for their testimony to the Messiahship of Jesus; whilst they left the full development of His claims to the working of time, the leavening of truth, and the course of providence. These considerations show why the early and general preaching of the apostles went in another direction than the priesthood, taking the theocracy, and keeping the priesthood for a time mostly in abeyance. There are, however, some notices in the Acts of the Apostles of another sort, such as the charge against Stephen (Acts vi. 13, 14),

Peculiar doctrines of this Epistle could not have been taught at first.

Nevertheless, some intimations of them in the Acts.

CHAP. XVII. and that against Paul (Acts xxi. 28). These
 Heb. ii. 17, 18; contain intimations that, in some instances, the
 iv. 14, 15. doctrine of this Epistle was touched upon by
 apostolic ministers, and that the first martyr was
 brought to his end mainly on this account; and
 that, for the same reason, Paul would have been
 sacrificed to popular frenzy in Jerusalem had not
 the chief captain interposed to protect him.

Christ's
 Atonement
 taught from
 the first, but
 not the rela-
 tion of the
 legal sacrifices
 to it.

These considerations may serve to show how it
 is that the great doctrine of Atonement is commonly
 presented to us in the ministry and writings of the
 apostles so much apart from all priestly corre-
 spondences, and so little under merely doctrinal
 definitions, terms, and aspects. The death of Christ
 is perpetually referred to as an event altogether by
 itself in the history of the world; as a death for
 men, for, or on account of, their sins; now and
 then as a propitiation, which is unquestionably a
 legal term for a sin-offering. We also find the
 word 'sin' in St. Paul's writings, the rendering
 of the Septuagint for ἁμαρτία; the word 'offering'
 is likewise applied to it, and for the same reason,
 the term 'Lamb' to the Saviour, by John the Bap-
 tist and by St. Peter. Then, too, we have the word
 λύτρον, or ransom, employed in a similar sense to
 denote an equivalent tendered for something to be
 released. These are all, undoubtedly, testimonies
 to the doctrine of atonement, and to its cardinal
 position in the apostolic teaching. Thus 'sacri-
 fice' also occurs, though but rarely. But, putting
 all these things together, they amount to a full
 recognition of, and even prominence given to, the
 doctrine of atonement, but in no very systematic
 form; far less so than we should have reason to

expect, had not the apostolic ministry been environed with the sacrificial and priestly system, while its own relations to it for the time being were therefore to be hidden, or, at most, barely intimated. This did not affect the substantial integrity of Christianity to its earnest disciples, who were, from the beginning, throughout, and individually, led to regard the death of the Cross as a propitiation for sin, and as the one great source of human restoration. They were taught that the dignity of the Redeemer Himself not only followed, but resulted from it; and that His suffering and His glory were blended eternally as cause and effect.

CHAP. XVII.
Heb. ii. 17, 18;
iv. 14, 15.

Atonement
presented
rather under
its legal, than
its priestly
aspect.

It will appear, however, that the Atonement was presented under its regal rather than its priestly aspect; in proof of which we quote St. Peter as an example of the apostolic testimony (Acts ii. 36), 'Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.' Sovereignty, nevertheless, is a more remote, though a more comprehensive, result of atonement than priesthood. The relation of atonement is to priesthood direct, to sovereignty only *indirect*. A sacrifice by which atonement is effected, as it cannot be taken apart from ulterior purposes, so it must have respect to a class of functions ensuing. As an act performed on behalf of a class of beings astray from God, it must have a presence, a language, and a claim to be formally accepted for them with God. It cannot remain isolated, or as a thing of the past merely; it must exist *representatively*, and in proportionate power to itself, and so become a

Christ's sovereignty a more remote result of Atonement than His priesthood.

CHAP. XVII.

Heb. ii. 17, 18;
iv. 14, 15.

Atonement
being by a
Person, the
relations
established by
it must be
perpetuated
by that
Person.

The human
Sonship pro-
minent in
Christ's
priesthood.

consideration and a cause why the government of the world is thus, and not otherwise. As the sacrifice is that of a PERSON, its living perpetuation must be that of a person also, in such relations to God on the one hand, and to man on the other, as shall suffice for reconciliation and restoration, together with the advancement of honour and glory. Thus priesthood is *intermediate* between atonement and sovereignty, disposing and qualifying the latter so as to render it expressive of the attributes of the former, while it also maintains and expounds the prerogatives of law.

In looking at the priesthood of Christ from the one standpoint of His Sonship, we see how (in accordance with previous discussions) the human side of the Sonship is made immediately prominent: so to speak, this side takes the place of the phenomenal in the doctrinal system, as it is next to ourselves, and, in fact, forms our only medium for observing the higher side of His person. It is not the God but the Man who passes before us. The very vestments in which this 'great High Priest' is clad, are simply those of our humanity glorified; and if we look upon Him in the earlier stages of His ministry, while only *preparing* to offer up Himself, He appears as a man amongst His fellows. The superadded majesty of Godhead, veiled by this, retires from our immediate gaze, as God Himself does, by the interposed veil of nature.

Thus, while no act or suffering of Christ can be taken apart from His *entire* person comprised in the ineffable name of the Son, or Son of God, yet the nature of the connection between both Sonships

is for ever shrouded in mystery—the *fact* of their union is none the less patent, nor the sphere appropriate to each the less distinct and perfect. The personal imputation at least, if not always the immediate agency, of the Godhead, appertains to all the attributes and offices of this great High Priest. The sphere and charge of His priesthood, the grounds on which it rests, and the objects it is designed to accomplish, are absolutely beyond the nature and position of a mere creature. Yet the humanity is, for obvious reasons, placed full in our view, and may be said to charge the office of the priesthood with powers so intimately in accordance with humanity and its conditions, that we are allowed to contemplate the Son more as if He were one of ourselves than the ‘image of the invisible God.’ Two things are especially to be noted in this view :

CHAP. XVII.

Heb. ii. 17, 18;
iv. 14, 15.

No act of Christ to be taken apart from His entire person, though union of two natures in that person an inaccessible mystery.

1st, That the typical relation to the Son, of human beings in the priestly office, entirely arises from His manhood. On no other ground could He be ranked either with Melchisedec or with Aaron, or, indeed, with historical personages of any sort. These could not be types of God, as such, in any of His prerogatives or works; but they could become appropriately types of the Being who, though truly God, was also as truly man. Hence it is clear from the nature of this discussion respecting the priesthood, the personages introduced, and the conclusions established, that the human side of the Sonship is, throughout, made the direct view of the Saviour’s person.

Typical relations of human priests to Christ only possible on the ground of His humanity.

Attributes ascribed to Christ in His priestly character those of humanity.

2d, The affections and sympathies also ascribed to this great High Priest, and their assimilation

CHAP. XVII. to a human parallel, concur in establishing the same truth. The prominence given to these is remarkable both for its frequency and for the terms employed to set them forth. Quotations are here apposite: 'Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.' In this scripture the humanity and its conditions, its exercises and its perils, its frailties and burdens, are represented as assumed by Christ—freely and fully assumed with direct reference to His priesthood,—not in reference to the duties of His human history, but, wonderful to relate, to the functions of His office in a far more exalted sphere, His priesthood in the heavens! According to this doctrine, the human history of the Saviour, including the whole of His experiences and acts, has its perfect antithesis in His glorified condition—they are translated into it by the translation of His Person, and are made necessary pre-conditions to His administrative relations with His people. Thus the Priesthood, in its highest form, is made dependent on something foregoing, and is entirely a thing of earthly growth, though in heaven beheld as the 'branch of the Lord, beautiful and glorious.'

Same teaching, Heb. iv. 15.

A second example of the same kind occurs chapter iv. verse 15: 'For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities,' *i.e.* our liabilities to temptation—to be overcome as well as distressed by it; 'but was in all points tempted like as we are,' or simi-

larly, 'yet without sin.' The doctrine here is full of interest, for it affirms a perfect sympathy between Christ as man, and men in their trials, through the bond of a common nature and condition. This is grounded on the impossibility of man being represented except by man; in no other way can succouring sympathies be acquired, and power to exercise them, but as the result of a fellowship in his nature and experiences. These must belong in their utmost range, sin excepted, to the High Priest, 'in all points tempted like,' or after a human fashion.¹

CHAP. XVII.
 Heb. ii. 17, 18;
 iv. 14, 15.

Such is the language employed to set this forth, and thus to open to us a vast view of the mysteries of our Lord's human state on earth. He remained immaculate and perfect after an unparalleled series of temptations, though a veil is thrown over the detail of those temptations, forbidding impertinent curiosity, while the fact itself is reverently to be accepted, to the furtherance of our gratitude and trust.

¹ It should be remembered that the historical parallel is doctrinally interwoven with these last verses of the chapter, as well as with the former part of it; since in no portion of the Old Testament do the tender, unselfish, man-loving qualities show themselves in connection with official greatness so strikingly as in the character of Moses. He was touched with the feeling of the infirmities of those he represented; but it was probably the recollection of his failing signally in *one* instance which suggested in this place the perfection of Christ.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PRIESTHOOD — QUALIFICATIONS AND OFFICE OF THE AARONIC HIGH PRIEST.

HEB. V. 1-6.

THE subject of the priesthood is extended through the greater part of the fifth chapter. 'For every High Priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.' Here the argument is from the less to the greater, from the merely human type to the divine and human antitype. First, the High Priest is taken from 'among men,' not from another order of beings, and, in the instance here given, from among his brethren, nationally considered. He represented the family; his office was instinct with consanguinities; and his charity, therefore, was to be the prime prompting principle of his office. Second, 'He was ordained for men,' *i.e.* to represent them officially, inasmuch as every single man was not to be his own priest, much less the priest of the nation. The High Priest was their deputy, though not by a human ordinance. Representation is the principle of priesthood. Things are to be done for us which cannot be done by us,

His office 'for men.'

except in a federal or imputative sense. These things pertain to God, *i.e.* to Him primarily and especially: they are the things of worship and of the soul, things pertaining to the immutable relations of God with His creatures, His claims upon them, His justice, His grace, His covenant—their duties, their sins, their guilt, and need of reconciliation. This places the office of the priest in direct antithesis to the office of the magistrate. The latter concerns himself with things pertaining to men. His charge is over society, the relations and obligations of men one to another. This is his service as appointed by God; but if he take upon him more than this, he enters on the province of the *priest*, in addition to that of the *ruler*, and intrudes himself into an office not, even under the law, given to the chief magistrate, but especially reserved for a distinct order of men.

CH. XVIII.

Heb. v. 1-6.

Distinction
between
offices of
priest and
ruler.

There were some exceptions to this, but these exceptions were no precedents. There is only One who combines both offices in Himself, who is saluted King and also Priest, as in the 5th and 6th verses of this chapter: 'Thou art my Son,'—this is the royalty; 'Thou art a priest for ever,'—this is the pontificate. His duties and dispositions are specified: 'in things pertaining to God;' 'that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.' Reference is made here to the sacrifices prescribed by the law. Of these sacrifices, *viz.* the sacrifices for purification, for ceremonial defilements, leprosy, release from vows, thank-offerings, peace-offerings, etc., it may be sufficient to say, that while they all partook of

Christ alone
unites these
offices.

Different
classes of
'sacrifices'
under the law.

CH. XVIII. the nature of atonement or offerings for sin, a class
 Heb. v. 1-6. of them had more expressly and emphatically this character. Such were the two kinds of sin-offering, one of which only had the blood sprinkled before the veil, and its flesh carried without the camp; the other, the burnt-offerings ordained specifically for various classes of offences. These distinctions, however important in the Levitical ritual, all consisted with a perfect unity of nature. From first to last every ordinance of the altar told of sin and guilt, of reconciliation and peace by the vicarious victim; so that, while other offerings not peculiar might be, and were, added to them,—such as those of the first fruits, the meat-offering, and the drink-offering, including the presentation of the general products of nature,—these are to be understood as *accompaniments* merely to the principal offering, made acceptable only by their connection with it, and on the ground of atonement by animal sacrifice.

'Gifts' under
 the law.

'Gifts' are here also mentioned, probably meant to include the presentation both of persons and property to God, such as the devotement of a field or an estate, its fruit-trees, its products, the cattle, or even of some members of the family. Great scope was left by the law for these spontaneous offerings of piety, over and above what was strictly required. These 'gifts' would depend much upon the general state of religion in the nation, and upon its deeper influence on individuals. They would doubtless include also large bequests of property from the wealthy, spoils taken in war, and occasional presentations of costly offerings from strangers or proselytes. The tendency of a great central system, or national institute of

worship, manifestly was to augment the wealth of the priesthood, and of the temple, in which apartments were devoted to the dedicated things, and which had also its treasury, so that at particular periods this wealth must have been enormous. The appropriations by David and the princes as preparatory only to the building of the Temple, as well as the immense sum expended by Solomon on its erection and furnishing, are examples. All these endowments were supposed to pass into the hands of the High Priest, and by him to be formally presented to God as the offerings of His people for His service and glory. A trace of this is found in the Gospels, in the offerings which the rich men cast into the treasury, and the touching note by our Lord of the poor widow who cast in two mites, which made a farthing. Thus 'the gifts' seemed an appropriate sequel to the 'sacrifices for sins;' they were the returns of thankfulness for the grace of atonement which alone, as producing them, could make them well-pleasing unto God.

CH. XVIII.

Heb. v. 1-6.

'The ignorant, and them that are out of the way.'¹ This direction of the compassions of the High Priest was probably toward that section of the nation which, in every state, lies without the pale of the well-ordered portion of society,—who are a law unto themselves, and neither fear God nor regard men,—vagrants, beggars, marauders, the vicious of all sorts, the neglected, the destitute, or persons in the grain atheistic or immoral, all these are spoken of as 'the ignorant,' or 'them that are out of the way,'—besotted and estranged both

Objects of the
High Priest's
special com-
passion.

¹ 'Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.'

CH. XVIII.

Heb. v. 1-6.

from their stock and their privileges. Yet even these are supposed to have a suitor with God, in the High Priest of the nation. He regards them as his brethren, or as his wayward and lost children. He puts himself intentionally, and with emphasis, between God and these reprobates; even though they would seem to be irreclaimable, and doomed to destruction, he sues for mercy and the grace of recovery for them, after the example of Moses and Aaron, who interceded and saved the rebel congregation in the wilderness, when sentence had gone out against it. From this verse we learn that the power of cherishing and giving vent to these compassions toward 'the ignorant, and them that are out of the way,' was a qualification as exalted as it was indispensable—a state of feeling very rare in the days of our Lord among the ecclesiastics, as we learn from the Gospels, for they murmured, saying, 'This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.'

This compassion an essential qualification for the High Priest's office.

Our Lord exhibited the true type of the High Priest in His compassions for 'the ignorant, and them that are out of the way,' and with telling force vindicated Himself against those 'who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others.' This was the more remarkable as our Lord could have no fellow-feeling with them as sinners; whereas it is advanced as the very ground of the sympathy of the Jewish High Priest with his people: 'For that he himself is compassed about with infirmity.' This is made still stronger by the teaching of verse 3, 'And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.' Hence it appears that the High Priest of self-righteous temperament was virtually

disqualified for the performance of his office; since he neither felt his own sins nor the sins of his people, in which case the offering of sacrifice was but a solemn lie unto God, adding through the essential falsity of the act to his own sin, and depriving the people of all benefit. There could be no true offering for sin unaccompanied by confession broad enough to include both the High Priest and the people. The true language of the sin-offering and the sin-offerer is best put in that of the English Litany, 'Have mercy upon us miserable sinners.'

Verse 4. 'And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.' This verse is remarkable as collating the *vocation* with the *honour* of the priesthood. Its peculiar sacredness as an office of 'things pertaining to God,' is its fence against self-intrusion, or even popular intrusion. This constitutes the difference between priesthood and kingship, since these reasons do not apply to the latter office. The divine right of kings is an indefensible tenet disproved by all history except that of the Hebrew commonwealth, in which 'the Lord's Anointed' was the divine antithesis to the High Priest.¹ The argument respecting vocation is confined here exclusively to the office of the high-priesthood, which being once settled in a particular family was of necessity hereditary, and its authenticity was

CH. XVIII.

Heb. v. 1-6.

Divine right of kings or of priests no existence outside the Jewish commonwealth.

Vocation the only ground of a true ministry.

¹ Neither, however, had any force from divine patent beyond the Hebrew commonwealth; and this text, therefore, is cited to little purpose in favour of the dogma of 'succession,' and against a free and independent call to the Christian ministry; since Christian ministers are not priests, much less high priests. They rather take rank with prophets than priests, and their vocation therefore is far less dependent on any ordinance than on the impulse and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

CH. XVIII.

Heb. v. 1-6.

Fundamental
principle of
the Jewish
priesthood,
that God must
choose His
own minister.

Union of regal
and priestly
offices in
Christ rests on
His divine
and human
nature.

identified with that of the Pentateuch. Economical and national reasons both required that the high-priesthood should be settled by pedigree, and that this honour at least should remain unchallengeable. The principle upon which it rested, however, seems to have been more profound, viz. that God must choose His own minister, and that men can only indorse him. The application of the doctrine to Christ Himself gives us the origin of the Jewish high-priesthood as a typical institution. It is illustrated by the prophetic appellations given to Him, such as, 'Mine Elect,' 'My Servant,' 'Mine Anointed.' These, it is true, express equally the sovereignty of Christ; and accordingly His vocation as a High Priest is here coupled with His vocation as a Sovereign, while both are founded on the doctrine of His Sonship as human and divine. 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. As He saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.'

It is remarkable also that these Psalms (ii. and ex.) point to the period of our Lord's exaltation as that in which He received alike His royalty and His priesthood. The Son as raised from the dead and exalted to heaven, is the Son enthroned as King and Priest in one person and at one time. Both offices bear the same date, both are concurrent and inseparable in His administration, and both are to be recognised in the worship and doctrine of His Church.

CHAPTER XIX.

PRIESTHOOD—PRIESTLY CHARACTER OF CHRIST'S OBEDIENCE AND SUFFERING.

HEB. v. 7-9.

‘Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared.’

This verse contains a striking epitome of our Lord's humiliation and troubles, and is undoubtedly a direct reference to the Agony. ‘Who in the days of His flesh,’ is an expression which plainly separates what follows from the more general experience of His humanity, and directs us to some time or times of peculiar pressure. Various notices are dropped by the evangelists of our Lord's prayerfulness, and its outgoings in the night, on the mountain or in the wilderness; but they give us no information as to the nature of His suits, nor of the wrestling importunity of His exercises at these times. This passage therefore must refer to the Agony alone. It entirely accords with the several narratives of this touching and awful scene, and is the only comment on it supplied by the entire apostolic writings.

Ver. 7 a
direct refer-
ence to the
‘Agony.’

It is here remarkably placed, in the argument

CHAP. XIX.

Heb. v. 7-9.

Remarkably
placed in the
argument for
the priest-
hood.

respecting the priesthood, as being one of its chief preliminary exercises, and as being very mainly concerned in the accomplishment of all its preconditions,—‘being made perfect’—‘He offered up prayers and supplications,’ such were the preliminaries with which He approached the great altar of sacrifice; these heralded His progress, and as it were made way for the great self-oblation of the High Priest. The details are passed over in silence by the evangelists, save the reiterated ejaculation ‘Father, if it be possible,’ yet they are to be supposed; they are even intimated by St.

Luke xxii. 44.

Luke in that terrible expression, ‘And being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly.’ The same evangelist also gives us the clue in the yet more terrible expression, ‘His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.’ These words collated with this comment, ‘with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death,’ let us into the mystery of that awful hour, when an angel from heaven appeared to strengthen Him as He was about to swoon into death. The hour was ended when the agony was no longer tolerable, ‘He was heard in that He feared,’—words which may be understood of the averting by His prayer of the death imminent through the pressure of this mental suffering.¹

Ver. 8 should
be rendered
‘the Son.’

‘Ver. 8. ‘Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.’ It should be though He were ‘the Son;’ for the indefinite article, instead of the definite here, is

¹ Or they may be understood as the *ground* of its prevalency,—‘in that He feared,’—sometimes rendered ‘for His piety,’ i.e. His perfect resignation to His Father’s will.

out of keeping with the majesty of the Son as opened in this Epistle, and also destroys the point of the argument which lies in the supposed immunity of the Son, as the Son, from suffering of any kind. His very rank entitled Him to exemption from the accidents to which creatures are liable, and also from the necessity of learning obedience in any way, least of all by *a course of suffering*. Ver. 8 therefore is intended to suggest that the learning of obedience by the Son, and His learning it by a course of suffering, were a phenomenon resolvable by no law, and standing equally without precedent or the possibility of repetition.

CHAP. XIX.

Heb. v. 7-9.

Intimates that His rank should exempt Him from obedience to suffering.

The position of the Son here as the subject of His Father, exercised with temptations and perfected by sufferings, is another example in proof of the observation before made, that the human side of the Sonship is immediately turned toward us in these chapters, since obedience is proper to a creature-relation to God, and very emphatically the obedience of suffering.

Another example of the human Sonship.

Still the Son is here put before us *indirectly* in His divine majesty also, but with such an added creature-nature and relation to God as constituted the basis of an imputation of the acts proper to His humanity, as made proper also to His divinity. The mystery of a changed hypostatic relation to the Father lies at the basis of the Incarnation itself, and this, rather than the fact abstractedly taken of a human impersonation of Godhead, is the wonder to which expression is given by the Incarnation. This mystery (as before stated in chap. iv.) is the self-ruled relation of the Son, who, though sovereign, becomes subject to the Father;

Indirectly of the divine, but with such added relations to God as constitutes the mystery on which the Incarnation rests.

The self-ruled subjection of the Son the ground of His obedience.

CHAP. XIX.

Heb. v. 7-9.

for, without this, the relations of the two natures implied in the person of the Son as Christ would have been absolutely incompatible, and, it may be added, not in accordance with the language of Scripture. Thus, obedience in the Son becomes from first to last the just development of this first truth of the Sonship.

Suffering only possible to Him as the representative of sinners.

The obedience of suffering is appropriate to Christ only, as the Representative and Redeemer of sinners. On no other ground could it be affirmed that the obedience of suffering ascribed to the Son had been possible. Obedience is the conformity of conduct or actions to the will of a superior, and must therefore reflect the character of that superior. As the obedience is here offered to God, His character precludes the possibility of suffering making any part of a creature's duty, except for a moral faultiness. If, therefore, our Lord's obedience of suffering were not representative and vicarious, rather than personal in its nature, His humanity could not have been faultless, and His suffering would have been, as in ordinary cases, a corrective discipline, tending to amend and expurgate it. This, however, is an assumption absolutely contrary to the whole tenor of the Epistle, and abhorrent to the entire teaching of the New Testament.

Suffering can only be inflicted for moral faultiness.

Suffering not in its nature corrective.

Besides, obedience wrought out by suffering is no doctrine established by the common experiences of humanity. The few cases we have are very mainly of a political or social, rather than of a moral sort. Further, the doctrine would strongly tend in a direction adverse to revelation itself, viz. to show that penalty, which is the idea of suffering

in this connection, bears a reactionary character, and instead of being a mere award of justice on delinquency, is but in fact a correctional process, ending in ultimate recovery. The only two cases in which obedience is the effect of suffering are, (1) when suffering is made a subsidiary appointment to some higher principle than itself, and where a nature as such is not absolutely depraved; or (2) when suffering is endured for the sake of others, and as a means and condition for securing advantages apparently only obtainable by this self-sacrifice. Our Lord's obedience of suffering was plainly of this latter description. His obedience was representative. His sufferings were vicarious. He was in the room and stead of others before God as 'the Son,' and thus capable, by such a course of endurance and self-sacrifice, of working out for men a redemption and deliverance otherwise inconceivable.

CHAP. XIX.
Heb. v. 7-9.

Save (1) where subservient to some higher principle.

(2) Where endured for others.

The things which He suffered as 'the Son' must be taken to include both the Agony, as described in the preceding verse, and the subsequent sufferings, all wound up in the death of the cross. The obedience here ascribed to Him intimates with what directness and simplicity this terrible onus of suffering was accepted and borne as the will of His Father; even those sufferings which were immediately inflicted by the malice of men, much more those ineffable ones immediately inflicted by the hand of His Father: 'For it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, and to make His soul,' not His flesh merely, 'an offering for sin.' Thus 'He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.' His humanity became the subject of new and all but

Christ's sufferings His obedience to the will of the Father.

CHAP. XIX. overwhelming experiences of what substitutional
 Heb. v. 7-9. obedience meant. Even His mind, previously to the season of suffering and the facts of endurance, was unacquainted with the tremendous import of this all-redeeming hour. It seemed, if not to take Him by surprise, yet to awaken in Him emotions which sounded the very depths of His soul, to which utterance could only be imperfectly given, and which, in their intensity, as well as their fruitfulness, must subsist in Him only as the 'Lamb slain.' It was the great hour of His soul-travail and the new birth of a dead world.¹

'Perfect,'
 accomplished,
 completed.

Verse 9. 'And being made perfect.' The word perfect here may signify, (1) the close or accomplishment of the work of obedience by suffering, *i.e.* the goal of obedience, the *τελείωσις*, as it were, of His course; answerably to His own words, 'It is finished,' uttered from the cross, and there obviously connected with all the particulars comprised in fulfilled prophecy, of which taking the vinegar from the sponge was the last. It was done, completed, as a travail gone through and ended, never to return.

(2) It includes
 causes and
 consequences.

(2) But 'being made perfect' here also signifies or takes in all causes and consequences of this obedience wrought out by the things 'which He suffered.' As representative and substitutional, this obedience by suffering must needs comprise the fulfilment of all His duty to the Father as His Son 'made flesh,' and standing between Him and an offending world, to reconcile it to Him, and to make its recovery broadly practicable. In this sense it could

¹ 'And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.'

be nothing less than atonement consummated by vicarious suffering, as appointed, tendered, and accepted. This greatest of all acts which the universe admits, was really perfected when this obedience was finished. It was simply impossible that more than this could be required, and probably as impossible that less than this could have sufficed.

CHAP. XIX.

Heb. v. 7-9.

(3) But there is a third view of the phrase 'being made perfect,' in itself of great moment, and also very prominent in passages of this Epistle. It is the doctrine of the perfected human sympathy of the Son with universal man, but especially with His people, as the effect of 'the things which He suffered.' His humanity, relatively to His office and to the conditions under which it must be exercised for the behoof of men, required such a process as this, since it seems impossible that this perfection of human nature as related to a given sphere of offices, can come in any other way. Fellow-feeling is a much more powerful succourer than the loftiest reason, and a much closer bond between one man and another than mere accomplishments, caste, combinations, tastes, friendships; in a word, the closest interlacings of humanity throughout the world are made out of its heart-strings, not out of its logic. Suffering, in its almost infinitely varied forms and degrees, is the most powerful baptism into humanity all the world over; indeed, it is the only one which thoroughly filters into the soul, and reveals the depths of our nature to one another. No wonder, then, that the Prince of humanity and its Author has concentrated in Himself all the humanity of man, and that His one bosom responds to its voices, as the deep calls

It includes
the human
sympathy of
the Son.

CHAP. XIX.

Heb. v. 7-9.

'Salvation'
the result of
the Son's
being 'made
perfect' (ver.
9).

'Salvation'
the perfecting
of human
nature subjec-
tively and
objectively,
i.e. with re-
spect to itself,
and with
respect to
God.

'Author'
equivalent to
Saviour.

to the deep; that by Him the world of humanity is responded to in the heavens, and bespoken in all the intercessions and tendernesses of His eternal priesthood.

'He became the author of eternal salvation to them that obey Him.' The adjunction of 'eternal salvation' as the direct effect of His being 'made perfect,' shows that this threefold view of the phrase does not unduly extend its meaning. 'Eternal salvation,' as ascribed to the Son, and to Him as being 'made perfect,' reveals the transcendent character of His atoning work. The very attribute of eternity gives it an overwhelming importance in the case of a single individual, seeing that every such individual is no mean accession to the happiness of God's universe, and must represent a confluence of all the richest elements of beatitude which the divine and human natures meeting in Christ can furnish. It is the *nature* of man which is saved, not his fortunes; it is his relations to, and intercourse with, the Godhead which are secured, not his creature associations merely, much less any artificial and contingent advantages. Salvation is an everlasting correlative to our self-consciousness, and more than this to our divine consciousness,—in which assuredly combine a perfect self-repose, a perfect immunity from evil, and a perfect possession of the Infinite as the first and last of being. Such a creature may himself be more than a world, and a more resplendent witness to the perfections and government of God, than all the planets in the sky, or a whole order of less privileged intelligences.

'Author,' while it signifies an equivalent to Creator, signifies also something more especially appro-

priate to man, viz. Saviour. It is a specific title which has its bearing directly on humanity, and is the complement of all others. This close connection between the perfection ascribed to Christ and the salvation which issued from it, fully accounts for the prominence given to salvation, in the New Testament, as a thing actually provided and freely offered to the world. The grandeur and distinctness of this revelation are made more impressive by the one word employed to declare them, SALVATION, than they could be by any conceivable variety of expression, or the most profuse forms of illustration. As the distant sound of music swells upon the ear, begetting interest, and even transport as it becomes louder and more distinct,—so salvation, while it unfolds the great cardinal idea of redemption, invests it also with a mysterious indefiniteness fitted to raise the mind by the help of the imagination, as well as by the intuitions of reason and conscience. This is not merely the peace of earth, but the very joy of heaven. ‘Salvation’ constitutes the cardinal difference between the revelations of the Old and New Testaments; for, while the former again and again refers to it in expressions which show that in earlier times it was not altogether a secret, but the sun and soul of ancient piety, yet salvation is nowhere put forward in an unshrouded form, as the very orb of the heavens dispelling the gloom of death’s shadow, and opening eternity to man. It is rather like prophecy, ‘a light shining in a dark place’ until the day dawn, an anticipation of a brighter future, and a prelude only to the song of the Lamb.

‘To them that obey Him.’ The connection of

CHAP. XIX.

Heb. vi. 7-9.

Salvation.

CHAP. XIX.

Heb. v. 7-9.

The Son's
obedience the
source of His
supreme
authority over
His Church.

He becomes
the Viceroy
of the Father.

Summary.

obedience to Christ with His own obedience to the Father, is the antithesis suggested by this phrase. The obedience wrought out by suffering becomes the source of supreme authority to the Son, since His subjection was only transient, and His sovereignty was made its direct award. This is a great New Testament theme, and is here put before us in a practical form. The idea is, that He takes charge of all creatures henceforth, but especially of redeemed men; that they are all given into His hand, and that whatever duties they owe to God they must pay to Christ as His viceroy and their king. Thus obedience is their tribute to His sovereignty, while all punitive and rewarding rights are also vested in Him, and sanctioned by the Father.

The great moral deduced seems to be, that as the supreme power of the universe is in the hands of a sufferer, 'the Lamb slain;' so the obedience of suffering qualified by the merits of His atonement, especially when endured in the service of His religion (though not excluding private suffering), elevates to the supreme places of dignity and joy in the kingdom of God. There is a sense in which the sufferings of Christ are participated by His members, and also, as St. Peter says, 'the glory that shall be revealed.'

CHAPTER XX.

MELCHISEDEC.

HEB. VII. 1-21.

MELCHISEDEC is here introduced as the great prototype of Christ,—in certain respects absolutely peculiar. In rank, as well as in the order of time, he is Aaron's superior, and even the superior of Moses himself. Had we possessed the inspired narrative only (Genesis xiv. 18), we should probably have been little aware of the singular importance of this personage. The history is as brief as a notice well could be of one deemed worthy of a place at all in the scripture record. It is altogether contained in a few lines; but yet this passing narrative, put before us in the form of a mere incident in the life of Abraham, becomes at once a theme of prophecy and of amplified evangelical teaching. It is remarkable, too, as affording an instance of the manner in which Bible narratives are made to form the basis of the most momentous doctrines. By the divine order they are inseparably entwined; the Old Testament forms an integral part of the New,—they stand or fall together. Psalm cx. 4 (undeniably Messianic prophecy) contains the scripture which forms the intermediate link between the narrative and the

Melchisedec,
as the proto-
type of Christ,
superior both
to Moses and
to Aaron.

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1-21.

The priest-
hood of Christ
more closely
represented
by Melchi-
sedec than
by Aaron.

teachings of this Epistle. It recognises the priesthood of Melchisedec, and its close association with that of the Messiah; indeed in some respects the Messiah's priesthood more thoroughly assimilates with that of Melchisedec than with that of Aaron. The order or rank of this patriarchal priest foreshadowed that of the Messiah, in certain mysterious aspects of it not predicable of that of Aaron. It is probable that even the concise and unconnected form of the narrative itself was designed by the inspiring Spirit to intimate this fact, since he is made to appear and disappear as it were in a moment, not to return, as an historical personage, for ever. This mixture of mystery with fact is, of itself, a presumption of the typical character of the narrative, and that more was meant to be drawn out of it than its bare letter would suggest. More is said of him than of any other personage, after so long an interval of time between his personal existence and his finally ascertained position in the system of revealed truth.

Was Melchi-
sedec a tem-
poral or
spiritual
ruler?

On looking over his character under the light of this chapter, one of two suggestions may be accepted, the literal or the spiritual. In what sense was Melchisedec a king at all? Was he such territorially and secularly, or was he simply a sovereign-pontiff, a great spiritual ruler, whose functions were entirely apart from those of the civil magistrate? Or was he a temporal prince with the functions of a religious order superadded, *i.e.* the two estates blended in one? Much, perhaps, might be said in favour of the former view; yet the title 'King of Righteousness,' though not necessarily excluding the idea of a monarch dis-

tinguished for the integrity of his administration, seems to imply much more than this; while understood as containing the Hebrew equivalent for his name, in some different, though perhaps cognate, language, it still implies that it was a name, like others in Scripture, given him by divine direction and with peculiar reference to his typical character with respect to the Messiah. Taken in connection with the second appellation, 'King of Peace,' this thought seems invested with high probability, since even the history forbids us to regard Melchisedec as a secular prince averse from war when righteously waged, as was the case in Abraham's conflict with the kings. He would assuredly not approve as righteous in others that which in his own personal administration he condemned. On the contrary, we see that he went out to meet the successful warrior, received a portion of the spoils at his hands, and blessed him in the name of the Most High God. The inference from this seems to be, that it was in a religious or evangelical sense that he was 'King of Righteousness' or 'King of Peace.' This fact does not exclude the possibility that he was a territorial prince with superadded spiritual functions, more widely recognised than his civil ones; yet these marked characteristics, 'King of Righteousness' and 'King of Peace,' are in their highest sense answerable to his typical character, and are chiefly to be borne in mind when studying this account of him. If 'Salem' be taken as the name of a place, it probably means Jerusalem, which thus acquires an earlier interest historically than when, after its possession by the Jebusites, it fell into the hands of David and be-

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1-21.

Probably he
was both.

CHAP. XX. came the seat and centre of the Hebrew Theocracy.
 Heb. vii. 1-21. It might be that Melchisedec, as King of Salem, was the last and most distinguished representative of the Noachian Theocracy, and of that form of sacred government which, through many ages afterwards, was to be continued by the descendants of Abraham, and for ever perfected in the reign of the Son of God.

Language of
 ver. 3 applied
 to his priestly
 pedigree.

The language of verse 3, 'Without father, without mother, without descent,' should not be understood of his kingly, but of his priestly pedigree, since, if it were referred to the former, it might be suspected that he was an usurper, or at least a man raised to kingly eminency by some popular movement. It is, indeed, quite possible that his royalty was not hereditary, but became the crown of his personal and priestly eminency; that his priesthood was first in order of time, and that the great spiritual power gave birth to the temporal. But be this as it may, the language of verse 3 should be taken exclusively in the priestly sense. This is obvious when we consider how strict the law of pedigree was with respect to the priesthood within the Hebrew commonwealth, and that this principle (fought against in the wilderness by the people and the princes) was the very one established by God when the priesthood was vested in the tribe of Levi and in the family of Aaron without the least modification for ever. Whatever flaws therefore might creep into the ordinary genealogies of families, the rolls of priestly descent were guarded with all the jealousy of the priestly caste, and held as their heavenly patent both of maintenance and honour. Now it is in contrast to this

law of genealogy that the history of Melchisedec stands. He is neither the descendant of a race of priests, nor is he the head of a particular order—he stands alone without successor or predecessor. We have no account of his installation nor of his decease, and therefore no authoritative record of the extinction or tradition of his priesthood, ‘He abideth a priest continually.’ This is evidently the point chiefly regarded in the Psalm (so frequently quoted in the Epistle) as that in which he most closely resembles the Messiah, *i.e.* in the perpetuity of office, as contrasted with office maintained by succession. In this capital point, however, it must be allowed that the glory of the anti-type is cast upon the type, and that the narrative is, so to speak, idealized to suit it. He is thus made ‘like unto the Son of God,’ not by being exalted to personal immortality, with its concomitant, perpetual priesthood (for this would be more than likeness in the typical sense), but by the abstraction from the record of all the ordinary predicates of humanity, such as birth, death, official installation, or priestly decadence, as in the case of Aaron on Mount Hor, or of Moses on Mount Pisgah. We have simply a glimpse of the man in his regal pontificate, who is then withdrawn as if, like Elijah, carried up by a whirlwind into heaven. This same sense of typical and official, as distinguished from personal life, is traced in the latter part of verse 8, ‘of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.’ The phrase ‘it is witnessed’ is an obvious allusion to the language of Psalm cx., ‘Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec,’ and its introduction here shows that the teaching

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1–21.

Contrast to the hereditary character of the Aaronic priesthood.

In ver. 3 the narrative idealized to express the perpetuity of Christ's priesthood.

Distinction between personal and official life of Melchisedec taught here, also in ver. 8, and Psalm cx.

CHAP. XX.
Heb. vii. 1-21.

of the Psalm is to be understood of the official, not of the personal, life of Melchisedec. Melchisedec, like every other typical person or typical thing, might be said to live on till the antitype was revealed, in whom both the person and the office should truly live for ever. More than this cannot be made of the language by any rule of fair construction, nor by any perceptible bearing of the history of Melchisedec on the argument before us.

‘Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: but he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.’

The 4th verse invites to the consideration of the glory of Melchisedec, and the subject is continued to the 10th verse. Taking here the inspired comment, together with the narrative on which it is founded, this glory is exceedingly eminent.

Abraham
acknowledged
the spiritual
dominion of
Melchisedec
by the pay-
ment of tithes.

The patriarch Abraham gave him the tenth of the spoils taken in war. This act was the more remarkable as he refused to touch any portion of them himself. It looked as if the patriarch

regarded these, not in the light of honourable gratuities, much less as the returns of hospitality, but as the payment of dues to this sovereign pontiff which piety forbade him to withhold. This incident is of great importance as showing that the spiritual dominion of Melchisedec extended to countries and peoples far beyond the limits of his own, and that he represented, what in modern language would be called, the claims of the Church on the State, even where the State as such was perfectly independent of him. This argument, from the payment of tithes by Abraham to Melchisedec, is pressed in verses 5 and 6 to show his surpassing dignity in comparison with that of Aaron and his descendants. These took tithes of their brethren, but not of strangers. As they had no jurisdiction, so they had no revenues, beyond the Hebrew commonwealth; but the patriarch Abraham here acknowledges the jurisdiction of Melchisedec over himself and over the nations whose goods he tithes to meet these claims, and thus, in a spiritual sense, he acknowledged himself and them as the subjects of this sovereign pontiff.

So again, verse 8: 'And here men that die receive tithes; but there he of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.' There is some obscurity with respect to the position and force of this verse in the conduct of the argument. One thing, however, is clear, that it is an argument from the less to the greater, and may be put thus: If men that die receive tithes—*i.e.* if the Aaronic priesthood in succession, notwithstanding the mortality of its individual members, receives tithes—the claim inheres in the priesthood as an order, not in the several individuals

CHAP. XX.
Heb. vii. 1-21.

Argument
from the less
to the greater
—from the
Aaronic to the
Melchise-
decian Priest-
hood.

CHAP. XX.
Heb. vii. 1-21.

composing it; how much more, then, does the tithe-claim remain substantiated in the priesthood of Melchisedec, which, in the typical sense at least, is an irrevocable ordinance? Thus from the less is inferred the greater; and it is shown that the *ground* of the Aaronic tithe-taking was much older than the ordinance itself, and was, in fact, included in the tithe-paying to Melchisedec, returned by the blessing of Melchisedec, through Abraham, to his descendants. It terminated with the termination of that priesthood, when fulfilled by its antitype Christ. That this is the thought of the writer is obvious from verses 9 and 10: 'As I may so say, Levi also, who received tithes, paid tithes in Abraham, while he was yet in the loins of his father;' *i.e.* Levi was represented by Abraham, and in this representative sense paid the dues of Levi to Melchisedec, receiving in turn, originally at least, his right to tithes from his brethren, with the priesthood which he inherited.

Tithe superseded by an analogous homage to Christ.

In this view of the matter, the eighth verse does not contain an argument for the perpetuity of tithes under the evangelical dispensation, any more than it sets forth the actual priesthood of Melchisedec as continued by Christ. The most that can be made of it in this direction is, that it does not render tithing under Christianity unlawful, while it rather teaches that the tender of homage to Christ by His Church in forms analogous to this is an obligation paramount and universal. It may be that there is some reference to this doctrine (Rev. v. 12), 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.'

Verse 7: 'And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better,' *i.e.* of the greater. In all ancient examples of benediction, whether priestly or patriarchal, the superiority of the person blessing over those who receive the blessing is assumed, since the blessing did not consist in a mere form of kindly expression or pious desire, nor even in the supposed availableness of prayer, but in the power and authority of the person who placed himself in this mid position between God and the individuals to be benefited. The position was, in fact, essentially a mediatorial one. It was inseparable from paternity or office in some very privileged forms, but it was especially vested in priesthood as the great type and ministry of redemption. It is needless to quote examples with which every one is familiar, or even the form of blessing contained in Num. vi. 22. In the example before us, as the office was transcendent and the person typical, so the blessing bestowed upon Abraham would be of corresponding import. No doubt Melchisedec was directed to perform this act of his ministry immediately by God, and to open relations with the favoured patriarch, to whom hitherto he seems to have been a stranger of mysterious significance. But what becomes us here to notice is the obviously *world-character* of Melchisedec's office. It embraced not only his own subjects, or the peoples surrounding him, but Abraham, a wanderer from Ur of the Chaldees, with whom he held no civil relations whatever. This fact, representatively considered, is an image of the gospel and of its equal aspect to Jew and Gentile, all-including, all-blessing. Abraham is

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1-21.

In ancient examples of blessing, the superiority of the person bestowing it always implied.

World-characteristics of Melchisedec's office an image of the gospel.

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1-21.

Abraham
blessed in his
Gentile cha-
racter.

here taken in his broad Gentile character as but one among the many, and his blessing as but an example of the world-blessing of redemption. But this blessing also was one of super-eminent distinction conferred on the patriarch. It was a visible and direct confirmation of his privileged relations to God, and of the promises already made to him. Moreover, it was an augury of favours yet in store, of the covenant yet to be ratified, and of the mingled stream of blessing, spiritual and temporal, to flow through him to his posterity,—expanding into nationality, into the wonders of the politico-theocracy, and finally into the Christian theocracy throughout all nations.

Heb. vii. 11.

‘If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?’

Levitical
priesthood
intermediate,
therefore ter-
minable.

‘If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood,’ etc. (1) The advantage of carrying back the type of priesthood beyond the date of the Law lies in this, that it proves that, as the Levitical priesthood was not a primary but an intermediate institution, so there was no ground in the institution itself for establishing its finality. It was plainly terminable, as laid down by St. Paul (Gal. iii. 17), on the same ground as the Law of which it forms a part. Perfection could not be by the Levitical priesthood. The true type of the Messianic priesthood is here shown to be much older than the Law. Had it been otherwise, the order of Aaron must have been perpetuated in the conformity of the Messiah to it, rather than to the older type of Melchisedec.

(2) The advantage of connecting the Messianic priesthood with Melchisedec rather than with Aaron, consists in the separation of the Messianic priesthood from the tribeship and pedigree of the Levitical priesthood, a point of the greatest importance when this Epistle was written. It was well known that '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 Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.' This was a fact of vast significance; for, as it is said in verse 12, 'the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the Law.' That the priesthood was absolutely changed, in opposition to all Jewish notions of that period, was demonstrated by two facts: (1) That, on the authority of prophecy, the Messiah was the great High Priest of the nations; and (2) That His order of priesthood was conformable to a type anterior to the Law. Hence it follows, that whoever received Jesus Christ as the Messiah, must necessarily receive also with Him the truth of His priesthood, together with its Melchisedecian character. Both rest on the authority of the Hebrew prophecy, which, in this instance, clearly ruled this great question against the Law and its priesthood.

(3) An advantage is derived also by this mode of treating the question of the priesthood in favour of the world-aspect of Christianity. The great primitive type of priesthood was, on this showing, Gentile, not Hebrew. World-religion came first; national religion came afterwards. Christianity displaces Judaism, and unites itself with Patri-

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii, 1-21.

Importance of connecting the Messianic priesthood with Melchisedec rather than with Aaron.

Christ's Priesthood and its Melchisedecian character declared by prophecy inseparable from His Messiahship.

Primitive type of priesthood Gentile, not Hebrew.

CHAP. XX. archaism, or brings downward Patriarchalism to
 Heb. vii. 1-21. its own era as the thing which, for breadth, simplicity, and evangelical distinctness, was the brightest image of itself,—its bow, so to speak, of varied colours, vast span, and pristine perfectness, which should only be dispelled in after times by the zenith power of its own sun, dissolving the clouds on which, for a while, its great final glory was pictured.

Vers. 12-16. ‘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 Judah; 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.’

Vers. 14 and 15 discuss not relative certainty, but relative importance of the subject.

‘And it is yet far more evident.’ This formula is a plain correlative with that of the 14th verse: ‘For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah.’ It is perhaps not easy to see how it can be ‘far more evident’ that the Messianic priesthood contains the powers here imputed to it than that ‘our Lord sprang out of Judah,’ and therefore could be no priest according to the Levitical institute; since the fact surely must be as patent as the doctrine, together with the argument founded on it. Hence it seems probable that the ‘far more evident’ does not relate to the degrees of certainty as between the fact and the doctrine, but to the differing importance between the genealogical question and the question of the priesthood itself, its nature, and its transcendent glories. This seems clear from

what follows: '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 for ever after the order of Melchisedec' (verse 17). On this showing, the question certainly is of far greater importance as to who and what this priest may be, than as to what tribe He sprang from. The question of *priestly* pedigree was not determined by the letter of prophecy, but rather by the pedigree of the Messiah. He sprang out of Judah, as being the sovereign tribe; and hence the priesthood passed over to that tribe in Him, and not the royalty over to the priestly tribe. Historically, these were matters of importance to the nation out of which He sprang and to the world, as showing the conformity of the Christ with the conditions prescribed for His identification; but as regards the permanent influence of the Messiah, it depends on other and far more lofty doctrines than these. The prophecy of Psalm cx. 4 has, according to this Epistle, by its very letter, shown that the priesthood of the Messiah is a thing absolute and by itself, grounded on His personal immortality, and comprising all the riches of His personal nature, His human history, and His mediatorial exaltation. The 'carnal commandment' here mentioned means an ordinance founded on the patent condition of humanity as fleshly and corruptible; this ordinance therefore implies succession as its principle of continuity, involving the transmission of the priesthood as an heirloom from father to son, and from one generation to another; just as the pontifical robes were a heritage, worn by

CHAP. XX.
Heb. vii. 1-21.

Christ's
royalty and
priesthood
determined by
prophecy, but
no Aaronic
descent.

Contrast be-
tween suc-
cessional and
abiding
priesthood.

CHAP. XX. one and another,—each in turn reminded of his
 Heb. vii. 1-21. own mortality by the fact that he wore dead men's
 clothes, and that these clothes, together with his
 registered name, would be the only remnant of his
 existence with posterity. Such was the 'carnal
 commandment' on which the mighty edifice of the
 Hebrew temple and worship rested,—gorgeous, but
 shadowy,—ever vanishing, but constantly renewed,
 just as children ripen into manhood, and the de-
 parting age is the birth-time and parent of that
 which follows.

Difference of
 nature in the
 priests, reason
 of this con-
 trast.

Thus the very conditions of humanity necessitated the ordinance for a successional priesthood. It was an ordinance founded simply on man as he is, and therefore an ordinance for a priesthood of corresponding limitations; the office could not rise above the nature; but the Messiah, as foreshadowed by Melchisedec, is an independent and perfect Priest, because His personal nature is immortal and all-plenary. 'The power of an endless life' is antithetic to 'the law of a carnal commandment.' If *δύναμις* be set against *νόμος*, it suggests that the former is an indefinite and all-sufficient basis of official agency, while the latter is simply one of prescriptive attributes. The law of the earthly priesthood is something defined by a letter, and of only prescriptive efficacy, because the ordinance on which it is founded is carnal or fleshly, *i.e.* of human nature, and limited by conditions of pedigree; whereas 'the power of an endless life' is one of indefinite range,—actual, spiritual, all-pervading, immutable,—the same person, the same office, the same attributes and outgoings. The Humanity and the Godhead are one in this Person and in this

Office, alike embracing the world of men and the infinity of God. It is this difference of nature and personality which sets the priesthood of the Messiah, not only immeasurably above that of Aaron, but above that of Melchisedec also. Both were types of the same High Priest, but in differing degrees of glory,—shadows of an infinite reality, since they forecasted Him who was to come,—but of no personal significance whatsoever, save as they stood in this privileged relation to the sole Priest of the world.

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1-21.

The course of the argument may be comprised in this summary. Summary.

The great type of the Messianic Priesthood, as derived from the record, is pre-Levitical, and in its attributes immensely superior. Abraham himself confessed this by a tithe-tribute, and by the reception of blessing from Melchisedec. Abraham, in his relations with Melchisedec, was a representative both of the Gentile and of the Hebrew peoples, *i.e.* of the world, and of the nation descended from him, which in future times constituted the Visible Church. ‘The less was blessed of the better.’ This transaction placed the Hebrew nation in subordination to Melchisedec, the official personage who typically represented the Messiah: the payment of tithes in the person of Abraham was their charter to receive them of their brethren. The priesthood itself first paid through its representative its tribute to a greater power, and in its turn received its right to exact it.

Great Mes-
sianic type
pre-Levitical.

Again, they were mortal priests who had right to this form of tribute; but he was an ever-living Priest to whom tithe was first presented: thus de-

Jewish Priests
mortal, Christ
ever-living.

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1-21.

Respects in
which Mel-
chisedec was
superior to
the Jewish
Priests.

noting the world-range of tribute to a supreme Priesthood, while the Levite could only take it from his brethren. These marks of superior dignity in the priesthood of Melchisedec were plainly not embodied in the Levitical ordinance, much less could the Levitical rise to the dignity of the Messiah's Priesthood. For this purpose, a single person, and not a succession of persons, an earlier position in the world's history, and a world-relation, which they had not, were requisite.

Conclusion—
Levitical
Priesthood
imperfect,
therefore not
final.

Otherwise,
Christ but
the last of a
series.

The conclusion from these considerations is the imperfection of the Levitical Institute, and consequently its evanescent character. So far from its being the institute after which Christianity was to be modelled, it could not even consist with it, but must give place to another and a higher priesthood. Had our Lord's priesthood been conformed to that of Aaron instead of to that of Melchisedec, He must have been the last of the series of High Priests, and not 'the first and the last.' He must have remained on earth as the source and centre of a visible priesthood, not have been received into the heaven; and His kingdom must, in like manner, have partaken of the visible—or, in other words, it must have been a new edition of the old Law, and Christ's religion a modification of Judaism diffused throughout the world. But the change in the type of the priesthood necessarily effected a change in the type of the religion. The new priesthood is not sustained by a number of individuals in succession, nor by the law of pedigree, nor are its functions exercised in accordance with the previous institute,—all is changed by the great fundamental change of the priesthood, from succession to unity,

from mortality to immortality, from the human to the divine, from the earthly to the heavenly. The law was but the administration of a priesthood, the gospel itself is nothing more; they differ, not in their general nature, as dispensations, so much as in the character, attributes, and influences of the priesthood belonging to each. They cannot be blended, for the one contains the other, and renders it therefore entirely superfluous; the one is but the shadow of a substance, of itself it is nothing; the other, as that substance, is entire without the shadow.

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1-21.

Change in the
priesthood
chief difference
between
law and
gospel.

The doctrine of verses 18 and 19 should be regarded as the obvious inference from this position of the priesthoods: '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.'

The language of the 18th verse may be understood as laying down the true reason for the abrogation of the law in general, though here to be understood particularly of the priesthood. This restricted sense of the word 'commandment' seems equally justified by the argument and by the language of verse 19, 'For the law made nothing perfect.' The abrogation of the priesthood, therefore, results from the weakness and unprofitableness thereof, because it was a 'carnal commandment;' i.e. offices merely human (though ecclesiastical and even resting on divine authority) are insufficient of themselves to accomplish the great work of the spiritual redemption of human nature. They can-

Powerlessness
of ordinances
to effect re-
demption.

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1-21.

The law
annulled, not
incorporated.

not penetrate the mind sphere of humanity; they may be means and accessories, but they can never take the rank of agencies, or be in the place of God to the soul. This is as true of Christian as of Hebrew ordinances, though the tendency of man always has been to exalt them into religion itself, and to trust in them instead of in the spiritual status essential to restored humanity. For this purpose they are weak and unprofitable. The administration is 'weak.' The routine, however elaborate or punctiliously observed, still fails to raise human nature to God; it rather operates as a barrier, and makes religion to consist, not in the outgoings of a renewed mind, but in the habits chiefly of the outward life. For this reason the 'commandment' going before is suppressed, not incorporated into the Christian system; it does not consist with it as an advanced spiritual life, and rather tends to impair and destroy it than to foster and perfect it. The doctrine of verse 18 is therefore by construction a prohibition of all Judaizing practices under Christian names, *i.e.* it is against all ritualism or cumbrous ecclesiasticism, which is a dead weight to the Church, and too often merely the religion of the Pharisee.

Law imper-
fect, because
introductory.

'For the law made nothing perfect' assigns the *reason* for its elementary and imperfect constitution: it was introductory merely, not final. According to this doctrine, legalism, in whatever form, is imperfection. The routine and drill which men take so much delight in enforcing as religion, is at best but a 'weak and unprofitable' thing; for it either supposes the perfectibility of human nature by a discipline which is fundamentally false, or it adopts

Legalism im-
perfection; its
standard
human, not
divine.

a standard of perfection human rather than divine; or, differing from both these, it advances an impracticable standard, and therefore converts human virtue into a penalty. Hence all communities, whether under the law, or since the law, ignorant of the true doctrines of religion, have had their ascetic discipline or anti-human peculiarities, called by different names, but in effect the same thing; whereas, according to the nineteenth verse, the Law has done its work when it has brought in 'the better hope.' Its whole constitution and drift were to prepare for the evangelical future, but not to intermingle with it. It became defunct in reality when Christianity was brought in; a transition from one to the other was in God's order, and was very mighty, though the systems were in juxtaposition. In like manner the Law religion, existing even under Christian forms, may seem so close upon Christianity itself as in many instances to be mistaken for it; but it is really something divided from it by an infinite interval, and may serve above all things as a fatal barrier. It is only when law, under all forms and designations, becomes the introduction of the 'better hope' that it may be said to perform its true office. Simple unmixed evangelism is the last stage of the religious life,—the 'better hope,' as it is here expressed, not only because its objects are more gloriously expanded and distinct, but the relations of the individual believer to them are those of assured interest. No legal religion, however conscientious and painstaking, can give this assurance. It alternates between hope and fear. It seems to take hold tremblingly of 'the hope set before us,' ever and anon drawing back with un-

CHAP. XX.

Heb. vii. 1-21.

Differences
between legal
and evan-
gelical wor-
ship and
piety.

CHAP. XX. loosened grasp. It is a religion of shadow and
 Heb. vii. 1-21. gloom, rather than of joy and sunniness, and is more the reflection of guilty and disordered self than the reciprocation of the love of God and of the riches of the Atonement. Hence the last clause of this verse is meant to suggest the characteristics of Christian as distinguished from Jewish, or, as we may say, legal piety. Jewish worship was a much more prescriptive thing than Christian—more charged with associations of duty or obedience, encumbered with recollections of failure, of sin, of repentance, or of good works. To the mind of the worshipper of God, majesty was predominant, though not to the exclusion of covenant relations. Hence the piety issuing from these impressions would be a very complex mental state, and much tinged with the specialities of individual character and history.

But it is obvious how different in kind from all this must be the spirit and exercises of Christian piety. Faith in the Atonement, followed by conscious reconciliation, the gift of adoption, the grace of Fatherhood, and the communion of the Holy Ghost,—these great things must necessarily revolutionize the entire spirit of devotion, and create ‘a new thing in the earth;’ *i.e.* individuals and assemblies of believers by a soul-bent drawing near to God, and not from a mere sense of duty, lured by affection rather than by precept, and by the delights of service even more than by its reasonableness. The contemplations of God are unmixed with terror, and His perfections are regarded as but the reflections of His Fatherhood. His very voice invites, and the presence of His own chosen High

Priest within the mystic sanctuary, not merely of the heavens but of the soul, is answered by the Spirit of Grace, carrying back the echoes of the eternal bosom. The gospel state is as much distinguished from the legal as was the chaotic from the finished world on which paradise was seated, replenished by the works, and glorified by the visitations of God Himself.

CHAP. XX,
Heb. vii, 1-21.

‘To draw near to God’ was the ancient formula, derived from the worship of the tabernacle, for expressing either social or private worship, or the habitual communion of the mind with God.

The phrase ‘we draw nigh unto God’ is meant to be an assertion of Christian privilege in respect to worship, and a covert implication of its transference from the Hebrew nation. The right of ‘drawing near unto God’ was already personally cancelled to the disciples of Moses, since the priesthood itself was exclusively resident, henceforth, in the Christ as the true Melchisedec. Those ancient and impressive forms of divine prescription were now inanities; for the temple was closed, the veil rent, and the priesthood dissolved. They subsisted only as national customs not yet destroyed by the dismemberment of the nation, but awaiting that event. God no longer held covenant relations with the Law, but with Christianity alone; and the congregational privileges of the ancient faith now appertained only to the subjects of the new priesthood.

Privilege of
approach to
God trans-
ferred from
Hebrew to
Christian
Church.

‘And inasmuch as not without an oath He was made Priest,’ is the conclusion of the inspired exposition of Psalm cx. concerning the Messiah’s priesthood. It is a singular example of an extended,

CHAP. XX. and one might say, an exhaustive discussion on a particular doctrine. A fellow-example occurs in chapters iii. and iv. on the doctrine of the Rest. Both are instances of a treatment of scripture peculiar to this Epistle, and both have in them something of the nature of a preaching style, *i.e.* of the orderly treatment of a subject rather than of a passing allusion to some general doctrine contained in a scripture.

Five important statements respecting Messiah's Priesthood.

For instance, we have (1) an introduction of this scripture, 'Thou art a priest for ever,' as a specific authentication of the Messiah's priesthood by the Old Testament.

(2) The typical illustration of this priesthood drawn from the history of Melchisedec.

(3) The inferiority of the Levitical priesthood, and its consequent terminableness, drawn from its want of correspondence with the great patriarchal type before mentioned.

(4) The unapproachable eminency of the Messiah's priesthood, not only beyond the Levitical but beyond the Patriarchal type.

See chap. v. 6, 10; vi. 20; vii. 17, 21.

(5) The installation of the Messiah as High Priest of the Church and of the world by the oath of God, in virtue of which this office is ratified as unchangeable. In fact, the quotation from Psalm ex. is without precedent with respect to its frequency. It is introduced no fewer than five times in confirmation of the doctrine advocated. It is probable that this important passage was moulded by the incidents of Old Testament history: 'The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent,' etc. The most stubborn example of rebellion recorded in the Pentateuch arose out of the jealousies of the people

respecting the order of the priesthood: they resisted the ordinance which confined it to a particular tribe, and more especially to a particular family. Korah and his company (backed, it would seem, by almost universal suffrage) contended for a tribal basis of priesthood, if not for a priesthood elective rather than hereditary. But this formidable rebellion was quashed by divine interposition, and the priesthood absolutely given to the family of Aaron, so as to exclude all change whatever throughout the entire history of the nation. In this respect, the 'calling of God,' to use St. Paul's language, 'was without repentance.' But this ordinance did not exclude the change of the pontificate from one branch of the same family to another. An example of this kind occurs in respect to the house of Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 30: 'I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord says, Be it far from me;' and again, chapter iii. 14: 'Therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged by sacrifice nor offering for ever.' Here we have an example of God's oath to deprive the house of Eli of the high-priesthood; thus shutting out all repentance or change of purpose. The sin as it respected office was 'unto death.' In the instance of the Messiah, again, the oath is interposed which bars all possibility of change, installing Him in His office of High Priest 'for ever.'

CHAP. XX.
Heb. vii. 1-21.

Priesthood
settled by
divine decree.

Thus we are instructed by the historical precedents of the Hebrew people in the paramount glory of the Messiah's priesthood,—standing absolutely alone in its self-sufficiency,—and in the

CHAP. XX. divine complacency in Him as the Son and the
Heb. vii. 1-21. Redeemer of the world. '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 for ever after the
order of Melchisedec.'

CHAPTER XXI.

UNITY AND FINALITY OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD.

HEB. VII. 22-28.

VERSE 22: 'By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.' The phrase 'by so much' seems correlative with ver. 20, 'and inasmuch as;' if it does not rather include the entire enumeration of foregoing particulars touching the superiority of the Messiah's priesthood. Should it, however, be limited to the 'oath' of ver. 20, then it contains an implied argument in favour of the excellency of the New Testament in comparison of the Old, grounded on the excellency of its priesthood. The priesthood in both cases is to be regarded as the *administrative* faculty of the covenants, which are therefore to be estimated according to their respective priesthods: these stand to the covenants in the relation of means to an end.

Comparison in
favour of New
Testament
Priesthood.

The word rendered here 'testament' should be covenant, the rendering of *διαθήκη* by testament being entirely unauthorized, except in the one instance of chapter ix. 16, 17.¹ A covenant is a contract to which two or more parties are necessary; it contains stipulations, proposes advantages, and is presumed to be legally ratified. This general

Covenant the
true rendering,
save in
chap. ix. 16,
17.

¹ See Chap. xxix.

CHAP. XXI.

Heb. vii. 22-28.

The double
nature of
Christ quali-
fies Him to
be the surety
of this Cove-
nant.

definition suits both the word and the thing as found in the Scriptures ; but it does not agree with testament, which is merely a legal form of bequest, as will appear from the reference just quoted. The surety or sponsor of the covenant is the person supposed to represent the contracting parties, and to administer its provisions and secure its objects. Surety or sponsor, therefore, may well be rendered by the word trustee, *i.e.* the person who guarantees the execution of a covenant or contract, and who is supposed to have adequate motives for thus interesting himself in the performance of it. And to whom may such a sponsorship appertain but to Jesus the Redeemer of men, who, as conditional to this great undertaking, represents both the divine and human natures in His own Person? Hence His trusteeship is referred back to the very constitution of His own Person, and to the great redemptional acts presupposed by the existence of this covenant. He in whom the covenant originates must needs be invested with its entire administration, and as being the Alpha must also be the Omega, the beginning and the end.

Offices of the
Priesthood
one; persons
filling it
many.

Verse 23: 'And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death;' *i.e.* unity was contained in multiplicity; time was, as it were, bridged over by the almost countless arches of a personal priesthood—all crumbled in the rear, one only momentarily entire, as the office passed onward to another; it was bound down to the nature, and was proportionately feeble and imperfect; the pontiff, not privileged as to life beyond the meanest of his congregation, seemed to derive but little glory from

his office. Robed for the last time, he presented his death-sacrifice, and passing no more within the veil with his fragrant censer, but, as a spirit unclothed, beyond the veil of the visible, he was gathered to his people. Such is the law of all merely human office, embracing kings and priests alike, princes, officers of state, and pillars of the Church,—all bow down in turn to the dust; and by the law of death and re-investiture the world at once recedes and opens, and the shadows of the past are ever projected by the day-spring of the future.

CHAP. XXI.

Heb. vii. 22-28.

Verse 24: 'But this man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.' 'But this man,' or rather this High Priest, . . . 'hath an unchangeable priesthood.' Unchangeable appears not to be the true rendering, but untraditive or self-contained; for, as the priesthood here is made commensurate with the life of the priest, it is plainly not the character of the office as changeable or unchangeable in itself which is intended by *ἀπαράβατον*, but the relation of the office to the person holding it, excluding from it a successor or a series of successors. The office belongs to One Person only, on the ground of His ever-living nature. There is but one living, changeless, High Priest of man, who, together with all personal perfections and as their true correlatives, holds all prerogatives which can by possibility fall within the sphere of priesthood; and is thus, in Himself, such an infinite positive of personal and official life, as to render priesthood in every other form or direction, the negative anti-strophe of HIMSELF.

Ever-living
nature of
Christ the
ground of His
perpetual
office.

Verse 25: 'Wherefore He is able also to save

CHAP. XXI.
 Heb. vii. 22-28.
 Evangelical
 positions
 established by
 ver. 25.

them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.' This verse is of vast importance as revealing great evangelical positions. (1.) The intimate relation between the priesthood of Christ, as an administrative ordinance, and access to God; that, in fact, this relation is absolute and inseparable. (2.) That this relation must be *recognised*, or there is no approach to God possible to man, *i.e.* in the sense of acceptableness, grace, and fellowship. In order to this, the evangelical doctrine must be fully held, and faith, in the sense of personal trust in the ever-living High Priest, be an explicit and unreserved exercise of the worshipper. (3.) The connection between intercession on the part of Christ and His power to bestow Salvation is made direct, as that of cause and effect.

'Salvation,' here ascribed to the priestly interposition of Christ, is declared to be 'to the uttermost,' which may be either understood as the result of a comparison between the law and the gospel, or of a comparison between the degrees of salvation appertaining to the gospel itself. In one or both of these senses it may be understood; *i.e.* this salvation is either an ultimate thing, merely prefaced and prefigured by the Law, or it is ultimate in the sense of completeness, something to which there can be no addition made nor sequel possible; it is absolute; it is eternal. The connection between the perpetuity of intercession and the fulness of this salvation shows that the latter is not to be understood of a future, but of a present gift, the direct fruit of coming 'unto God by Him.' As the office of intercession is not carried beyond

Christ's intercession not carried beyond this life, therefore salvation not a futurity.

the present life, so the effect of that intercession is supposed to be contemporary as well as commensurate with it. In fact, the completeness of future salvation is made the issue of a present salvation—a truth of the highest importance to Christian disciples, revealing the 'length and depth and breadth and height' of the evangelical grace, and its immeasurable superiority over antecedent dispensations, or, indeed, over any other, in the nature of things possible. Intercession is here to be understood of that act of the priesthood which, as grounded on an Atonement previously offered, is supposed to present formally the claims of that Atonement to God on behalf of those that come to Him, and to ensure to them those peculiar forms of blessing included in the term Salvation. These are not placed on the ground of man's need, but of Christ's merits preferred by Himself to God, and by a covenanted sovereignty made sure through this medium to every true seeker.

'For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.'

A necessary relation is here affirmed between the prerogatives of this High Priest and the range of human nature and necessity; *i.e.* the results comprised in the word 'salvation' are impossibilities, except on these conditions. No such provision is conceivable as falling within the sphere of moral law, or the current ordinances of divine government. Restoration is not included in creation as its counterpart; it is exceptional, and, as it would seem, unique. Nor yet under a dispensation of grace, founded on mediation (as was the law),

CHAP. XXI.

Heb. vii. 22-28.

Ver. 26 the relation of the prerogatives of the High Priest to humanity.

CHAP. XXI.

Heb. vii. 22-23.

Christ's
Priesthood the
means by
which the
ends of grace
are attained.

are the blessings of Christianity possible, at least in any approximate measure. The Law gave only anticipations, prefigurations, and ordinances, which can never take the place of the Redeemer's priestly administration. Hence the force of the expression, 'Such an High Priest became us;' the becomingness or fitness here mentioned referring to this very point, viz. the administrative suitableness of Christ's priesthood to the purposes of redeeming grace.

He is 'holy,' not in an official, but in a personal sense; not by imputation, but by absolute perfection. He is 'harmless,' to be understood probably in the sense of faultless—a tacit reference to the absence of all personal blemishes in the high priest so peremptorily demanded by the law. 'Undeiled' may signify that in Him there were no corruptions to be removed by the prescribed offices of the law, as in the case of high priests generally; but that purity belonged to His very nature, and that throughout the course of His earthly history this original purity was never sullied, but, on the contrary, was tested and perfected. 'Separate from sinners' means that Christ was, in a moral sense, a singular phenomenon, the only human being who bore to surrounding men no affinity whatever, save the ties of nature; as appearing to represent and redeem a world of transgressors, He was an absolute antithesis, and must needs be so for this very end.

All earthly
conditions
unbefitting
the glory of
Christ's
Priesthood.

'And made higher than the heavens.' This last phrase contains the climax of His dignity. We may understand it as meaning the powers of the heavens (*i.e.* all the hosts of angels and glorified men), or, we may take it literally, that He is

'made higher than the heavens' (in the same sense as these are God's throne), and that 'all things are put under His feet.' The heavens are but the sphere of His ministry, 'the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man;' or, according to the expression in the Ephesians, 'He ascended far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.' Understood in this latter sense, it is an intimation that all earthly conditions are unbecfitting the essential glory of such a priesthood, and that the seat of the Divine Majesty alone is worthy of His personal and official presence as the God-man and 'the Author of eternal salvation.'

Ver. 27. '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.'

This verse very specially places Christ's eminency in the fact that His sacrifice once offered on earth was in its very nature infinite, and precluded all possibility of repetition. Earthly high priests were bound to this lower sphere of ministry, because, as matter of fact, they were incapable of offering any real atonement for sin, and because typical atonement demanded *a system of repetition*. These repetitions were in place in a typical system; but *a true atonement is of necessity singular, and would be disproven were it ever to be repeated*. The sacrifices of the earthly priesthood included both the offerer himself, as being a sinner, and those whom he represented, as being sinners also. But the antithesis here expressed in the words, 'for this He did once, when He offered up Himself,' is necessarily limited to the latter clause of this twofold

CHAP. XXI.
 Heb. vii. 22-23.

Typical atonement involves repetition; true atonement disproved if repeated.

Last clause of ver. 27 applicable to the work, not to the person of Christ.

CHAP. XXI. antecedent: *i.e.* He offered up Himself for the
 Heb. vii. 22-28. people's sins, not for His own. Had it been otherwise, He could not have atoned by the offering up of Himself, since He would have been disqualified had He not been holy, harmless, and undefiled. Further, the law of the type did not require the high priest to immolate himself for his own sins and the sins of the people, but to offer a substitute for both in animals to whom no sin could be imputed, and which, besides this, were required to be 'without blemish,' as representatives of the essential holiness of the Atonement.

Ver. 28. '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 for evermore.'

Imperfections
 of the Levitical
 Priests
 necessitated
 repeated sacrifices.

The imperfection ascribed to the Levitical Priesthood is the reason, made emphatic by frequent assertions, for its abolition. More specifically, however, it is here introduced as the reason why the high priests under the law were required to offer up daily sacrifices on their own account as well as on account of the people. The acknowledgment of sin was thus made to begin with the priesthood itself; because the priesthood was included in the general humanity of the nation (perhaps neither better nor worse on account of office), and also because, without such acknowledgment, the priesthood, officially considered, would have been disqualified for the performance of acts on behalf of others. Atonement must begin with the priest, and from the priest extend itself to the people. Official, as distinguished from personal holiness, was a thing unrecognised; it is a fiction in itself,

Holiness
 never inherent
 in office.

and was entirely disallowed by the ordinance which compelled the priest first to acknowledge his own sins and the sins of his house, as to be removed only by an atonement strictly personal in its application. Thence issued the official fitness, on which so much depended, both as respected individual worshippers and the nation at large.

By 'infirmary' we are to understand moral faults, anomalies, as much incident to a priest as to any of the people whom he represented. It is probable, nay historically certain, that the High Priests were not always in personal character what their office required. But while bad men were as such unacceptable to God, they were not officially disqualified, so long as they observed the ordinance of the law respecting atonement, though this was altogether a distinct matter from the question of their own personal salvation; office did not carry it, but rather enhanced the responsibility of the man before Him who is no respecter of persons. These contingencies as to character were inseparable from the legal constitution of the priesthood, showing how imperfect the law itself was, and that it could never rise above its administration, which, as a merely human thing, was infinitely distant from the administration of a Divine Priesthood.

This is one of the two capital distinctions between the law and the gospel: 'The word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.' The emphasis of the contrast between the priests who 'have infirmity' and the Son, lies in the infinite dignity of His person as human and divine. As such He answers to the lofty description of the previous

CHAP. XXI.
Heb. vii. 22-28.

The law administered by human priests, the gospel by a divine priest.

CHAP. XXI. verses : 'holy, harmless, separate from sinners, Heb. vii. 22-23. and made higher than the heavens.' He perfectly represents the world of man, and brings with Him to the sphere of His ministry in the heavens the entire summary of His earthly history, and especially the virtue of an all-perfect sacrifice. Thus this chapter ends where the first chapter begins, in the emphatic assertion of the supremacy of the Son over every minister and ministry of God, whether human or angelic, and with this the absolute unchangeableness of the priestly office : 'He is consecrated for evermore.'

The two immutable things of the gospel the promise and the oath. Gen. xxii. 16. Chap. vii. adds a third, the word of the oath, Ps. cx. 4.

'Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.'

To sum up: the sixth chapter sets down two immutable things as appertaining to the gospel in contradistinction to the law, viz. (1) 'the promise,' and (2) 'the oath' to Abraham. This seventh chapter adds a third, for we have here 'the word of the oath which was since the law.' If the two former may be construed of the Evangelical Covenant and its provisions, the latter may be construed as its administrative guarantee. The 'word of the oath' is the passage so frequently quoted (Ps. cx. 4). The phrase 'since the law' may be understood, chronologically, as bearing date from David's day, more than 400 years after the age of Moses. Or it may be understood of the prophetic testimony to be fulfilled in the gospel age, when the law had become virtually defunct, and was historically to be recorded as among the things of the past.

To these three immutable things of the gospel a fourth may be added from Psalm lxxxix. 3, 4: 'I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish

for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations.' This is the 'oath unto David' by which the throne of Christ is built up for evermore, and God's faithfulness established in the very heavens. Taking these together, the two former ensure the immutability of the covenant, the two latter the mode of its administration. Both the covenant and its administration are taken out of the sphere of temporal things, placed beyond the range of vicissitude, and in fact embodied in the order and stability of the spiritual world. This is 'the kingdom which cannot be moved.'

CHAP. XXI.

Heb. vii. 22-28.

The two first constitute the Covenant, the third the guarantee of its administration.

CHAPTER XXII.

CHRIST'S UNSEEN MINISTRY.

HEB. VIII. 1-6.

‘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.’

‘Sum,’ doctrines already established from which deductions are to be drawn.

The word *κεφάλαιον*, rendered ‘sum,’ may signify the total of an account, here figuratively applied to the main doctrine established by an argument or discourse. If it be used in the sense of ‘head or chief,’ the meaning is well-nigh the same, but it seems less pertinent and forcible, relatively to the previous tenor of the Epistle. The word thus rendered refers to something already fully established, and of the first importance; it also pre-intimates further discussions to be drawn out of it. The doctrines dignified as ‘the sum’ of the Epistle are thus set down: ‘We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.’ The expression ‘such an High Priest’ is meant to be superlative; that He is beyond comparison, wonderful, a solitary example of personal and official glory; in Him supreme sovereignty and priesthood combine, for ‘He is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.’

According to this statement, the Author of the New Testament is a veritable person, of ineffable attributes, intermediate between the Majesty in the heavens and the dwellers upon earth. His rule is the complement of His history, human and divine. His offices for man qualify the entire estate of the world. According to this doctrine, man has no direct relations with God at all; these are entirely between God and man's Representative. Mere Theistic doctrines are, therefore, ideas which do not represent realities; they are a programme of nature in its normal state, in which the government is not priestly, because the nature of man is not sinful; the *Lawgiver* is purely righteous without indulgence, because the *subject* is simply bounden to duty. This great vision of an enthroned High Priest of universal man is pregnant with intimations of the greatness of humanity, since it alone is represented by the Son, and that alone on the ground of an atonement, and for the purpose of salvation.

Verse 2. 'A minister of the sanctuary' should rather be rendered, as in the margin, a minister 'of holy things,' or 'things pertaining unto God,' *i.e.* things which directly ground themselves on the holiness of the divine nature, the inviolability of law. These 'holy things' include the imputation by the High Priest of the virtue of His own sacrifice, His intercession for persons and congregations, the behests of forgiveness, the inward sanctification of human nature, and the consequent acceptance of persons as saints, together with their acts and offices as the outcome of a living piety; in short, the principles of all true Christianity are 'holy

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

Christ a veritable person standing between God and man.

Theism appropriate only to innocence.

Holy things.

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

Christianity
concerned
with every
sphere of the
spiritual
world.

Minister a
term of
office.

Ministry in
Scripture not
necessarily
visible.

Minister
marks the
human side of
the Son's
office.

things,' mysteries of God arising out of the highest sanctuary of the heavens, and thence flowing into human bosoms as a fountain of living waters.

The ideas of gift and reciprocity, of the hidden and the manifested, of the heavenly and the earthly, of the divine and the human, are inseparable New Testament correlatives. Christianity does in fact represent the profoundest mysteries of being; it ranges by its own laws throughout the spiritual world, much as the flower, the plant, and the animal, however localized, range by the laws which they presuppose, throughout the entire material system to which they belong.

The word 'minister' here employed to signify the office of the High Priest, or rather the High Priest on duty, means much the same as 'a servant,' or 'a functionary in charge.' It therefore must not be pressed too far, and made to signify a mere *public* functionary, since the High Priest under the law was something far grander than this; while applied to our Lord, as removed from earth to the 'tabernacle of the heavens,' it is obviously irrelevant. His appointment is neither of man nor among men, but of God, and in the heavens. The same term is applied to the ministry of angels, which shows that the idea of publicity is irrelevant to the scriptural use of the word; since angelic ministry is entirely secret, and in no sense public, save in so far as all service radiates beyond the person of the servant. Here, again, we mark the human side of the Son's office, as we have before the human side of the Son's Person; for *λειτουργός* is a term applicable to the office of a creature, though in the most exalted form, and divine only

by the imputation of the attributes of the supreme nature to the requirements of this service. Still it is a service, or it could not be humanly typified or represented in any language not absolutely appropriate to Godhead.

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

‘The true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.’ It is worthy of remark that the *primitive* institutions of the Law are here alone recognised, and that the author had deeply studied, and was thoroughly imbued with, the Books of Exodus and Leviticus. Indeed, this Epistle could not have been written but by a master of sacred lore, as well as one inspired by the Holy Ghost to bring out its great New Testament counterpart. He evidently placed himself *sub initio rerum*, so as to take in an exact and vivid representation of the great framework of the Jewish polity in the wilderness.

Primitive institutions of the law alone recognised in this Epistle.

After the law given from the mount, the tabernacle, called ‘the tabernacle of witness,’ or ‘the tabernacle of the congregation,’ was the most striking phenomenon of that transition period, whether we consider the purposes it was meant to serve, the costliness of its materials, the exquisiteness of its workmanship, or, above all, the presence of God’s glory dwelling in and sanctifying it. Its three compartments, perfectly distinct and differently designated, made up a oneness of typical ideal and of adaptation to the divine service—a service entirely prescriptive and augustly ceremonial, yet full of suggestion to the spiritual mind. Further, there was added the awful sacredness of the presence-chamber of the King Eternal, entrance into which, according to an invariable

The Tabernacle.

Not exclusively priestly.

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

ordinance, was the annual privilege of the High Priest alone. The first and second courts only were always accessible, yet it was not exclusively priestly, for it was called 'the Tabernacle of the Congregation.'

The 'true tabernacle'
(1) an original
as distinguished
from a copy.

'The true tabernacle,' however, represented by this miniature and moveable fabric, and subsequently by the temple, is one of inconceivable grandeur, for its site is in the heavens, and its workmanship is God's. It is called the 'true tabernacle,' *i.e.* in the sense of an original, represented by a copy indescribably mean as compared with itself, and yet in certain respects a truthful rudiment. This is the first sense of the word 'true' in this connection: the second is closely kindred to it; it signifies something real as distinguished from a mere picture or representation which cannot embody the properties of the thing represented. The last is, perhaps, the radical signification of the word 'true' in this place. Or it signifies what is consequent upon both these—transcendent excellency; something which fails to be adequately represented by any earthly symbol, because shrouded in the mystery of a higher world. This is implied in the closing antithesis of the verse, 'which the Lord pitched, and not man;' an intimation that as all God's works immeasurably transcend those of His creatures, so this 'Tabernacle,' appropriated to the ministry of Christ, exhibits this distinction in its fulness, making it the wonder of the very heavens.

(2) A reality
as distinguished
from a representation.

(3) A something that
cannot be
adequately
represented.

Probably our Lord intends the same thing under that noble phrase, 'In my Father's house are many mansions.' Undoubtedly this tabernacle which 'the Lord pitched' supplies the imagery of

the Apocalypse: 'A door was opened to John in heaven,' and, as the New Testament seer, he became enwrapped in the visions of the true tabernacle. The presiding idea of the Apocalypse throughout is that of a sanctuary or tabernacle opened, and its wonders made to pass in succession before the eye of the beloved disciple,—perhaps the only human being who, without tasting death, was ever privileged with such an insight. The very figure of the Tabernacle, taken in connection with the scenes of the Apocalypse, strikingly intimates what may be called an evangelical heaven. Other heavens may stand related to it, and form a part of its 'many mansions,' but there is, nevertheless, a Christian heaven, literally and properly such, *i.e.* some sphere of the unseen which answers to the tabernacle type; if it be not so, the teaching here is vague and unsatisfactory. Place there is; revelations there are of the divine majesty and glory, ministering spirits, disembodied saints, and, above all, the Human Person of the Son. There is a throne or seat of sovereignty; there is collective worship—the deathless breathing of song and adoration, perhaps refined forms and arrangements of materialism—the very gems of things; but pre-eminently *there* stands the great High Priest of the world, and His throne is a supreme reality. There the world is represented in Him alone, and His offices, whether of intercession and salvation, or of justice and retribution, are all-pervading things, absorbing every order and capacity of mind, and for ever revealing the last light and issues of creature existence.

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

The 'true tabernacle' represented in the Apocalypse.

The evangelical heaven.

Verse 3: 'For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices.' This is put as a reason

Gifts and sacrifices
'holy things.'

CHAP. XXII. Heb. viii. 1-6.	for the statement of the second verse, and therefore shows that 'minister of the sanctuary' is rightly rendered 'minister of holy things,' <i>i.e.</i> of gifts and sacrifices, the offering of which is here made essential to the ordinance of priesthood. 'Gifts and sacrifices' are the 'holy things' of the priesthood, things expressly separated from secular uses and appropriated to the service of God. The doctrine is, that whatever offerings men consecrate to God, whether of their property, services, or persons, must be qualified for acceptance by the ministry of priesthood; they cannot be offered <i>directly</i> , because sin must be recognised. Atonement and its offices are fundamental to all the exercises and expressions of individual or collective piety; and the representative principle upon which it is founded is embodied in the institution of priesthood. God's gifts and blessings travel downward to the world and to the Church through the channel of mediation, and they return to Himself through the same medium—they have accomplished their entire circuit of agency and influence when this result is perfected.
Cannot be directly offered.	
Atonement fundamental.	
Its representative principle embodied in atonement.	
Typical priesthood representative of essential priesthood.	It is not meant that we should be taught here that the typical priesthood rules the true priesthood so as to bring it into literal conformity with itself, but rather, that the typical priesthood being a draft from the divine original, must be a true representation of its essential verities. Of these verities, the presentation to God of gifts and sacrifices was a true emblem. A great world-doctrine was sketched out by these local administrations, and one which may be fitly described, in the Psalmist's language, as like the circuit of the
Sacrifices, emblems of atonement; gifts, of man's gratitude for it.	

sun, rounding the very extremities of the world, so that 'nothing is hid from the heat thereof.' The necessity, therefore, here affirmed for the offerings of Christ, goes much deeper than its conformity to the law of the typical priesthood; it arises from the nature of priesthood itself, and from the will of God, upon which priesthood was founded. Sacrifices are the representatives of man as sinful, but atoned for and forgiven; gifts are the spontaneous embodiments of the piety springing out of atonement, ever prompt and studious to find vents for its sense of obligation.

In this view our Lord may be said to present as from men 'both gifts and sacrifices;' the offerings of contrition and the sacrifices of praise, the gifts of personal consecration, the best affections of the renewed mind, the vows of service, and the contributions of fortune—in a word, whatever may testify to the gratitude of man for His redemption, or may serve to express the riches of divine grace in the recovery of a rebel nature to loyalty and delight in God. It cannot be too much remembered, and acted upon, that all individual and Church expressions of piety pass into and through the hands of the great High Priest before they can be presented unto God. Of themselves they must lack those qualities of holiness and perfection which could entitle them to any such recognition; not to add, that as all must originate in the grace of redemption, so all must be made expressly to contribute to the glory of the Redeemer as the High Priest over the house of God.

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

'Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.'

Both must draw their holiness from Christ.

Verse 4: 'For if He were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

Heaven
necessarily
the scene of
our Lord's
priesthood.

offer gifts according to the law.' This verse does undoubtedly recognise the existence of the Jewish worship at the time this Epistle was written, since it is made, as a fact, the basis of an argument against a contemporary priesthood on earth in the person of Christ. In this point of view, it is intended to show that the doctrine of our Lord's *heavenly* priesthood must be true, if it were true that He was a priest at all, which, it is presumed, had been already amply established. But this is not the only ground on which the doctrine of priesthood in the heavens is maintained; since, if it were, the removal of the typical system should have made way for the world-priesthood of Christ in some visible form. The truth is, that our Lord's priesthood is altogether incompatible with an earthly sphere or with visible functions. It certainly is impossible that He should repeat Himself under the old forms of the Mosaic law,—should symbolize His own sacrifice, or within any particular shrine lift up before God the censer of intercession. All this is obviously absurd, infinitely demeaning to His person and office, centralizing His administration, and rendering necessary a chain of dependent functionaries of a priestly order, co-extended throughout His Church, and ramified through the most distant nations of the world. His priesthood, therefore, must necessarily be heavenly to become ubiquitous, and invisible, to perform its profoundest functions in universal human nature. An earthly and visible priesthood was competent only to the duties of a restricted sphere, and to the purposes of typical foreshowing, *i.e.* to national and preliminary objects, not to ultimate and world religion.

Ver. 5. '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;' i.e. whose office is in harmony with the idea of a typical institute; *ὑποδείγμα, σκία*, both signifying a representation, outline, or intimation of something as yet withheld from view, and to be known only by symbols. The priestly law, therefore, was a sort of parable, in which one thing is taught by another, and the unknown is manifested by sensible images. The reference here to the pattern seen by Moses in the mount, to which the workmanship of the tabernacle exactly answered, is a noble illustration of the entire character of the Levitical institute. It was a divine programme, set forth on earth, of the mysteries of redemption, at that time existing only in the divine purpose. These mysteries were finally to be expanded into facts displayed in the very heavens,—henceforth to be no more represented on earth by the ancient types.

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

The priestly law an earthly parable to be fulfilled in the heavens.

This doctrine of example and shadow, illustrated by reference to 'the pattern' and 'the tabernacle,' is one of wide application. In every procedure of God, His thought ranks first, His work next, His glory last. 'Let us make man'—this is His thought or pattern; 'so God made man of the dust of the ground'—this is His work; 'so God made man after His own image'—this is the display of His glory. So, in respect to the tabernacle, the thought or pattern is first exhibited; then follows the work delegated to human genius and labour to accomplish; then the consecration, with the resident

The order of God's procedure: His thought, His work, His glory.

CHAP. XXII. display of His glory. The same order is traceable
 Heb. viii. 1-6. in the Incarnation and its results. The *thought* is made the one theme of prophecy from the beginning, exhibiting the specialities of our Lord's human character; then follows the Incarnation itself, the one *work* of God standing, as a divine phenomenon, apart from all others in its moral riches and in its universe relations. The *issue* is beheld in the official wonders of the Messiah,—His beneficence, power, holiness,—His atoning fulness, and His mediatorial glory.

We have the same order manifest in the *administered* redemption of humanity.

The same order to be observed in His administration of redemption.

(1.) We have the *thought* or pattern of human recovery: 'Conformity to the image of His Son.'

(2.) We have the *work* of human transformation, or its tabernacle building according to this 'pattern,' by the descent of Christ into the believing spirit, and His union of the human nature in its entirety with Himself. An evangelical conversion, therefore, is a heavenly wonder; for it is the bringing of a human being to a oneness with the pattern tabernacle of the Lord Himself, to which the human nature is made to answer finally with the exactness of a pattern to an original. This is what St. Paul means by 'the riches of the glory of the mystery among the Gentiles,' and is the key to those expressions in John's Gospel: 'Them whom thou hast given me,' *i.e.* 'given' as material to be moulded by Christ according to His own living pattern.

(3.) The *glory* of Triune indwelling, of which so much is made in the New Testament, is the ineffable result of this building of God in human nature

by the hand of Christ: 'That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.'

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

The antithesis between the ministry of Christ and the Levitical.

Ver. 6. '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.' This verse points out the profound correlation existing between the ministry of Christ and the provisions of the New Covenant, and may be adduced as an example of the poverty of human language when it is forced to make use of an earthly and visible thing to represent one heavenly and invisible. The expression, 'a more excellent ministry,' is the whole phrase used to set in antithesis things which, though having some resemblance to one another, are, in certain respects, infinitely dissimilar. A picture is a representation of nature,—yet it is only a representation, not nature itself. The outlying objects copied on the canvas by colour and manipulation, yet lack all the real properties belonging to the objects as part of the system of nature. No one would pretend to compare the work of God and the work of man—the work of God as seen in nature, and the work of man as seen in the picture; the one is represented by the other, but not identified in the least with it. The relation between our Lord's ministry and the Levitical may be thus set forth. To use an old phrase, it is to compare great things with small; yet this difference perhaps could not be more forcibly expressed than by the words here employed, 'A more excellent ministry.'

Is as that between a picture and nature.

But if nature and the picture be the illustration chosen, it fails to convey a perfect idea of the transcendent ministry of the Son even when compared

CHAP. XXII. with the superb ritual of the Hebrew ministry.
 Heb. viii. 1-6. There are some things absolutely incapable of representation, strictly speaking: such, for instance, as space in its infinity; power in its origin; spirituality, personality, and vitality in the divine nature. We lose ourselves on the very edge of these great questions: their sphere is not open to us, nor will it ever become so, except in some sense relative to our present knowledge. Yet our Lord's ministry actually partakes of attributes like these: He fills all things with His presence, sustains all things by His power, governs the relations of God to the whole world, and vitalizes and transforms the human heart. In fact, the history of a single redeemed spirit is, as it were, a microcosm of these infinite perfections; they are translated thither as into their own proper kingdom, depository, ark, tabernacle. Still, all this can only be expressed by such words as these: 'Yet now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry.' Thus reflecting, we are not surprised that Scripture deals so much in parable, allegory, and trope; for this language has the advantage of giving a vivid and truthful representation of the highest things, bringing them down to our level; while the loftiest philosophy, when attempting to become their substitute, fails to rear its ladder above the sensible, or lands us only in a region of subtle and dreary speculation.

Supernatural things only to be expressed by allegory.

'By how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant.' This relation of the covenant to the ministry of Christ gives us the truest idea of the excellency of that ministry, since it at least lies within the sphere of humanity, and enables us, if not to judge of the cause, yet to judge of the

Christ's ministry the exponent of His covenant.

effect. In truth, it is by this same principle and in this same way that we judge of the Creator by His works. The unseen, whether as Creator or Redeemer, is brought before us by phenomena either external or mental, but as Redeemer with greatly superior force of demonstration, because of the directness and individuality of the dealing with us. The ministry of Christ supplies, in truth, the only knowledge of God entitled to be ranked as such; it is entirely distinct from, and superior to, that which springs from the moral and intellectual nature of man under culture. This ministry, based on the authority of inspiration, and on historical evidence, with a long train of preliminary notices, is yet as much a personal fact to faith as the opened inner sanctuary itself, the sphere of that ministry. The verification of the unseen in the spiritual nature of man is the grand peculiarity of the gospel. This does not lie in the weight of its historical testimony, much less in any system of external attestation or doctrine of Church infallibility, but in individual experiences of the inner life.

CHAP. XXII.

Heb. viii. 1-6.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE COVENANTS.

HEB. VIII. 7-13.

The two
Covenants.

‘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 neighbour, 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.’

The remaining portion of the eighth chapter, contained in these verses, is given to a comparison of the covenants as appropriate to the demonstration of the 'better covenant' resulting from our Lord's ministry. Hence, instead of examining the verses *seriatim*, we shall get a broader view of the truths they contain by surveying briefly the two covenants separately, and also relatively.

'The better covenant established upon better promises' may be taken first. The covenants are here distinguished as Old and New, which distinction was recognised by our Lord at the institution of the Supper, and is therefore a tacit acknowledgment of Jeremiah's authority, since this distinction is plainly referable to him, and is transcribed into this chapter for the purposes of the argument, viz. that our Lord had 'obtained a more excellent ministry' than the Levitical, and that even then the old ministry was defunct. But we may trace the New Covenant further back than Jeremiah, viz. to Genesis (xii. 3, xv. 6, and the 17th ch.). It is observable here, that in the intercourse between God and Abraham, concerning God's future relations with him and his seed, only one covenant is traceable, and that this is the New. It is true that this covenant could only be fulfilled by means of his seed; but it is also true that Abraham personally and specially was introduced to it, through his justification by faith, mentioned Gen. xv. 6. Hence circumcision was undoubtedly an evangelical sign, not a legal one; nor was the dotation of the land to Abraham's posterity a thing separable from the covenant itself, which of necessity implied the gift of nationality to the patriarch's

CH. XXIII.

Heb. viii. 7-13.

The better
Covenant, *i.e.*
the New.

Luke xxii. 20.

Jer. xxxi.
31-35.May be
traced to
Gen. xii. 3.Abraham in-
troduced to it.Circumcision
an evangelical
sign.

CII. XXIII.

Heb. viii. 7-13.

Second, *i.e.*
legal, Cove-
nant grafted
on to the
first.

descendants. A separate covenant might be, however, and actually was, four hundred years after, grafted upon this, entirely different in its nature and provisions, but instituted with strict reference to the first. This first and great covenant made Abraham not the father of one people, but, as St. Paul says, the 'heir of the world,' through 'the seed,' or Christ, by whom alone, as the Redeemer of the world, all nations could be blessed, *i.e.* accepted into this covenant of spiritual blessings as distinguished from the covenant of temporal ones.

As, however, the 'fulness of the time' was not come in Abraham's day, but was then a distant future, it became necessary to institute a second and supplementary covenant in accordance with the promise of nationality to Abraham's seed, and to found this upon a series of historical events, all brought about by immediate interposition. This relation and order of the two covenants is but an example of those existing between spiritual and temporal things in the economies of nature and of grace, in both of which the spiritual takes precedence, making the providential rule of the world an entirely subordinate affair; *i.e.*, according to our Lord's teaching, the latter is something added to, not identical with, the kingdom of God. Thus the temporal or second covenant subsequently instituted became ancillary to the first or evangelical, which is properly the 'everlasting covenant,' generally recognised by the prophets, and remaining intact when the other was annulled. This view is confirmed by Galatians iii. 17, where the completeness and independence of the evangelical or first covenant is argued from its priority of time, as well as

The spiritual
takes preced-
ence of the
temporal.

In providence.

And in the
Covenants.

from its difference of nature from the second covenant. The first covenant remained in abeyance, after it was ratified, from the days of Abraham until the coming of Christ; and all that intervened in nowise affected or drew upon its provisions, since these could have no substantiation until the advent of the Messiah.

The question now suggests itself, put by St. Paul (Gal. iii. 19), 'Wherefore then serveth the law?' And we may gratefully take his answer as a full though brief exposition of its purpose: 'It was added because of transgressions.' This admits of a twofold meaning: either that the world at that period was in too crude and corrupt a state to permit of the immediate introduction of Christianity; or that a course of discipline of a national sort, protracted through centuries, was necessary for the favoured people to prepare them for what emphatically is 'the kingdom of God.' Under the law, their history was, on the whole, a humiliating testimony to the moral state of humanity under the most favourable conditions, and demonstrated the insufficiency of mere law, however enforced, to reform and elevate the most privileged people. Their rebellion was all but chronic, and the law at many periods reduced to a dead letter.

But there is another and more spiritual view of the office of the law not to be passed over. This was, to teach the more enlightened and conscientious of the Hebrew people in their several generations the doctrine so finely opened by St. Paul (Rom. vi.): of the law of sin in the members bringing forth fruit unto death. The spiritual nature of man was out of harmony with the law,

CH. XXIII.

Heb. viii. 7-13.

The first covenant in abeyance from Abraham to Christ.

The second added because of moral unfitness for the first.

Spiritual office of the law.

To teach the nature of sin.

CH. XXIII.

Heb. viii. 7-13.

spiritually construed, though not with its letter. 'The law was weak through the flesh' to rectify this disorder; and the remedy was provided only by the first great evangelical, or Abrahamic Covenant. The law did not teach justification by faith, nor did it bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost upon its people. They were held in bondage, or, as St. Paul says, 'under a schoolmaster.' Thus the design of the second covenant was to make way for the first, and was wonderfully adapted for its end.

The *original* evangelical Covenant included national blessings for the Hebrews.

Nor can it be doubted that the first covenant was meant to be as broadly national as the second. Looked at from the Abrahamic point of view, the first or evangelical covenant comprised the weal of the entire Hebrew people, and not merely the *individual* aspect of its provisions as interpreted by the New Testament. With respect to the Jewish people, the New Testament recognises not divine *intentions*, but existing *facts*, and that *individual* completeness of divine relations which the New Covenant bestows upon men as such throughout the world. This view, however, of the Abrahamic Covenant, in its peculiar relation to the Hebrew people, is one of great importance, as supplying us with the key to the general language of prophecy in its evangelical aspects, and also to some passages of the Pentateuch, which plainly out-look on the destinies of this people far beyond the range of the second covenant.

This the key to several Old Testament scriptures.

Twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus evangelical.

(1.) For example, Leviticus xxvi. 42 contains a direct reference to the first or evangelical covenant, not to the second made in the wilderness. Again, verse 44 is too general in its language to have been exhausted by past historical deliverances, but runs

on to our own times: 'Neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them.' Verse 45 contains a distinct notice of the second covenant, but collated with the first, thus adding the facts of history as corroborative of the then unaccomplished design of the evangelical covenant.

CIL. XXIII.
Heb. viii. 7-13.

(2.) The general tenor of prophecy on the subject of Israelitish restoration bears out this interpretation of the Pentateuch; since, if we regard these prophecies as having been fulfilled by the return from Babylon, their very letter in many instances cannot be verified, nor their glowing descriptions of national felicity be made to accord with the later section of Jewish history. Something far more durable, glorious, and fitting to inspire the rapture of the ancient seer, must be intended than those lees of national existence, those last sparks which portended extinction in a long night of gloom.

Prophecy of
Hebrew
restoration,
evangelical
and national.

(3.) It is remarkable that the leading prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, entirely overlook the *individual* applications of the New Covenant; Daniel only mentions the confirming of the covenant 'with many for one week.' In all other instances the *national* aspect of the New Covenant is alone regarded. Thus the great Messianic prophecy, Isa. ix. 1-7, closes with a distinct reference to the throne of David and his kingdom, 'to order and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.' This undeniably describes a national issue of the Messiah's sovereignty, and a national establishment of the first covenant.

The leading
prophets speak
only of the
national
aspect of the
New Cove-
nant.

Examples:
Isa. ix. 1-7.

A second example, equally decisive, is taken from

CH. XXIII. the same prophet, chap. xi. 11, 12, where it is described as the second recovery of the favoured people from a wide dispersion: 'From the islands of the sea,' and 'from the four corners of the earth;' hence Heb. viii. 7-13. chap. xii. is an evangelical ode, anticipative of this event, and a wonderfully appropriate celebration of the opened 'wells of salvation.' Chapters xxxi. and xxxiii. of Jeremiah, from which the quotations are selected in this Epistle, are equally express examples of the same kind. The New, or first, Covenant is placed in apposition to the second as equally a national event; otherwise, it could not have been pertinently introduced with a notice of the deliverance of the Israelites from the land of Egypt: the second covenanting of God with them is paralleled with the first covenanting, which of itself determines the national character of the first. It is also expressly prefaced by a declaration to the same effect: 'I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.' The following declarations corroborate this view even as they stand in the Epistle: 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people.' This language is undeniably national, as is also the following: 'They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord;' *i.e.* the different estates of the nation shall be included within the bonds of the New Covenant,—not a portion of it, not a majority, but the nation. To the same effect is the testimony of Ezekiel, chap. xxxiv. 24-31. To these quotations may be added Ezek. xxxvii., containing the wonderful vision of the valley of dry bones. These are only specimens of the general tenor of prophecy in confirmation of this point.

Isa. xii.
Jer. xxxi.
and xxxiii.
Ezek. xxxiv.
24-31.

(4.) This aspect of the New, or first, Covenant towards the Jewish nation appears to be the true ground of the leading descriptions of Jerusalem, restored in the latter day and immeasurably exalted in glory above all former precedent. These descriptions—those of Isaiah particularly—are not meant to apply to the Church Catholic, or the Gentile Church, but to the Jewish Church under the New Covenant, to Jerusalem as the centre of Jewish nationality when rendered purely Christian by so broad an example of conversion as the world has never yet witnessed, and of which the day of Pentecost itself was a mere earnest. National conversion and national restoration are, by the uniform testimony of prophecy, made correlative with each other. Nor, in fact, could a New Covenant restoration be possible on any other condition than the one given us in Jeremiah: ‘After those days, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. . . . They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord;’ *i.e.* the office of a converting ministry is rendered superfluous by a national turning to God; one as profound as it is simultaneous, at once so signal as to cancel and oblivionize the sins of the past, and to give to them nationally, through a long future, the New Covenant in an unbroken range of application.

CH. XXIII.
 Heb. viii. 7-13.
 The New
 Covenant the
 ground of the
 final restora-
 tion of the
 Jewish
 Church and
 nation.

In this respect the prophetic anticipations of the reign of the New Covenant over this people give it an explicit contrariety to the history of the Old. The one was broken and for ever dissolved, while the other remains in force, without suspension or decline, so far as the light of prophecy enables us to

Duration of
 the New
 Covenant
 contrasted
 with the
 Old.

CH. XXIII.

Heb. viii. 7-13.

Jer. xxxi.
35, 36.Rom. xi.
26, 27.The Second
Covenant
founded on
older revela-
tions.No advance
made in its
teachings.

divine a future ; for it is in this sense that Jeremiah is to be understood: 'If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.' The 11th chapter of Romans seems to have been indited in the very spirit of these predictions: 'So all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.'

(5.) The nature of the Second Covenant may be thus expounded. It was founded on a compact between God and the Hebrew people, of which Moses was the medium; it was administered by sacrifice; it included all the great primitive doctrines of religion, formally epitomized in the Decalogue, expanded in typical institutes, and amplified in a variety of moral and political details. It may be said that an abstract only of the covenant was first given, extending from Exodus xx. to xxiii. Its entire provisions were given much more in detail, and in fact comprise portions of the book of Deuteronomy itself. This covenant does not appear to have materially advanced the range of religious truth beyond former revelations, or, in the broader sense, to have originated a new dispensation of religion. Properly speaking, there are but two dispensations—the one of promise, the other of fulfilment; the one is Patriarchalism, the other Evangelism. The second covenant is purely national and transitive; it is built on all that went before, but only out of pre-existing material; there is no perceptible advance of divine truth, it is rather a provision for perpetuating and transmitting it, by giving it a *national*

expression, and placing it in the hands of a people laid under special obligations to maintain it and hand it forward. It was, however, both a national and a personal law: in the former sense, it guaranteed national integrity and weal; in the latter, it guaranteed salvation as an explicit rule of life based on the doctrine of atonement typically administered, and on promises of grace drawn from more ancient times and from sources higher than itself.

(6.) The New Covenant (the phrase in Jeremiah) is the Abrahamic expanded into its final evangelical completeness. Of this covenant Christ is at once the Mediator and the Author; He not only administers its provisions, and is the guardian of its enactments, but the covenant itself entirely originates in His Person and work as the Redeemer of the world. It is, strictly speaking, the New Covenant, as He says, 'in my blood;' *i.e.* it arises directly out of His Atonement, and its administration by His own priesthood, and its prerogatives as unfolded in this Epistle. All notices of this covenant found particularly in the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians concur in this view. To all believers in Christ it is a fully administered personal redemption: its righteousness is that of faith; its law is that of the heart; its indwelling of the Holy Ghost, the true glory foreshadowed by that of the Tabernacle. Its sanctification is spiritual and entire; its gifts of knowledge, power, and heavenliness, free and indefinitely great. A single human subject is as capable of its inward draught and fulness, as if its intentions were restricted to one only, while its outgoings are absolutely unlimited as to the number of its 'vessels afore pre-

CH. XXIII.

Heb. viii. 7-13.

Made national in order to its preservation and spread.

The Person and work of Christ the basis of the New Covenant.

Its spirituality.

CH. XXIII.

Heb. viii. 7-13.

The kingdom
of heaven
as distin-
guished from
the Jewish
kingdom.

pared unto glory,' and as perfect as the present conditions of humanity admit of. This Covenant may, therefore, well be called 'the kingdom of heaven,' as distinguished from the territorial theocracy which preceded it. It is something far greater than the mere revelation of immortality and the resurrection, or the implantation of a hope and a preparation in this direction. It is itself the eternal life translated from the higher into the lower sphere of humanity; and the substantiation, by the oneness of a redeemed nature with the all-redeeming God, of whatever remains future and hidden in the kingdom of His Son; and this by an earnest of the Spirit till 'the redemption of the purchased possession.'

The New
Covenant
the basis of
the Christian
Church.

(7.) It should not be overlooked that the relation of God to His people by the New Covenant contains, in addition to its peculiar *national* relation to the Jews, the true basis of the evangelical commonwealth, *i.e.* the Christian Church. This is made apparent from the terms employed in these quotations from Jeremiah, such as, 'I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people,' since it is impossible to restrict this relation to the natural descendants of Abraham; on the contrary, the whole tenor of the Epistles of the New Testament is demonstrative of the extension of this privilege to the disciples of Christ of all lands and languages. The New Covenant creates a people of God in a far more exalted sense than the Old or second could do; for, the Old Covenant being dissolved, its relations necessarily ceased. Rejecting the New Covenant, the Jew himself could no longer plead the estate of the Old, and his hereditary relations to

The Old
Covenant
being dis-
solved, the
Jews no
longer claim
under it.

God under it. This was annulled, and its re-institution was impossible. He was, therefore, reduced to the alternative of accepting a better status under the New Covenant, or of becoming disinherited altogether.

CH. XXIII.

Heb. viii. 7-13.

This is the doctrine of election (found in Rom. ix. and in other parts of St. Paul's writings), of such immense importance at that particular juncture, when the New Covenant first came into operation, and the Church itself was altogether remodelled agreeably with its provisions. Collating the general teaching of the apostles with the prophetic quotations of this chapter, it becomes apparent that a most momentous crisis had arrived in the history of the Church, that the restrictions of the Old Covenant had been annulled, and that henceforth the Abrahamic Covenant was alone in force, both as a doctrine of salvation and as the basis of the Church. In future, no hereditary principle could be admissible in this status. It was altogether an Old Covenant thing done away. There could be no such thing as historical, traditional, or incorporate Christianity; for all this would be Old Testament religion in New Testament attire. The nature of the Covenant as spiritual, precludes everything from being a part of itself and entitling to its privileges, but the individual possession of its distinguishing blessings. The Christian Church has no broader basis than this, which is just as catholic as individual faith, and just as determinate as the law written in the heart.

This the doctrine of Rom. ix.

The hereditary principle has no place in the New Covenant.

Nationality may be combined with the New Covenant, though not of its nature.

(8.) There is, however, no real contrariety between this view of the covenant as exclusively spiritual and the former view, which makes it, as

CH. XXIII. to the Jews only, also national. It is the same
 Heb. viii. 7-13. principle, which in the one case creates a catholic
 commonwealth, and in the other a territorial one.
 It can expand itself wide as the world, and yet
 have combined with it, special facts of nationality
 in some one instance. As to nations at large, or
 human beings individually, Christianity can give
 no other blessings than those comprised in its
 Covenant, or those reflected from it.

Peculiar rela-
 tion of the
 Jews to the
 Abrahamic
 Covenant.

But it must be remembered that the Abrahamic
 Covenant was in both testaments a predicted des-
 tiny for the Jewish people. It was evolved out
 of that people and their ancestry by a long series
 of divine communications. The Christ was of
 their stock, as well as 'the fathers,' the apostles,
 and the primitive Church. They alone of all
 people had a long pre-existing estate of national
 covenant and recognition by God. They are
 mainly the subjects of the great prophetic future
 of the Old Testament: their territory is an
 everlasting possession, while they themselves are
 a people preserved, through ages of wonderful
 vicissitude, entire in blood, customs, and combina-
 tion, as if on purpose to answer some day to the
 grand prophetic programme, and to create a greater
 wonder and sensation in the earth by their restored
 nationality and conversion than did the Exodus it-
 self, which filled all nations far and near with the
 sound of Jehovah's name. But all this may come
 to pass within the bonds of the New Covenant, and
 by its power alone, without in the least infringing
 on the established order of things, or necessitating
 a dispensation of miracle. More than all this is
 expressed in the words of Jeremiah: 'I will put

my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.' CH. XXIII.
Heb. viii. 7-13.

The whole of the ninth chapter, together with the tenth as far as the twenty-second verse, may be regarded as the theme of the two Covenants continued, powerfully argued, and variously illustrated. The whole discussion appertains to the administrative questions especially characteristic of each Covenant, bringing out with wonderful force the surpassing glory of the first over the second, of the New over the Old. This view of the unity of topic embraced within these limits greatly helps to a true understanding of the course of the argument, and to the right interpretation of particular sections. Administra-
tion of the
two Cove-
nants.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE HEBREW TABERNACLE.

HEB. IX. 1-6.

The Tabernacle.

THE ninth chapter opens with a brief description of the Tabernacle, its furniture, ministry, and services. This is obviously taken from the fortieth chapter of Exodus, made as succinct as possible, because a more extended transcription would have been both unnecessary, as addressed to Hebrews, and inconvenient to the argument itself. It is, however, important as showing how familiar the great facts of Hebrew history and Hebrew institute were to the minds of that age: to them a passing reference only was needful as the ground of some new doctrine to be advanced. The Epistle was not written for the purpose of confirming them in the belief that they really had a history such as the Pentateuch gives, or to prove to them that their national origin had in it something more substantial than mere pagan legends. Save on this assumption, this Epistle ought not to have existed as a portion of the New Testament; it is entirely baseless without it, and is degraded into a mere counterpart of what, if in fact it was a myth, might well defy all useful exposition.

The notices taken from the Pentateuch are prefaced by the statement of the first verse: 'Then

verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.' The 'ordinances of divine service' performed within the 'worldly sanctuary' comprise the great administrative provisions of the second covenant. These were essentially mediatorial and typical. They are expressly called (verse 9), 'A figure for the time then present.' By 'ordinances of divine service' we understand, of course, the Levitical ministry ordained and conducted according to divine law, having not merely law as its general foundation, but particular enactments which exactly ruled its specific forms, and gave to every part of it a character of unvarying routine. No scope was left for will-worship, or the play of fancy, or the filling up of the divine programme by human additions of any kind. The whole service was absolutely immutable; all that was left to the priests was simply to carry it out. The prohibition of the slightest degree of innovation was, in fact, the only safeguard against corruption; and in order to this, the law itself was written down immediately, and was in its form singularly direct and explicit.

By the 'worldly sanctuary,' of course, is meant the Tabernacle made out of various and costly productions of nature and art; many of its materials were probably furnished by the spoils of the Egyptians, or by mercantile traffic carried on with neighbouring peoples, or with the traders about those regions. It is here obviously called a 'worldly sanctuary,' not merely in reference to its materials and workmanship, but in opposition to the 'true tabernacle' before mentioned, 'which the Lord pitched, and not man.'

CH. XXIV.

Heb. ix. 1-6.

Ordinances of divine service.

The Levitical ministry strictly typical.

Unchangeable.

Worldly sanctuary the Tabernacle.

CH. XXIV. Verse 2: 'For there was a tabernacle made.'
 Heb. ix. 1-6. This is synonymous with the 'worldly sanctuary.'
 The Tabernacle. The word Tabernacle here is used comprehensively for the entire building, which consisted of two compartments, and, in addition, of a large outer court. That the Israelites were able to construct it so exactly according to pattern, and of materials so costly, is in proof that they were rich and highly civilised. Though they had been in servitude, they were not barbarians. They were acquainted with the Egyptian civilisation, while some among them were men of pre-eminent genius in the higher departments of art. The Tabernacle, therefore, is to be looked upon as a monument of Hebrew culture as well as of Hebrew piety and munificence. It was, though on a miniature scale, a shrine of incomparable beauty, preciousness, and durability, in some respects more remarkable than the Temple, in which finally its most holy thing, 'the ark of the covenant,' was deposited.

Vers. 2-5. 'The first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; 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; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.'

In this description, the inspection is supposed to begin from the inner door of the court. This led into an oblong apartment, the farther end of which was the veil which separated it from the inner

sanctuary. Both these apartments seem to have been made from similar materials, lined with exquisitely wrought curtains, not unlike tapestry. Externally they were fenced by boards and bars of the finest wood, socketed with silver and gold, while the roof appears to have been of rare dyed skins, placed in a double series, the uppermost of stronger material, to serve as a protection against weather. The curtains of fine linen, of blue, purple, and scarlet, inwrought with figures of cherubim, must have contrasted strikingly with the furniture of the apartment, all of the brightest and purest gold; so that it is difficult to conceive of so magnificent an interior as this when lighted up in the evening by its sevenfold lamp. This lamp, carefully and elaborately constructed, must, according to the divine plan and the surviving figure of it upon the Arch of Titus, have been flat, almost fan-like. Its branches, six in number, formed its two sides, the centre making the seventh. This figure was admirably suited to the position and office of the lamp. Its design was to throw as much light as possible against the veil which separated from the divine presence-chamber, and also upon the golden altar of incense, where the high priest, morning and evening, performed the most solemn act of his ministry by burning incense before the veil.

This light was indispensable for the evening service, and added very much to its impressiveness. Doubtless it was also symbolic, intimating that the Father of lights was within that Tabernacle, and that He ordains the light which His service requires. Standing without the veil which marks off from mortal ken the invisible and the infinite, it

CH. XXIV.

Heb. ix. 1-6.

The lamp.

A symbol of revelation.

CH. XXIV. might be taken as a symbol of Revelation itself;
 Heb. ix. 1 c. which, while it casts a broad, strong light upon the
 great objects of religion, speculatively considered,
 is especially directed on the sphere of human duty.
 Generally, it teaches that true religion is not super-
 stition, which is always bred of darkness,—the
 darkness from within and the darkness from with-
 out,—but on the contrary it is a bright, well-
 trimmed lamp, at once revealing the true office of
 the churches and the glory of the saints. They
 are children of the light.

The table. ‘The table’ means the table of the shew-bread.
 This account of the furniture of the first Tabernacle
 seems taken from the twenty-fifth chapter of
 Exodus, and the notice of the table from the
 twenty-third verse. It is singular, however, that
 the golden altar of incense is omitted, though one
 of the three prime objects of interest. Perhaps
 the most probable explanation is, that the account
 given here is quoted from the twenty-fifth chapter,
 whereas the description of the golden altar is
 found only in the thirtieth. Moreover, the whole
 notice is exceedingly cursory; for instance, all the
 vessels and implements used by the priesthood are
 unmentioned, while the fifth verse—‘of which we
 cannot now speak particularly,’ *i.e.* either dilate on
 each article, or enumerate them more largely—
 gives evidence that the writer was quite aware of
 these omissions.

The shew-
 bread.

The law of the shew-bread occurs Lev. xxiv. 5.
 There the size and the number of the cakes are
 prescribed, how they were to be ordered on the
 table, to be covered with frankincense, and when
 they were to be exchanged. It was a weekly

offering unto the Lord, made additionally sacred by its presentation every Sabbath, and enforced as a part of the Covenant denominated 'everlasting.' We learn from Leviticus, as well as from our Lord's authority, that it was food lawful only for the priests to eat, and that to them it was most holy, as having been in this very formal manner offered to God during an entire week. As it is called 'bread for a memorial,' the intent of it may be gathered as being a symbolic expression, by divine command, of God's engagement to feed His people, and of the fact that this engagement was from time to time made good; that He was the Feeder, they were the fed; and that this provision, like every other for that people, rested not on the mere order of nature, nor on the course of providence, but was made special to them by the Covenant. Hence the bread is called 'the bread of memorial,' in the same sense as the rainbow was termed the token of the covenant. God was supposed to look upon this bread as an offering made to Him, and by its presence in His house, to be reminded (speaking after the manner of men) of the needs of His people, and of His engagement to supply them. Mystically it signifies the bread of God which came down from heaven,—the secret resource of the spiritual life unrecognised by the world, unfurnished by the creatures, and the true food of the true priesthood or Church in the last times. John vi. 51 is a fine illustration of the mystery of the shew-bread: 'The bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.'

CH. XXIV.

Heb. ix. 1-6.

It symbolizes
God's engage-
ment to feed
His people.

Its mystic
signification.

‘And after the second veil, the tabernacle which

CH. XXIV.
 Heb. ix. 1-6.
 The Holiest
 of all.

is called the Holiest of all.' The distinction between 'holy' and 'most holy' is found in the Pentateuch again and again; and it is evident that this distinction is fully borne out by the differences between the places so designated, for the one was the house of the priests, the other was God's house. No one might set foot within that threshold on pain of instant death, slight as was the partition, and narrow the line of demarcation between 'the place of His feet made glorious,' and the floor trodden by the feet of busily-serving priests. No spot on the face of the earth, either mountain or plain, was like that, which was yet but a small area of the sandy desert, curtained off from outward gaze as the pavilion of the enthroned Majesty of the heavens.

The golden
 censer.

Two things strike us as singular in this description of the Holiest, one of addition, and the other of omission. The one is the golden censer mentioned in the fourth verse, the other the 'glory,' only indirectly noticed in ver. 5. It is but mere conjecture to what golden censer allusion is here made, as there is no mention in the Pentateuch of any memorial censer answering to it, laid up within the veil. Broad plates (but these were of brass) for the covering of the altar were indeed to be made out of the censers of Korah and his company, but no *golden* censer is spoken of as a memorial laid up before God in the tabernacle on that occasion. The only plausible conjecture, therefore, is, that this was a censer separated from the ordinary service of the priesthood, and laid up in the Tabernacle for the use of the high priest when he entered within the veil on the great Day of Atonement,

and was left there for the same purpose from year to year. Whether this notice of the golden censer was derived merely from tradition, or whether any accident may have curtailed the text in Exodus, in which the specific directions are given respecting the furniture of the tabernacle, may be dismissed as uncertain. However decided, it is unimportant to the purpose for which the account is here introduced, which, as the author says, is not meant to be given ‘particularly,’ but only as a general draft or outline.

CH. XXIV.

Heb. ix. 1-6.

‘The ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold.’ From this it appears that the ark was a solidly-constructed box, inwardly and outwardly overlaid with gold plates, and the borders richly ornamented. As it contained the two tables of the law, it was called the ‘ark of the covenant.’ It was the very foundation and centre of the whole Hebrew commonwealth,—unseen and sacred beyond every other object belonging to the tabernacle; as it were, the very throne of God Himself who dwelt over it. It could be approached only by selected persons, and was guarded and kept with the most scrupulous and awful jealousy; yet it does not appear that it was so closed from the time when the tables were deposited, that no other objects might be introduced save the tables; for this verse favours the notion that ‘the golden pot that had manna,’ and ‘Aaron’s rod that budded,’ were lodged within the very ark, and not merely within the inner sanctuary. The expressions in the Pentateuch, such as ‘laying up before the Lord,’ and ‘before the testimony,’ are indefinite; but the passage (Deut. xxxi. 26), ‘Take this book of the

The ark of
the Covenant.
Ex. xxv. 10.

Its contents.

CH. XXIV. law, and put it in the side of the ark of the cove-
 Heb. ix. 1-6. nant,' must mean either that the side of the ark
 could be opened for some such purpose as deposit-
 ing a copy of the law, or that there was a re-
 ceptacle close to it adapted to this and similar
 memorials, such as the 'golden pot that had
 manna,' and 'Aaron's rod that budded.' But it
 is far more probable that the lid of the ark (deno-
 minated the mercy-seat) was moveable, and that,
 if a separate stand was not made on which to place
 the cherubim, the lid of the ark was actually moved,
 together with the cherubim, whenever the taber-
 nacle was taken down.

The law of its
removal.

Its dimen-
sions.

There is nothing improbable or irreverent in this
 supposition, since the priests had undoubtedly a
 licence to deal thus with these holy things, and,
 indeed, must have done, whenever the tabernacle
 was to be removed, that which, while it was stand-
 ing, was absolutely unlawful. They must have
 entered into the Holiest to cover the sacred objects
 with the magnificent purple cloths prescribed for
 the purpose, before they were laid on the shoulders
 of the Levites. Again, if the dimensions of the ark,
 reasonably interpreted, might be something like
 three feet wide by six in length, with a corre-
 sponding depth of three feet, it would be more
 than sufficient to hold the two tables of the cove-
 nant, so that there was no difficulty in depositing,
 together with these, the original of the Law (which
 must have been rather bulky, probably written on
 papyrus leaf in the form of rolls), the small golden
 vase containing the manna, and also Aaron's rod
 that budded. If we suppose the tables of the
 covenant to have been thin slabs of polished

granite, divinely engraved with the ten commandments, both these might certainly be laid on the bottom of the ark, and probably exactly fitted it, so as to exhibit the whole law upon the upper surface. The other articles might be laid upon them, and remain there for ages, as in a place too sacred to be in danger of violation.

CH. XXIV.

IIeb. ix. 1-6.

That the lid of the ark was moveable seems clear from the circumstance that the Bethshemites were punished for uplifting it and looking into it, and also from the fact that, when it was removed into the sanctuary which Solomon had prepared for it, nothing was found in it but the tables of the covenant, showing that, at some time or other in the vicissitudes of national fortune, the pot of manna and Aaron's rod had been abstracted. That the papyrus roll of the Law should be there deposited, was befitting; being itself the divine edition of the covenant in full, whereas the tables were only an abstract. Aaron's rod was hardly less sacred, inasmuch as his office was essentially bound up with the administration of the law. The golden pot of manna seems entitled to a similar reverence, because it was the voucher for the broadest and most extended miracle ever wrought by God, viz. the sustentation of a whole nation for forty years by bread from heaven. These memorials, it would seem, were periodically exhibited by the high priest, and replaced by the same hand,—the only authentic relics these of which a nation could ever boast, in distinction from the overwhelming mass which a pious or fraudulent superstition has fabricated for Christians in times much nearer our own.

CH. XXIV.
 Heb. ix. 1-6.
 The cherubim.

Ver. 5. 'And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat.' This finishes the description of the two departments of the tabernacle, for the spacious court containing the brazen altar and the laver is omitted, — another example in proof that the description is merely meant as a sketch for a purpose. The three things here grouped together comprise the great mysteries of the tabernacle, viz. the Ark of the Covenant, the Mercy-seat, and the Cherubim.

The tables of
 the Covenant
 symbolized
 government
 by law.

Of these the tables of the covenant may be said to be fundamental, symbolizing the great truth, that all government is an administration of law, not a vague and desultory assertion of authority on the one hand, and of subjection on the other. In this case Law was made specific; it was written, — written by the finger of God, engraven in stone, probably the imperishable granite of the mountain whence the law was delivered. The voice which had so solemnly uttered it had died away, but the record was indelible; and the very writing of God Himself was not only visible to Moses when he deposited the tables, but to the high priest until comparatively late times. These, and the 'breastplate of judgment,' whence issued the oracles, were the awful and incommunicable mysteries reserved to the high priest, rendering him an inconceivably august personage to the nation.

The mercy-
 seat symbol-
 ized the in-
 tervention of
 atonement.

The 'Mercy-seat,' or propitiatory (properly 'the throne of God in the sanctuary'), by its position surmounting Law, formally registered in the tables beneath, showed the gracious sovereignty which ruled its administration, and, above all, that atonement intervened, since the mercy-seat was

sprinkled with blood year by year. By this act sin was confessed in the person of the high priest, and national infractions of the covenant, when accompanied by the penitence of the people on the day of atonement, were condoned. This mercy-seat, however, was still that of sovereignty keeping the boundaries of indulgence within itself, and giving warning against 'presumptuous sin' as 'the great transgression.' This was proved by the judicial occurrences in the wilderness, and very impressively by the terrible signs which accompanied the giving of the law, though these subsided into the calm enthronement of Jehovah upon the mercy-seat.

CH. XXIV.

II Heb. ix. 1-6.

There were the two Cherubim at either end, as it were the extension of the mercy-seat itself, thus giving the idea that they sprang out of it, and were its most wonderful creation. They were images of life by sacrifice, of the vitality of atonement,—the greatest moral miracle, since it harmonized seeming contrarieties, and brought about the impossible, viz. that death should be the cause of life. The doctrine of the Cherubim seems to have been, that winged and lofty life, indefinitely expansive and bathed in the light of heaven, emerged from the very bosom of death by the prerogatives of mercy, through the atonement, harmonized with the tables of the law. Hence the Cherubim could be no other than emblems of redeemed and glorified humanity; their position and relations to the ark and inner tabernacle evince this. They are said to overshadow, with their faces downcast and mutually confronted, the mercy-seat and the underlying ark of the cove-

The cheru-
bim symbols
of the Church.

CH. XXIV. Heb. ix. 1-6. *nant.* All this is nobly significant of enwrap thought and soul within the sphere of the mysteries of the tabernacle; and that the gleaming glory on their faces from above was the light which enabled them to penetrate these profound arcana of the divine counsels. They are called here ‘cherubims of glory,’ or glorious cherubim, because sunned by the divine presence which filled the inner sanctuary, but which radiated immediately from between themselves. They are also called cherubim of glory in respect to their destiny, for they are seen in the visions of heaven as well as in the lower sanctuary; and, in conformity with this typical presentation, they are upon the throne of God and the Lamb.

It is probably as pointing to this that the ‘glory of God,’ so often mentioned in the New Testament, is to be understood. It does not mean heaven in the general (which rather gives us the notion of space or place), but a divine manifestation appropriate to it, and in a very special sense the inheritance of the saints. This glory is probably identical with our Lord’s expressions, ‘seeing God’ or ‘the face of my Father which is in heaven,’ the privilege which Moses desired in vain: ‘Thou canst not see my face and live.’ Such, then, are the Cherubim of glory, beings destined to live in this highest sphere of creature privilege,—that kingdom of God which flesh and blood cannot inherit, finally to be opened by the mediation of Christ, who gives entrance to this Holiest of all.

Verse 6: ‘Now when these things were thus ordained.’¹ This expression refers to the fore-

¹ ‘Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.’

going description of the first and second sanctuaries; it implies that everything belonging to them, as the history shows, was directly by divine prescription, and that the date of the priestly ministry was immediately subsequent to the formation of the tabernacle. The house was first, the service and the servants were ensuing arrangements, in conformity with the divine pattern showed to Moses in the mount. The daily service is mentioned first, which consisted chiefly in the offices of the golden altar of incense, the lighting of the lamp, and the sprinkling of the blood of the sin-offerings before the veil, or, at least, of one particular kind. But the chief service was undoubtedly performed in the court, and consisted in the offering of a lamb, morning and evening throughout the year, as a burnt-offering; of double this number on each Sabbath; and of a further increase of victims at the beginning of every month, exclusive of a large addition at each of the great national festivals. Besides these, the individual offerings, free-will-offerings, peace-offerings, etc., must have been very numerous, so that the duties of the priesthood would be not a little onerous, though the service directly referred to in this verse, accomplished within the first tabernacle, was an almost unvarying routine. The priests appear to have been selected for this service after a given order, or, as it is termed, after their 'courses,' both for the purpose of distributing the duties regularly, and also because the apartment was too small to allow of more than one or two conveniently entering it at once. Priests are, indeed, here mentioned as on duty; but this is general, and does not imply that more than one

CH. XXIV.

Heb. ix. 1-6.

Priestly
duties.

CH. XXIV. officiated at the same time. According to the
 Heb. ix. 1-6. letter of the ordinance, the offices of this sanctuary
 appertained to the high priest, though undoubtedly
 it was construed so as to include his subordinates,
 probably for the sake of securing unbroken regu-
 larity.

Symbolic
 teaching.

By this order we have suggested to us the combination of the seen and the unseen in religion; that, while there is a court or sphere of external service appointed for the Church and open to the world, which is to see its good works, yet the *duties* are but the development of doctrines, principles, and virtues unseen and divine. To employ a metaphor derived from Scripture itself, 'the tree planted in the house of the Lord flourishes and brings forth fruit in His courts;' the root strikes into the invisible and is secretly nourished, but the form, the foliage, and the fruit, are things open to the common gaze. There is a service within the veil which no eye but that of God can mark: the bright lights of the soul-tabernacle; the golden candlestick, with its radiant branches, its stems of truth, its lights of graces all intermingled and heavenly in lustre; the golden altar of incense expressing soul aspiration Godward—the reverence, the affliction, the faith, and the sanctified reason, all wafted upwards in prayer, thanksgiving, praise, a perpetual offering by fire of sweet incense to the Lord,—this is the moral of the unseen sanctuary, these the things that He approves who sees in secret.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

LEV. XVI.

THIS great festival of the Hebrew people requires a brief notice before entering on the exposition of it in the Epistle. It is the key to the main subject of these chapters, and the most forcible illustration of the priesthood of Christ and of its offices. Appointed to be holden on the tenth day of the seventh month, it was solemnly prefaced by the blowing of trumpets on the first day of that month; a most appropriate ordinance for arousing the mind of the nation to the approaching solemnities, inaugurated by the great Day of Atonement, and consummated by the Feast of Tabernacles.

Day of atone-
ment.

This Day of Atonement seems to have been the counterpart to that of the Passover, held on the fourteenth of the first month. In certain great respects the one resembled the other, but with certain points of difference also. Both very specially recognised the doctrine of atonement, both were national, both were annual. But they exhibit also these differences: the one commemorated deliverance, the other sin; the one recognised atonement as the ground of national deliverance, the other recognised it as the ground of

Contrasted
with the
Passover.

CHAP. XXV. continued national integrity and the favour of God.
 Lev. xvi. The one was rather a family ordinance; the other, by its forms, a national one. The Passover was remarkable for the absence of priestly interference, and for the supremacy it gave to the head of the household; the Day of Atonement, for the supremacy which it gave to the priesthood, and especially to the office of the pontifex. The one preceded the covenant and the law, heralding national existence; the other was a recognition of the obligations of the covenant, and a provision for renewing and maintaining it. Both were typical of redemption by atonement: in the one instance, of the family; in the other, of the nation: the one was typical of deliverance from destruction by the blood sprinkled upon the lintels; the other, of perpetuated communion with God and of accepted worship through the offices of priesthood. The one typified the food which gives strength for the spiritual journey; the other, the living Mediator, who, having first offered Himself for sin, for ever bears it away into the wilds of oblivion.

Begins with
 a national
 penitential
 fast.

Leviticus xvi. contains the law of this great solemnity *in extenso*. Its general character may be divined from one of its statutes, viz. that on that day the people were 'to afflict their souls,' by which is meant, rigidly to fast, to abstain from the works and the pleasures of life, to hold solemn convocation on a national scale, and to give themselves to serious and penitential exercises. This alone is significant of the nature of a day of atonement, that, as the Epistle says, it is 'a remembrance again made of sins every year,' a confession that the Covenant, even in a national sense, had not always

been kept in its integrity, so as to exempt them from the divine displeasure. But undoubtedly the aspects of the day were more strongly *personal* than national, since the argument of this chapter requires us thus to regard it, especially when taken in connection with such passages as these: 'Because that the worshippers, once purged, should have no more conscience of sins.' This, with other and similar statements, is demonstrative that the day of atonement was really a season in which God dealt with His people individually; that penitence and absolution were the things uppermost on the occasion. The relevancy of the day of atonement as a type requires this view, since an ordinance merely national could not prefigure offices personal and spiritual.

CHAP. XXV.

Lev. xvi.

Its personal aspect.

Its offerings.

Sin-offering.

Burnt-offering.

The scape-goat.

The lot and its mystic signification.

Turning now to the ceremonies of the day, besides the customary offerings of the tabernacle (for these were not superseded), a young bullock was to be provided for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering. With these atonement was to be made for the priesthood; in addition to which there was a burnt-offering for the people also, jointly with the priests. Then comes the most remarkable offering of the day, viz. the two goats presented before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. There, in the presence of the congregation, and surrounded by his sons or assistants, the high priest solemnly takes the lot as to which of the goats is to be sacrificed, and which is to be reserved for the scape-goat. This incident of the use of the lot to obtain a divine decision on a matter seemingly indifferent, and entirely peculiar to this offering, points us to a

CHAP. XXV.

Lev. xvi.

The pair of victims symbolized death and life as essential to atonement.

mystery; and that mystery cannot be other than God's own election of the great world-victim in the person of His Son; that His lot lies at the fountain-head of atoning efficacy; and that on no other principle than His election can the imputation of guilt and penalty be transmissible from the head of an offender to that of a substitute. Here the Lord's lot decides everything; man's intervention nothing. The presentation of a pair of victims, obviously meant on this occasion to be as one in their office, could have no other significance than to show that the principle and power of atonement lie, not in a defunct victim merely, but in a living one; that death and life are essential to the perpetuity and the purposes of atonement. These are not representable by one victim, but by two, reminding us of St. Paul's words: 'who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.'

In no other act recorded in the Old Testament, except that of the offering up of Isaac by his father, do we discern the double aspect of the great mystery of Atonement. The day of Christ was shown to the people, assembled at the door of the tabernacle, year by year, as it had been to the patriarch ages before on Mount Moriah. This consideration invests the day of atonement with a glory peculiarly its own.

The High Priest alone officiates.

The vestments and action of the high priest next require attention. Attired in his ordinary or undress garments, called the holy linen coat, and the linen breeches, and the linen girdle, with the linen mitre, after having first thoroughly washed, he appears most prominently in the ceremony of the

presentation of the two goats at the door of the tabernacle. The bullock first slain and offered in atonement for himself and his family, his next office is to slay the goat in sacrifice on which the Lord's lot fell; and then, by a solemn act of public confession before the congregation, to transfer the guilt and uncleanness of the nation to the head of the living animal, to be despatched into the wilderness. Here, again, a difference is to be marked between this ceremony and that of sacrifice in general. Ordinarily inferior priests slew and offered the victims on the altar; or, in the instance of a private offering, the individual himself slew his own victim, the priest taking charge of it afterwards; but in this instance the high priest appears alone as the offerer of the victim; all others stand aside, and something incommunicable is then and there done by him in virtue of his office. This also is typical.

CHAP. XXV.

Lev. xvi.

We then follow the high priest as he enters upon the most solemn of all his functions, described in the 12th, 13th, and 14th verses of the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus. With his golden censer full of coals taken from the altar, and his hands full of 'sweet incense beaten small,' he approaches the mysterious inner sanctuary, lifts or draws aside the veil, and, as it would seem, first on entry depositing the incense on the coals, a cloud of perfume thence arises, which fills the place, and so conceals the brightness of the Divine Presence, on which he was forbidden to gaze. The place being thus filled with a cloud of fragrance, and the censer laid on the floor, he takes into his hands the golden basin containing the blood of the bullock, and with his

He alone
enters within
the veil.

CHAP. XXV. finger sprinkles it seven times on and before the
 Lev. xvi. mercy-seat, eastward. Thence retiring and return-
 ing to the outer court, the goat of the sin-offering
 is killed. With its blood, and with the golden
 censer again charged with coals, and his hands
 He re-enters
 the Holiest. with incense, the high priest a second time enters
 the inner sanctuary, performs the same acts as in
 the first instance, and then withdraws.

Lev. xvi. 16. This office of the high priest is interpreted in the
 16th verse of the same chapter. He had effected
 a double atonement within the veil, most remark-
 ably here stated to be on behalf of the holy place
 itself, on the ground that it had been defiled by the
 sinfulness both of the priesthood and of the people
 during the past year. In consequence, it was not
 fit to be continued as a residence for the thrice
 holy Lord God; and this privilege was only con-
 ceded for the year ensuing on the fact being
 solemnly recognised by the presentation of atone-
 ment on the very mercy-seat itself. The defile-
 ment of the sanctuary, and the consequent with-
 drawal of God from it, were the doctrines assumed
 by the offerings of that hour. The prerogatives of
 mercy henceforth were concessions to the atone-
 ment, and not things necessarily inherent in the
 relation of God to His people. In the 20th verse
 of the same chapter this act of atonement is ex-
 pressly called 'reconciling the holy place,' *i.e.*
 making it consonant with the divine holiness to
 hold communications of favour with it,—a sense
 of the word 'reconcile' strongly evangelical, and
 of not unfrequent occurrence in the apostolic writ-
 ings. This act of sprinkling with blood appears to
 have been repeated in the first tabernacle, called

Reconciliation
 of the first
 Tabernacle.

the Tabernacle of the Congregation, not because the people themselves assembled therein, but because they were there represented by the priesthood. There the golden altar, the table of shewbread, and the vessels of the ministry were sanctified by the same process: thus they too were reconciled and made fit for future service. Then returning outward into the court of the congregation, the high priest sanctifies the brazen altar of sacrifice by sprinkling it with blood seven times.

CHAP. XXV.

Lev. xvi.

Of the Court.

The High Priest acts alone—typical of Christ's supremacy.

It is remarkable that in the whole of this solemn business the high priest acts alone. The tabernacle is formally closed until this reconciling ministry of his is finished. No man is with him throughout; no man either assists him in the ceremonial, or is a witness of it; it is entirely occult, and absolutely solitary. This, too, is strikingly typical of the sole and supreme ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ within the veil of the spiritual world, and in the realms of God's distinguishing and beatifying presence. He is the sole representative of the Church in that high and holy sphere; and His office alone suffices to open that hidden sanctuary, otherwise inaccessible to His people.

This atonement applied to things rather than persons.

It is further remarkable that this sanctification by sacrifice, as conducted by the high priest, is applied to places and things rather than to persons. It figures the effects of sinfulness on the relations and acts of humanity; on its worship, its services, and its intercourse with God,—an observation to be borne in mind when certain passages in the Epistle are examined. Yet further, and more important still, is the remark that the offices of the Day of Atonement were clearly fundamental to the whole

CHAP. XXV.

Lev. xvi.

administration of the law itself. The day of atonement lay at the root of the entire religion of the nation. Its ceremonial, its daily offering, and its sacrifices, whether personal or public, all sprang out of atonement, and were qualified by it. The priesthood appointed to offer atonement must first itself be atoned for. The brazen altar, by which all atonements for the year were effected, must itself be first the subject of atonement; and so of the sanctuaries and the furniture. They cannot be opened without this annual re-consecration; they cannot hallow except they first are hallowed by this blood of sprinkling, brought within the veil, and applied to the mercy-seat itself. This is really the capital doctrine or mystery set before us in this great Hebrew festival; and its evangelical significance is very striking.

Confession on
the head of
the goat.

After the 'reconciliation' follows the impressive ceremony of imposing on the head of the scape-goat, by the hands of the high priest, the sins which were supposed to have been atoned for and removed from the holy places. In beautiful sequence to the foregoing acts, these are represented as gathered up in the person of the high priest, and imposed in mass on the head of the scape-goat, and so borne away beyond the precincts of the holy territory, or the boundaries of the Hebrew encampment, into the wilderness.

That day, when the goat was out of sight, and his whereabouts became incognisable, as it were, a clearance was effected of the plague of leprosy, of the virus of a pestilence. Then room was made for blessing. The high priest put off the garments of humiliation and atonement; and, as if himself

defiled by this business of purification, he had
again to wash within the holy place, to robe him-
self in his grand pontificals, to offer the joint
burnt-offering of the day for himself and his
people, and to close all with the solemn benedic-
tion: 'The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the
Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gra-
cious unto thee: the Lord lift up His countenance
upon thee, and give thee peace.'

CHAP. XXV.

Lev. xvi.

Num. vi. 24,
25, 26.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT: ITS NEW TESTAMENT

διορθώσεις.

HEB. IX. 7-12.

THE preliminary observations on the facts of the day of atonement in the preceding chapter bring us to the consideration of their full inspired exposition. This is contained in the ninth chapter, from the 7th to the 12th and from the 23d to the 26th verses. The subject is resumed in the first four verses of the tenth chapter, and concluded in the 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22d of the same.¹

Ver. 7. 'But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.'

Sins of ignorance alone cleansed by the Day of Atonement.

The 'errors of the people' intimate the proper sphere of atonement on that day. The word *ἀγνοήματα* means sins of ignorance, and is a manifest reference to the early chapters of Leviticus, in which these sins are variously described as individual or as national. They are distinguished from sins of presumption, for which no atonement

¹ The verses from the 7th to the 12th are the theme of this chapter, save a few remarks at its close on the 23d and 24th verses. The order here given is not followed, but that of the Epistle is adhered to.—[Eds.]

was provided. By 'sins of ignorance' were meant sins against the ceremonial law, of which individuals, or even the nation, might be unconscious at the time they were committed, but which were not inconsistent with a general reverence for the law and its Author. By 'sins of presumption' were meant sins committed, not merely with privity that they were such, but in the spirit of blasphemous impiety and contempt of God: for these, punishment was inevitable. To the former class appertained the offices of the day of atonement. It removed the guilt and disability imputed to those trespasses, which, however, do not appear to have included merely ceremonial offences, but likewise, in some sense, moral ones. This is determined by the letter of the law itself, and by the argument of the Epistle also, which goes to show that the sacrifice of Christ alone can properly avail to take away moral offences, while the offices of the law availed only for the sins of ignorance.

Ver. 8. 'The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.'

'The Holy Ghost this signifying.' This expression at once opens to us both the Author and the lesson of the law in the arrangement of the tabernacle. The doctrine of the Holy Ghost's agency in accomplishing the institutions of the law is here especially affirmed,—a doctrine not obviously contained in the narratives of the Pentateuch, but authoritatively declared by these inspired comments on it.¹ This is a most important doctrine, since it

Agency of the Holy Ghost in the institutions of the law.

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 17 exhibits another signal instance of the same truth in the same connection.

CH. XXVI.
 Heb. ix. 7-12.

averts the inspiration of the Spirit as authenticating the Pentateuch itself, and particularly as ruling over these arrangements with distinct regard to the foreshadowing of evangelical mysteries. His work did not merely lie in inspiring Moses, or Aholiab, or Bezaleel, to design and fabricate these things for existing uses, but in making them typical of great evangelical futurities, to be in the process of time made manifest, though for a while hidden. Thus the apartment veiled off from priests and people alike, and only annually trodden by the high priest, inculcated the doctrine of reserve, and with this the doctrine of separation and of inhibited approach to God Himself, even by His ministers, much less by His people in general. He showed by the existence of the first tabernacle, consecrated to ordinary ministerial service, that the ultimate in religion could not then be reached, and that mystery and imperfection are necessary correlatives. He taught that no ceremonial atonements really opened the way to God, but were limited to an inferior department of service, viz. to a ceremonial religion, the existence of which was only compatible with something as yet undisclosed; that outward nighness to God might and did consist with inward separation from Him; and that local contiguity by no means implied spiritual intercourse.

Figure alone
 belittled the
 time present,
i.e. the Mosaic
 dispensation.

All this is pointed out in the 9th verse: 'Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.' 'Figure' here is the rendering of *παραβολή* [parable], *i.e.* a lesson taught by sensible imagery or by human analogue, at best

but imperfectly deciphered, often not at all, though it might be the most besitting the capacities of the people of that time, as well as the particular stage at which the divine purpose had arrived. By the 'time present' is to be understood the entire range of the Mosaic dispensation, probably not less than twelve or thirteen centuries. By 'him that did the service' is to be understood the priest who offered the 'gifts and sacrifices,' whether for himself or the people. By 'perfect as pertaining to the conscience' is to be understood an inward sense of the entire spirituality of his service, and of the divine acceptance of it; so as to render that service consciously holy, and as consciously reciprocated by the divine good pleasure. This perfection is contrasted with a merely official perfection, which arises from an exact fulfilment of the prescribed duty called in the law itself 'after the manner,' *i.e.* the ordinance; but which was unaccompanied by distinct spiritual fruitions, or perhaps emotions of any kind. The reason of this spiritual imperfection conjoined with the ceremonial perfection is further described as arising from the nature of the acts which comprise the service.¹ These were the offerings of 'meats and drinks,' *i.e.* sacrifices so named because consisting of cereals as well as of flesh, mingled with wine, and for the latter reason called drink-offerings in the law. These were so minutely described and specifically enforced, that the 'manner,' as it was termed, became a familiar routine to every priest on duty.

CH. XXVI.
Heb. ix. 7-12.

¹ 'Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.'—Ver. 10.

CH. XXVI.

Heb. ix, 7-12.

Divers washings.

The 'divers washings' refer to the injunctions, so imperatively laid down, that all priestly offices should be accompanied or preceded by the most careful ablutions both of the person and vestments. 'Carnal ordinances' seem to refer to the stringent commands respecting bodily qualifications for the priesthood, to the absence of all blemishes, and to the removal of all accidental defilement, or even to mourning for the dead, if, indeed, these notices are intended to apply exclusively to the priesthood.

The time of
reformation.

'Imposed on them until the time of reformation.' 'The time of reformation' is here obviously antithetic to the 'time then present' (verse 9), and is to be construed in the same large sense, viz. of the inauguration of the gospel age, together with its unknown range in the future. If so, then there is presumably a second antithesis to be noted between the word 'figure,' or 'parable,' as it stands in the original, and *διορθώσις*, here rendered reformation. The word reformation is infelicitous, because it suggests recovery from a foregoing state of lapse or corruption, and that Christianity is to be viewed in the light of the primitive Judaizers, i.e. as a revision of, or an addition to, the law. This would be a grave error. It is obvious that 'the time of reformation' here signifies alone the evangelical dispensation, and that the true sense of the phrase, bearing this in mind, is to be gathered by viewing it in strict relation to the time of the parable or typical institute. Thus *diorthosis* is probably not to be too literally translated as a rectification or straightening of something crooked or out of course, which seems to have misled our translators when

they rendered it reformation; it is rather to be understood of the institution of a worship strictly in conformity with facts and doctrines newly brought to light, or of the 'parable' expounded by the history of the New Testament. Our Lord uses parable for dark and unexplained doctrines, much in the same sense as it is here applied to the institutions of the law, 'a *figure* for the time then present.' These were to give place to the apostolic teachings of the Holy Spirit, which had in them all the force of a divine intuition and vision. 'The time cometh, when I will no more speak unto you in proverbs (or parables), but will show you plainly of the Father.'

CII. XXVI.

Heb. ix. 7-12.

To be understood of direct as opposed to parabolic teaching.

John xvi. 25.

Figure, *i.e.* parable, is always an indirect mode of teaching, consequently obscure. It is not self-interpretative; some knowledge of its main truths is presupposed, or it is unintelligible; where it does not exist, it must be supplied afterwards. This suggests the true idea of the *diorthosis* (διορθώσεις). Thus our Lord's explanations of His own parables (Matt. xiii.) answer to the *diorthosis*; and in a broader sense, the teachings of the Holy Spirit to the apostles on and after the day of Pentecost were the *diorthosis* of the evangelical history. In the same sense New Testament principles are the *diorthosis* of prophecy, according to St. Peter (2d Epistle i. 19, 20). The term is also applicable to moral truth, as well as to doctrines brought out of type or prophecy. For example, the Sermon on the Mount contains the *diorthosis* of the Moral Law (Matt. v. 17). Our Lord's declaration on the subject of marriage exhibits the *diorthosis* of that ordinance as both primitive and final; and His deliver-

CH. XXVI. Heb. ix. 7-12. ance on the Sabbath (Mark ii. 27) exhibits the *diorthosis* of that institute as a primitive and final one when stripped of its merely Hebrew specialities. The Epistle to the Hebrews is itself the *diorthosis* of the law; our Lord's humanity is the *diorthosis* of the inner tabernacle; while the tabernacle, collectively taken, may be regarded as having its *diorthosis* in the unseen sphere of our Lord's priesthood. We learn also from chapter x. 20 that His flesh is the *diorthosis* of the veil; and from many passages that His Atonement is the *diorthosis* of the entire system of sacrifice. Thus, too, the *diorthosis* of 'meats and drinks' (ver. 10) is the acceptableness of all offerings through the atonement—of 'divers washings' or baptisms, the washing of regeneration or renewing of the Holy Ghost—of 'carnal ordinances,' Christian perfection;—the *diorthosis* of all this, or, in other words, the interpretation, the canon or rule of judging and settling all doctrinal and moral questions regarding religion, is the Gospel, and the Gospel alone.

The Gospel differs from the Law and all teachings antecedent to itself in this remarkable particular, arising out of its finality, that all is to be viewed and determined by its light, while it, as referring to nothing ulterior, is self-revealing, or rather, is revealed by the Holy Ghost. Thus we are relieved from a system of successive figure, or parable, in which one is required to interpret another, but there is no last to interpret them all. To revive symbolic or parabolic religion, is to condemn its adherents to pace in a perpetual circle without ever being able to come to a knowledge of the truth.

The *diorthosis* then signifies a service which sets

out from evangelical doctrines, and is their true and direct application. This is a most important directory as to the nature of Christian worship. It includes, as afterwards explained, 'access by faith into the Holiest,' conscious communion with God, both congregational and private, a true priestly character, offices of spiritual devotion, and tokens of divine acceptance—in a word, it is entirely spiritual worship. Such is the *diorthosis* which necessarily excludes, as belonging to the time of the parable—(1) the idea of a located divine presence or consecrated place, and of conferring on it, by names and ceremonies, a sacredness not imputable to any other; (2) the institution of a successional priesthood analogous to the Jewish, without whose offices sacraments are invalid, worship is unwarranted, and blessing uncovenanted; (3) prescriptive forms of worship held to be as essential to Christianity as the Levitical rites were to the law of Moses, a routine necessarily inviolable, symbol largely employed, mysteries variously intimated, scenic and sensible appliances such as art and taste may furnish, statuary, painting, incense, crucifixes, altars, vestments, and holy water. In a word, all the characteristics of ritualism are demonstrably abnormal from the *diorthosis*; and the connection of these things with events close upon their own age probably suggested to the translators the somewhat exceptionable rendering, 'the time of reformation.'

Vers. 11, 12. 'But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood

CH. XXVI.

Heb. ix. 7-12.

CH. XXVI.
 Heb. ix. 7-12.

Christ the
 priest as well
 as the sacri-
 fice.

His High-
 Priesthood
 prior to His
 offering.

of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.'

These verses must be taken together. Our Lord is set forth as the one great antithesis to the high priest mentioned in the seventh verse; and this collocation requires us to understand that our Lord, in His passion and sacrifice, was not merely a victim, but a High Priest; that He was both the Offering and the Offerer; that He was both active and passive; and that, in the whole transaction of atonement, there was in Him a preceding intention, continual volition, and a judgment of perfection. According to this view, His sacrifice did not inaugurate His priesthood; His priesthood is presupposed by it, and qualified it. Atonement did not make the priest, but the priest atonement. Both views, indeed, are compatible with the human priesthood merely, as the Pentateuch shows. The priest was first made by atonement, and then offers it; but this view is inapplicable to Christ, and for obvious reasons: His nature is without sin, and He must needs represent innocency, or He cannot represent guilt. Such is the grand exception of His nature on which the entire efficacy of His priesthood depends.

Christ is here entitled an 'High Priest of good things to come.' This expression should hardly be regarded as contemporaneous language; it is moulded by the date of the tabernacle and institutions before described; the day of atonement being still unmistakably before the mind of the writer. But if the meaning of the phrase be extended to the evangelical future rather than to the legal one,

it intimates the unrestricted application of the gospel to the future, and even the eternity of that future. The 'good things' of this future are obviously the blessings of our Lord's ministry as High Priest, and are afterwards variously described as consisting in personal redemption, or the profound mysteries of experimental religion. The sphere of our Lord's priesthood is again introduced, as if to enforce the thought previously given, that the sphere of His priesthood corresponds with the excellency of its benefits, and that heavenly things and heavenly places are, in the evangelical economy, inseparably related. It is, in fact, but another caveat entered by inspiration against the fascinating notions of externalism.

'A greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands,' cannot be understood of our Lord's humanity, as some suppose, since in the next verse it is termed the 'holy place,' into which He once entered. Place, therefore, not person, should be adhered to in the interpretation, which seems to furnish a second instance (see ch. viii. 6) of the inadequacy of language to carry us into any supermundane realm; so that a generality of epithet, akin to that used by children before their ideas are enriched and expanded, is all that is available to intimate these transcendental subjects. All that can be said of it is, that it is 'a greater and more perfect tabernacle,' that it is anti-technic, unwrought by hands, and finally 'not of this building,' not like nor akin to any technical fabric, no, not to that reared in the wilderness, nor to the temple which then flourished in Jerusalem. The invisible is not representable either by the facts of the world or

CH. XXVI.

Heb. ix. 7-12.

Good things
evangelical
experiences.Ver. 11 refers
to place, not
to the Person
of Christ.Language in-
adequate to
describe the
unseen world.

CH. XXVI. the stretch of human fancy; and it is not a little
 Heb. ix. 7-12. remarkable, that whenever heaven is represented
 as 'opened,' by the prophets of the Old or New
 Testaments, its place, relations, and phenomena
 are entirely passed over, and only certain objects
 of profound interest, which represent life and action,
 are put before us; all the rest may be summed up in
 the language of this verse: 'not made with hands,
 i.e. not of this building.' The one all-important
 truth is our Lord's supreme relation to this taber-
 nacle. It appertains to Him in His character of
 'High Priest of good things to come;' it is the ap-
 propriate counterpart of His great office for the
 world; it testifies to the surpassing glory of that
 office in higher worlds than ours, and that His
 priesthood there has a definite sphere in all re-
 spects suited to its functions and purposes.

Christ's rela-
 tion to it
 alone made
 plain.

The Day of
 Atonement.
 The type
 closely follows
 the antitype.

Verse 12: 'Neither by the blood of goats and
 calves, but by His own blood.' As the *diorthosis*
 here keeps so closely to the 'figure,' i.e. the day of
 atonement, it is best to follow its order in the
 exposition. This order instructs us to begin with
 the *offering* of the atonement, and to follow with
 its *administration*. Our Lord's offering of Himself
 is clearly represented by that of the bullock and
 the goat before mentioned; these animals (though
 the ram is also included in Leviticus, and may be,
 therefore, put with them) together constituted one
 atonement, this conjunction itself being significant
 of weakness and insufficiency. Number is evidently
 had recourse to for the purpose of aggrandizing the
idea of atonement; for, since human sacrifices were
 precluded, no other resource remained but to aggre-
 gate animal sacrifices, and to weld them all into

Number used
 to aggrandize
 the idea of
 atonement.

one type of the one true and world-sufficing Victim. CH. XXVI.
 They represented feebly, yet truly, the main idea Heb. ix. 7-12.
 of atonement—that of substitution, the offering of Substitution
 one life for another, and the redemption of life by the main idea
 this offering. Thus death was really a ransom for represented by
 life supposed to be under doom of death, and in annual sacri-
 no other way to be rescued save by an equivalent. fice.
 Atonement was not effected by offering a money-
 value, or by gifts of property, by rendering of ser-
 vices, or by the endurance of penalties by the
 person needing redemption. Even the law taught
 that he must be represented by a substitute; that
 he must find the victim, but could not *be* the
 victim; and that blood, as representative of the
 life-principle in creatures, must be the offering to
 the justice of Heaven, and the price of remission
 and release from death-doom. The law taught that
 one might take the place of another, and that sin
 might be remitted by substitutional arrangement;
 but this was set forth only in figure, as a doctrine
 to be opened in the future. It was made as im-
 pressive as possible by systematic repetition and
 wide application,—so much so, that it became the
 cardinal idea of religion itself, and, as a mode of
 worship, was stringent as the first commandment
 of the Decalogue: ‘Thou shalt have no other gods
 before me.’ In accordance with the type and its
 doctrines, our Lord, as High Priest, offered up
 Himself as the one world-sacrifice, ‘without the
 gate,’ as it is said in the last chapter of the Epistle,
 as if to conform as literally as possible to the ordi-
 nance of the sin-offering.

The clause in verse fourteenth, ‘Who through
 the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to

CH. XXVI.

Heb. ix. 7-12.

Ver. 14 confirms the strict conformity of our Lord's offering to the type of the legal sin-offering.

The office of the Holy Spirit in the atoning work.

God,' is properly to be adjoined to this notice of the great sin-offering presented to God 'without the gate.' It shows in what our Lord's offering properly consisted, *i.e.* in His blood, making it strictly conformable to the type before mentioned, *i.e.* the blood of bulls and goats brought within the veil and sprinkled on the mercy-seat. It reveals to us, also, the great office of the Holy Spirit, in so succouring and illuminating the humanity of Christ, that, while passing through the inconceivable sufferings which extended from the Agony to the Crucifixion and the act of dying, the offering was absolutely faultless, judged even by God Himself, 'perfect' as it was infinite, and 'once,' as it was for the world. Thus the introduction of the Holy Spirit's office in connection with the Atonement, though expressed in this single passage, is vast in suggestion. It accords with all the facts of our Lord's preceding history,—His birth, temptation, miracles, and ministry. His humanity was the creature of the Spirit, He was the anointed of the Spirit, the preacher and miracle-worker of the Spirit, and, finally, He is the victim of the Spirit. For, if the Spirit's offices were needful to the human, the living, the acting Christ, how can we exclude them from the suffering, dying, atoning, and redeeming Christ? To forget the Spirit in the crisis of our Lord's work for the world, and in the hour of its consummated redemption, were a strange oversight indeed, a chasm in our theology, and a sin, it may be of ignorance, against His all-presiding glory in His greatest work, the redemption of man by the Christ, the Son of Man and the Son of God.

The phrase, 'having obtained eternal redemption for us,' is decisive of the direct effect of the Atonement. The doctrine of redemption is everywhere put in relation to the Atonement as the effect to the cause. Redemption is properly that view of the *effect* of the death of Christ which presents that effect in the way of analogy to, or as illustrated by, human examples or customs. It must not be taken in an absolutely literal sense, but as presented to us in this form as most convenient to our apprehension. When our Lord's blood, or life, is called a ransom, it is not to be understood literally in the sense of a price for human deliverance tendered to God and accepted for this end; since this view would militate against the grace of the deliverance, and would hardly be condign with true views of the Divine Majesty. Nor could we clear the doctrine from antinomian perversions, and from the statements of an injurious *ex parte* theology. Ransom or price, paid down for deliverance, is obviously in this instance to be reverently construed, and needs the *diorthosis* before mentioned to make it consonant with the attributes and government of God. In fact, ransom, in this case, by a life-offering, is to be interpreted by other human analogies, or forms of procedure, in which price is not taken literally in the sense of a bargain, or a contract implying a money-payment, but for the sequence of one act in the way of dependence on another, or, as we say, *sine quâ non*. Thus exertion is the price of promotion; suffering is the price of unlawful pleasures; risk of fortune or life, the price, it may be, to be paid for pre-eminent distinctions; war may be the

CII. XXVI.

Heb. ix. 7-12.

Redemption,
in what sense
the result of
atonement?

Ransom not
to be taken
literally as
price;

but as a *sine
quâ non*.

Examples.

CH. XXVI.
 Heb. ix. 7-12.

price of peace, or of the recovery of lost rights and interests by a people. In a word, numberless cases turn up in human affairs in which this connection of things is indissoluble, so that if the object is to be gained, such is the price to be paid.

The relations
 of man to God
 are rectified
 on the repre-
 sentative prin-
 ciple.

Christ the
 adequate
 Represent-
 ative.

This reasoning is perfectly applicable to the solemn business of human redemption. The relations of man being athwart his own happiness, and the nature and government of God, how are they to be rectified? Only by such a procedure as exalts the Fatherhood and the Sovereignty of God together. It must be remembered that the sin of man is not to be regarded *primarily* as a personal, but as a race-sin, and that its reign has become universal by this one open door. As an act of grace, therefore, it can be met by a representative principle applied in a counter-form by a Being of answerable dignity. The offering up of humanity, by that One Person in homage to the divine justice, is that act answerable to the facts of the case which may be termed the *lutron* or ransom-price of humanity. Pre-ordained, prefigured, consummated, and accepted, this is the *ONE* thing attested to be needful and sufficient for world-deliverance and redemption; it is the *ONE* consideration deemed adequate and acted upon by the Lord Himself, a *sine quâ non*, a preliminary necessity; so that, without saying world-deliverance *could* not by possibility come any other way (a position we are as little in need of taking as we are warranted in taking), we are justified in saying that it *would* not.

This, as it seems to us, is the true view to be held of this all-important matter. It maintains the doctrine of atonement in its integrity, and that

of ransom in its proper correlative form, while it neither encumbers nor lowers the doctrine of redemption by forcing it into an entire identity with human examples. CH. XXVI.
Heb. ix. 7-12.

The expression found in Peter, 'denying the Lord that bought them,' is undoubtedly to be understood in the same way. It is clearly a reference to a prevalent custom of buying slaves in the open market, and points to the Atonement offered for men as a price paid for them; but this literally rendered would assuredly be an indignity offered to such a subject. Properly understood, it amounts to this, that, in consideration of our Lord's sin-offering for the world, certain rights belong to Him, in and over humanity itself, of so absolute a kind that the fittest figure to represent them is the property acquired in men by purchase, or price paid down for them. There is no difficulty in understanding this, nor any objection of weight to be advanced against it. Christ's absolute rights in humanity.

When 'eternal redemption' is ascribed to the offering of Christ, it may be understood as contrasted with the *duration* of the ancient law, and the efficacy of the sacrificial system bound up and abolished with it,—there was no eternity in that redemption, but only a limited permanency. Or it may relate more particularly to the efficacy of the sacrifices offered on the day of atonement, expressly limited to one year only. Contrasted with these, our Lord's redemption is eternal, *i.e.* never to be superseded, not terminable so long as the world lasts. But it is eternal also in the absolute sense, as eternal life and as eternal salvation are properly endless things. His redemption bears a co-dura-

Redemption eternal, in contrast to the law.

CH. XXVI. tion with the soul itself, it takes up the body in its
Heb. ix, 7-12. range of the future, and it identifies itself in all its
wealth and perfection with this eternity of exist-
ence, flowing on for ever from one fountain opened
in time—the Cross.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE GREAT SACRIFICE ON EARTH, AND ITS PRESENTATION IN THE HEAVENS.

HEB. IX. 12.

(1.) It is important to notice how the one great offering of Christ stands before us, as representing the deepest sentiments and aspirations of humanity, while, in its great characteristics, it remains for ever apart in the history of the world. The doctrine of expiatory human sacrifice obtained strong hold both of the ancient and modern world, and has linked in strange concord tribes and nations the most alien and diverse in customs and civilisation. Human sacrifices prevailed among almost all peoples known within the historic period, and notices of them are plentiful in the Bible itself. With these facts before us, it is not a little singular, that a religion pre-eminently sacrificial, as was that of the Hebrews, expressly excludes them. The offering up of Isaac by his father was in figure only and not in act, and, therefore, tells precisely in the opposite direction to that for which a certain class of writers adduce it. The death of Jephthah's daughter—if death was the final issue of his rash vow—was a calamity arising out of a sinister application of the law of devotement, which expressly excluded human beings from its operation. The

Sacrifice expresses the deepest needs of humanity.

Absence of human sacrifice under the law.

CH. XXVII. death of Saul's sons, permitted by David, was an execution, not a sacrifice; they were hanged, not immolated; nor was it God, but the Gibeonites, who ordained these deaths. They were a satisfaction demanded by the Gibeonites from the descendants of a king who had wantonly destroyed them, and impiously violated a national oath; it was a national sin, entailing national penalties, which could only be removed by a satisfaction tendered to the Gibeonites, leaving it to them to say what this satisfaction must be.

Yet human life is the only equivalent for human guilt.

Its prohibition points to the one real sacrifice.

Christ's person as unique as His sacrifice.

These instances, however, have no real bearing on the point here stated, which is to show how wonderful it is that a religion, so profuse in the offering of animal sacrifices, *never* stained its altars by the blood of man; especially when we consider that human life seems to be the only equivalent to be tendered on behalf of human life, and that this has always been the common sentiment of the world. The fact cannot be accounted for but by allowing the divine origin of the Hebrew religion, since it was a departure from this strong instinct of humanity. It not only illustrates what an apostle calls 'the kindness and philanthropy of God our Saviour,' but also points to the great leading design of God, viz. that of giving a solitary and all-sufficing example of expiatory human sacrifice in the person of His Son. This was to be offered 'once for all,' henceforth excluding repetition by Himself, and for ever abolishing all expiatory sacrifices, whether animal or human.

(2.) It is further to be noticed, that the facts of Christ's person, including what has been before called the double Sonship meeting in Him, con-

stitute such a Person for this office as admits of no duplicate. His Person stands alone in the history of the universe, and therefore the work, to effect which this wonder originated, must also stand alone, and must shut out from the province of Atonement every - mere creature whatsoever, whether in earth or heaven.

CH. XXVII.

Heb. ix. 12.

(3.) The Great Offering of the Cross is historically, and as it would seem intentionally, divested of all sacrificial characters. This is a most suggestive fact, and appears designed to mark off the one example of a sin-offering in human nature from every preceding, and from every possible consequent, example to itself. As a fact accomplished and a fact recorded, it is simply the history of an unparalleled murder, nothing more. It has no one sacred or sacrificial aspect whatever; the whole is but a tissue of the vilest human intrigues, and the work of the most diabolical passions. Doubtless it was a convenient plea, when malice watched to clutch its victim, that the vaticination of the high priest imparted a sacredness to this foulest deed; but as the plot works itself out, all trace of pretended duty or national salvation to be accomplished by it entirely vanishes, and we see nothing but, on the one hand, the determination of the hierarchy, and, on the other, the array of secular power pandering to the clamours of the mob. We see, it is true, the great victim and High Priest wending to the place of His sacrifice, but not amidst the solemn awe inspired by a conscious world-crisis, by the impending accomplishment of prophecies, or by the near extinction of the typical system,—not accompanied by multitudes who felt that the

Our Lord's
sacrifice his-
torically a
murder.

Its sacrificial
nature en-
tirely hidden.

CH. XXVII. whole business was for them,—prayerful, sin-stricken
 Heb. ix. 12. masses, prostrate in the presence of Him whose self-immolation as a world-victim, drew upon that spot every face in the heavens, as to it appertained the fate of the world. But what a scene is before us! Every personal indignity is heaped upon the Redeemer, so that nothing can be conceived lacking to consummated shame and mental agony. To close all, those to be benefited are the beings who revel in this iniquity; and the very ‘sin of the world’ to be ‘taken away’ is profoundly represented in that concentrated crime, over which the heavens might well draw a veil, and the earth utter her groans.

Its hidden nature.

This the result of profound pre-arrangement.

It is passing wonderful that the true character of this deed of the Redeemer should have been thoroughly undisclosed by its attendant circumstances, and even shrouded from all exterior gaze by such an investiture of appalling tragedy, as defied, alike to friends and foes, all divination as to the real nature of the phenomenon. This could not be accident, nor reducible to an ordinary law of providence working through human passion or policy to bring about this or that event. On the contrary, it looks like profound arrangement and exact predestination; in order, apparently, so to veil from men the drift of their own agency, that they should become perfectly unconscious instruments in fulfilling God’s supreme world-purpose. This was absolutely ‘the mystery of God and of Christ,’ not to be profaned by human intuition any more than by human voluntary co-operation; demanding, even after its fulfilment, the revelation of the Holy Ghost to advance it to a doctrine, and

that doctrine the centre and soul of the Christian system. CH. XXVII.
Heb. ix. 12.

The offering of atonement, and the accomplishment of redemption (verse 12), lead us to their effect upon our Lord's subsequent position as the High Priest of humanity. Great stress is here laid upon the efficacy of the Atonement in securing our Lord's introduction to the sphere of His ministry: 'By His own blood He entered once into the holy place.' The offices of the day of atonement are still closely adhered to; the blood of Christ is contrasted with the blood of goats and calves, by which the high priest obtained access to God within the veil. The emphasis with which the blood of sacrifice is everywhere mentioned in Scripture, is always referable to the ordinance concerning it: 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.' Hence blood is equivalent to life offered in sacrifice, and, understood in this connection, gives a strong incidental corroboration to the doctrine of the true and proper atonement of Christ by His death; since it would be manifestly misleading and absurd again and again to mention the blood of Christ in connection with the blood of animal sacrifices, to which power of atonement was imputed by express ordinance, had not atonement in the true, though far higher sense, belonged to the one as well as the other. If the essential doctrine of the type be discarded, we are bewildered, not enlightened! On what admissible supposition besides this could our Lord 'by His own blood' enter into the holy place?

Christ becomes the Priest of humanity by His Atonement.

The Hebrew type adhered to in the argument.

Blood equivalent to life.

Lev. xvii. 11.

CH. XXVII. Unless there be similarity, though not parity, in
 Heb. ix. 12. the two offerings, what is the power of entry here
 ascribed to each?

Christ's entry
 into heaven.

The doctrine before advanced, of an interpretation of the word ransom wider than that which makes it consist in a payment or price, must be here carefully remembered if we would not demean our Lord's ineffable entry into heaven, by literally paralleling it with that of the high priest within the veil. Our Lord did not literally enter into heaven 'by His own blood,' but by His living and glorified humanity, previously offered in sacrifice, and accepted as the redemption-price of the world. We must take the expression, 'His own blood,' paraphrastically, or, as it were, 'by His own blood,' *i.e.* by the virtue and merit of the sacrifice of the Cross. It is not a material but a moral cause which is here ascribed to Christ. His entry into heaven was on His part a solemn memorial presented to God of His consummated sacrifice on the earth, and as solemn an assertion of His rights as the Redeemer. His entry into heaven is thus strongly marked as official rather than personal, and that it formed a necessary counterpart to His work on earth. He claims an entrance as the representative of man, not in His divine dignity as the Son, since this latter right belonged to Him from eternity, whilst the former was acquired. Pre-eminently it is HUMANITY which He carries up into heaven. The whole of the imagery before us is an evidence of this, and is strongly calculated to enhance the greatness of the humanity as concerned in sacrifice and redemption. The entry of Christ into heaven is that of the High Priest, solemnly presenting His

By His
 glorified
 humanity.

The counter-
 part of His
 work on earth.

World-Atonement to the Father, exhibiting in Himself alone the boundless profusion of its wealth, and its infinite claim to be received and enshrined by the Father; thus made 'a just God and a Saviour,' amidst His awful glories. In that presentation of Himself, there must needs be included all the virtue and devotion, all the sympathies and all the holiness of His humanity;—all which prompted His offering and sanctified it, is transfused into the offering itself, and for ever issues from it as the odour of 'a sweet smelling savour unto the Father.'

CH. XXVII.

Heb. ix. 12.

As we are to avoid literal construction of passages framed on the typical principle, so we are not to suppose that our Lord's entry into the unseen was accompanied by any acts of a priestly sort, analogous to those performed by the high priest within the veil. The 24th verse may be cited as a guiding example of interpretation in this respect: 'Now to appear in the presence of God for us.' The general but most impressive fact of an appearance 'for us' is all that is testified. An appearance is, in common language, a representation of one by another, by certain acts and for certain purposes. The expression denotes a public person pledged to, and engaged in, high public concerns: thus there are people's representatives appearing for them in the constituted assemblies of nations; advocates who appear for clients in the courts of law; ambassadors who appear in foreign courts representing their various nations and sovereigns.

Christ appears
in heaven
'for us.'

But the type before us is more sublime than all these. The high priest within the veil appeared for the nation before God; but our Lord within the heavens appears for the world; and His recep-

CH. XXVII. tion there, His glory personally considered, and
 Heb. ix. 12. His continuance there from age to age showing
 that His ministry is at once incessant and prevalent
 as the representative of humanity, exalt His ex-
 ample far above all peers, one might say above all
 similitudes. He is the One Being who links the
 world with God by the offices of His mediation,
 and ratifies perpetually the great world-covenant
 sealed in His blood. The unclouded beaming of
 God's face upon His breastplate and diadem, re-
 flects itself in rainbow hues upon the clouds and
 darkness so often prevalent below the firmament,
 attesting 'that mercy and judgment are the habi-
 tation of His throne.'

Ver. 23 ex-
 presses in
 typical lan-
 guage mys-
 teries not
 otherwise to
 be expressed.

Verse 23 furnishes another example of a larger interpretation of expressions derived from type than they are *literally* capable of. 'It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.' The whole of this is typical language used to express antitypal mysteries, and must be construed accordingly. What are the things in the heavens, of which those in the tabernacle are the patterns? Undoubtedly the reference here is to the tabernacle and its furniture purified by the high priest on the day of atonement; but, strictly speaking, there can be no 'things in the heavens' at all answerable to these,—doctrines and facts only, of indefinite and indescribable import supply their place; the analogy, though just, is yet uninterpretable. Again, what can be meant by purifying these with the blood of sacrifice, since it is as impossible that the heavens should need purifica-

tion, as it is that the dwelling-place of God should ever have been defiled? Here again the language is typical, and the ceremony of lustrating the sanctuaries on the day of atonement is the key to it. The doctrine is, not that heaven needs lustration by atonement, but that it is only accessible *to man* by atonement; that no human being ever is or ever was received there but by virtue of it; and that our Lord, as the High Priest of redemption, opens these realms of glory to man by His presented atonement, and maintains this relation between heaven and earth from age to age by His all-meriting mediation. 'He reconciles the holy place.'

CH. XXVII.
Heb. ix. 12.

The doctrine
—heaven only
accessible to
man by
atonement.

A third example, requiring us to interpret typical language by purely evangelical ideas, occurs in the same verse: 'better sacrifices than these.' What can be the meaning of this phrase? Did our Lord offer more than one sacrifice? since the 'better sacrifices' are distinguished from typical sacrifices, which have no efficacy there. The language is clearly framed on the various sacrifices of the day of atonement. These, though of several kinds, together made up but one atonement. The assumption is, that the unity of our Lord's sacrifice being established, no mistake could arise in the use of typical language representing it as more than one; and, indeed, as the many were employed to represent one, there could be no impropriety in representing the one as many.¹

The one
sacrifice repre-
sented by
many, is
here typically
spoken of as
itself many.

¹ Elsewhere typical language (which can hardly be distinguished from symbolic) occurs where we should least expect it, viz. in its application to Deity. For example, in Rev. iv. the Being who sits upon the throne is represented, not in His personality, but in His sovereignty. He is not put before us as the father, but as the monarch. The Son (Rev. v.) is not personally represented, but

CH. XXVII.

Heb. ix. 12.

Imagery of
chap. ix.
mainly
priestly.

Yet the
mercy-seat
combines also
the idea of
sovereignty.

Grace, not
justice, admits
of modifica-
tion.

It may not be overlooked that this ninth chapter places the reader within the sanctuary, or about it, on the great day of atonement. The imagery is therefore exclusively priestly, and entirely marked off from the sphere of sovereignty with which the Epistle opens. Yet these are found united in the arrangements of the ancient tabernacle, as they undoubtedly co-exist in the facts of the New Testament. The God and King of Israel, enthroned on the mercy-seat, was the Son, while the connection of His throne as a mercy-seat with the propitiation of the priesthood was eminently symbolic of the union of both offices in Him under the evangelical economy. The type clearly showed that sovereignty and its administration sprang out of priesthood and its propitiation, and that the former were but the normal and diversified expressions of the latter. It is the reign of grace, not of justice, which admits of infinite modifications in its action and results. Through this wonderful combination of grace and righteousness, intercession becomes an office from which none can be excluded. For, what can intercession mean more than the plea of sacrifice; the rendering of atonement into requirements answerable to human sinfulness and misery; the succour of saints; the repression of adversaries; the maintenance of truth amidst all forms and forces of error; the voice of the Covenant of the Father with the Son, insuring the redemption of all

officially. He is the Lamb, 'having seven horns and seven eyes.' Nor is the Holy Spirit Himself put before us personally in the opening of the Apocalypse, but administratively. He is the 'seven Spirits,' where, in fact, one only can be personally intended. These examples illustrate the language of verse 23, 'better sacrifices than these,' when one sacrifice only can be intended.

pledges, and the consummation, in which all things shall be delivered up to God? CH. XXVII.
 Heb. ix. 12.

Again, what does the doctrine of presentation, here so emphatically insisted on, mean? Was the presence of God less a reality to the offerer upon the cross than to the offerer in heaven? Is not the whole virtue of atonement as an offering contained in itself? Yet, allowing this, it cannot be affirmed that these facts have no bearings beyond themselves, or that their full predestinated influence could follow without the ulterior arrangements which they originate and demand. It is evident that the relation of our Lord's person as the Son to the Father required an adequate recognition after His strange humiliation; His return to His glory was a personal necessity, and that this return should be so signalized by the results of His human history as to inaugurate a new era of government, and to gather about it indications and pledges of an enriched future, and of a consummation of indescribable grandeur. Hence presentation might be, and probably was, a necessary correlative to the offering of propitiation. Together, they contain every fact on which mediation is founded, every provision for its broadest administration, and every guarantee for its sublimest results.

The Atonement demanded ulterior arrangements.

Its presentation inaugurated a new era.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

LEGAL ATONEMENT AND EVANGELICAL ATONEMENT.

HEB. IX. 13-15.

FROM Presentation, Administration issues. They may be said to comprise whatever had been done on earth and whatever had been acquired in heaven. Both are returned to the world in a confluence of blessing and glory absolutely boundless. The 13th, 14th, and 15th verses are the proximate registrations of this great truth.

‘For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.’

Here, while the sacrifices of the day of atonement are still kept before us, ‘the ordinance of the red heifer’ is somewhat singularly inserted with them. This insertion here, however, raises no surprise when the very special characters of the

The red
heifer.
Num. xix.

red heifer as a sin-offering are marked. These are so emphatic in the ordinance as to entitle this one sacrifice to be selected, together with those for the day of atonement. It was slain without the camp by the high priest, an entirely exceptional thing; its blood was sprinkled before the veil; its carcase was entirely consumed by fire; and the high priest himself was pronounced 'unclean' until the evening. Add to this that the cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet, employed only in the sprinkling of the blood of the sin-offering, were after this use cast into the fire, and consumed with the heifer.¹ The same ordinance specifies the uses of this sin-offering. The ashes of the heifer, mixed with spring-water as they were needed, formed a purification for sin in the case of one who had touched a dead body, or who had been concerned in funeral rites. To him this holy water must be applied, or he was debarred from the tabernacle and from the public services of God, on pain of death. It must be sprinkled, too, on his tent, his furniture, utensils, vessels, on every thing pertaining to the man or family as well as to their persons.

The law of the immolated heifer was express, and most important, both as a ceremonial appointment and as a typical one; and this accounts for its introduction with the sin-offering on the day of atonement, and even for the apparent merging of these sacrifices in the purifying properties ascribed

¹ To this office of the cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet, peculiar to the sin-offering, David alludes in his penitential psalm, when burdened with the sense of a guilt and impurity which needed a higher offering than that of the heifer: 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'

CII. XXVIII.

Heb. ix. 13-15.

Argument
founded on
the compari-
son of legal
and evangeli-
cal sacrifice.

to the ashes of the heifer, which 'sanctify to the purifying of the flesh.' The form of argument here used, which is founded on a comparison between the efficacy of the legal sacrifices and that of Christ, is in evidence that both were offerings of atonement; otherwise the higher doctrine could not be taught by the lower, nor could the effects ascribed to the one be imputed to the other. Hence the force of the expression (verse 14), 'How much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!' The argument is from the less to the greater, based on things which, though disproportionate to one another, bear certain points of affinity. In the one case, it is the lustration of the flesh; in the other, that of the conscience;—in the one, from the defilements of the dead body; in the other, from the dead works which defile the soul.

The one
applies to the
flesh, the
other to the
conscience.

Dead works.

The expression 'dead works' is manifestly antithetic to the defilements of the dead body, which were to be removed by the sprinkling of the ashes of the heifer, and which are here introduced with singular force to distinguish between the nature of legal and of evangelical lustrations. The reference before made to David's penitential psalm offers a powerful illustration. 'Thou desirest not sacrifices, else would I give it; Thou delightest not in burnt-offering;' *i.e.* these availed not to purge his conscience from 'dead works,' especially from his sin in the matter of Uriah. The Levitical institutes were entirely powerless in this case to remove the divine displeasure, and to take off the threatened penalty of death. Hence the importunate appeal to God Himself: 'Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O

God . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.' He besought that his conscience might be purged from dead works that he might serve the living God.

CH. XXVIII.

Heb. ix. 13-15.

This doctrine of 'dead works' is largely opened in the Epistle to the Romans, in which the domination of the carnal mind, its tyranny and soul-destroying agency, are insisted on as the broad experience of humanity, and especially of humanity when subject to law. The 'carnal mind' is said to be 'enmity against God,' to bring the man into captivity to the law of sin, and to be the very body of death in the soul itself. This evil the law was impotent to remove. It had no power to release and hallow the spirit, but only to detect and aggravate the 'law of sin.' In this respect the gospel is the strongest antithesis to the ancient law. The Levitical ordinances, as purely ceremonial, fulfilled their intent when they pointed out and removed certain arbitrary and, as we may say, artificial disabilities which debarred the subjects of the sacred commonwealth from a participation in the privileges which appertained to their peculiar position as God's people. Yet further, by figure, they interwove with the customs of life higher truths, which related to humanity in general as well as to themselves, and which could only be brought out by the revelations of the gospel. To use an expression in the following chapter, 'It was not possible that the blood of bulls or of goats should take away sins,' and as little possible that the moral law could be so perfectly fulfilled, in its heart-requirements and in its life-obedience, as to preclude 'dead works' from burdening the con-

Explained in
Rom. vi., vii.,
viii.

Release from
ceremonial
defilement
prepared the
Jew for his
national
services.

CIL. XXVIII. sciences of the more scrupulous and earnest wor-
 Heb. ix. 13-15. shippers. The law was detective, the gospel only
 is remedial.¹

Release from
 'dead works'
 prepares the
 soul for God's
 service.

The release from 'dead works' (verse 14), as a pre-condition to the service of the living God, is a manifest allusion to the pollutions removed by the ashes of the heifer, which restored the Israelite to the rights and privileges of sanctuary worship. But how momentous is the range of spiritual truth which this opens to us! The unpurged conscience, the unrenewed mind, are absolute disqualifications for the spiritual service of God. They amount to death-defilements which entail absolute interdict from entry on this sublimest sphere of life; they bind fast to the body of death; they detain within the realm of the dead. The religious offices and acts performed in this state are devoid of life, *i.e.* of spirituality, of sympathy, of faith, of communion with and conformity to God. The whole is but an orderly, or, it may be, pompous routine, or a discipline of asceticism, —a life of vows and penances, at best of conscientiousness and duty. The 'dead works' vitiate the whole as a service; and these require to be removed before the true priesthood of man can be entered upon, and the joys of devotion, whether on earth or in heaven, be in any degree tasted. The sacrifice of Christ not only consecrates the tabernacle of the skies, but the tabernacle of the conscience; and His priesthood not only opens heaven to faith

¹ The connection between the removal of 'dead works' from the conscience and the service of the living God is almost identical with that stated in the Epistle to the Romans, and strikingly indicates the Pauline authorship of this Epistle. It may be said that they illustrate each other.

and hope, but confers even on earth the qualities of a true priesthood to the living God. The glory of His priesthood fills the heavens, but its transforming power fills the soul.

CH. XXVIII.
Heb. ix. 13-15.

Ver. 15. 'And for this cause,' *i.e.* by virtue of this all-purifying power of His sacrifice, Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant, which, as promising and making sure these transcendent blessings of redemption, exhibits, in fact, but the fulness of His prerogatives. No lower priesthood than His, nor any mediator on earth, as was Moses, could fulfil, any more than originate, such a covenant as this. It is simply an engagement of God, prophetically announced, and in due time brought forward for man's acceptance.

The New Covenant exhibits the fulness of Christ's prerogatives.

What follows seems to be entirely exegetic of what has gone before, *i.e.* of the 'eternal redemption' which Christ has obtained for man, and the consequently advanced status of His people under the New Covenant as contrasted with the Old. This seems to be the meaning of the phrase, 'The redemption of the transgressions which were under the first covenant;' it is equivalent to the purging of the conscience from 'dead works,' which the 'first' or Levitical covenant did not provide for. Its typical redemptions were from transgressions of another order, as before explained. The types *indicated* redemption from 'dead works,' but they could do no more; 'the transgressions' under the first covenant remained uncanceled and unpurged, simply because it was based on a figurative and not on a real atonement for sin. This doctrine is decisive as to the cardinal difference between the gospel and the law. The administration of the

By it His people enjoy a greatly advanced status.

CH. XXVIII. latter was purely external and figurative, that of
 Heb. ix. 13-15. the former internal and real. Whatever light or
 Old Testa- solace was enjoyed by devout minds, under the
 ment saints law, came from the primitive and evangelical pro-
 lived under the Abra- mises made to the world, and transmitted through
 the Abra- ham and his covenant. They were not de-
 hamic, rather rived from the law, nor can the devotional elevation
 than the legal, and the very similitudes of Christian experience,
 Covenant, gathered from many of their inspired songs, be
 regarded in any other light than as evangelical
 presentiments and foretastes, with which the law
 had nothing whatever to do, save as its institutions
 were made to reflect, though dimly, the day of
 Christ.

'Called,' its
 interpretation.

This interpretation of the expression, 'the redemption of the transgressions which were under the first covenant,' opens the true interpretation of those which follow, that 'they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.' 'The called' is a familiar Pauline phrase, here employed in a somewhat Old Testament aspect. In Isaiah, for example, 'to call' means to summon, to invest with privileges, or to designate to a service; it is applied to Cyrus, to the Hebrew nation, and to the Messiah. In this aspect 'to call' is much the same as to choose or elect. Passing by New Testament examples, in which the sense is modified by the differences in the cases, it may be assumed here that 'the called' mean 'the elect,' or the subjects of redemption; they are here termed 'the called' with an implied reference to the nation to which they belonged, but also, with an implied distinction from that nation which was not now 'called,' or elected, *en masse*. The 'called'

were now the Christian part of it; and by this very designation the writer covertly intimates that the nation as such had lost this honour. The same subject is fully entered into by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, but to the Hebrews it is barely suggested by the use of a phrase which did not necessarily amount to more than a general Christian designation. It is hardly necessary to maintain that the phrase, 'the called,' is not here used in any theologically restrictive sense, since neither its ordinary meaning in the Gospels and the Epistles, much less its Old Testament use, supports this.

'Might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.' The Old Testament rendering of 'the called' is sustained by a manifest allusion to the call of the Hebrews from Egypt to inherit the land of promise; nor would the language have been so well understood by any, as by those whose history was so peculiar, and in fact evangelically typical throughout, as was theirs. 'The eternal inheritance' is a phrase doubtless derived from the promise made to Abraham: 'For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever,' and elsewhere described as 'an everlasting possession.' The 'called' are said to receive this promise in a similar sense to that in which Abraham received it, *i.e.* to enjoy the pledges and assurances of it, not the inheritance itself. 'The called' are the children of the promise, and are trained for the everlasting possession by the precursory power of the promise itself. It is a momentous truth that this promise of 'inheritance,' said to be received by the 'called,' is the true and inseparable correlative to

CH. XXVIII.

Heb. ix. 13-15.

'Eternal inheritance' an allusion to the Abrahamic Covenant.

Gen. xiii. 15.

Gen. xvii. 8.

The promise alone enjoyed by him and by us.

CII. XXVIII. their redemption, as described by these expressions: Heb. ix. 13-15. 'the conscience purged from dead works;' and 'the redemption of the transgressions which were under the first covenant.' 'The promise,' therefore, in this connection, must be understood of the gift of the Holy Ghost, of His plenary indwelling in 'the called,' as the divine witness to their adoption, and as the earnest of the inheritance until the day of redemption.

This promise
the plenary
indwelling of
the Holy
Spirit.

Examples:
Rom. viii. 23;
2 Cor. v. 5.

This pledge of
the eternal
inheritance
the distinction
between
the Christian
and the legal
state.

This great doctrine abounds in the New Testament, particularly in the Gospel of John, and in the Pauline Epistles. Two leading examples may be quoted from the latter: 'Not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.' 'Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing (*i.e.* for the eternal inheritance) is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.' Thus He is the Spirit of promise for two reasons: first, because He was promised by the prophets and by the Saviour; and second, because He is the Divine Interpreter and substance of all promise in relation to the eternal inheritance. This is a suggestive doctrine in its bearings on the Christian state, as distinguishing that state from that of the subjects of the Mosaic law. The law could not bestow these spiritual pledges of future blessedness, plainly because it could not redeem from the guilt and power of sin; its disciples were, 'through fear of death, all their lifetime subject to bondage;' they were overshadowed with its gloom, and all the relief obtained by the most favoured souls was fetched from the earlier dispensation, and was at

best very imperfect. Such was the fact until the day of Pentecost, and such it remains wherever human nature (whatever be its religious surroundings and impressions) retains its consciousness of guilt and impurity;—in other words, when not justified by faith, nor sanctified by the Holy Ghost, it remains entirely isolated from this realm of promise, and these visions of the eternal inheritance. However yearned after, they cannot be realized. Dread, if not despondency, is the prevailing consciousness of the unregenerate, and a darkness settles upon the soul, heavily distressing as antagonistic to the law of its immortality, and to its aspirations after an assurance of a future life of blessedness. Sin wars equally with our nature and our destiny; redemption restores both.

CH. XXVIII.
Heb. ix. 13-15.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Διαθήκη, TESTAMENT OR COVENANT?

HEB. IX. 16, 17.

Diatheke to
be rendered,
'testament'
in vers. 16
and 17 only.

'FOR where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.'

Elsewhere
covenant.

These verses present a difficulty, as is evidenced by the contrarieties of comment on them, and by the fault which the translators covertly confess. It arises from the figure of a will or testament being here introduced, which seems inconsonant with the general doctrine of the Epistle, and particularly with the notion of a covenant. The translators have endeavoured to meet this difficulty by rendering *διαθήκη* (*diatheke*) testament, which is necessary to the translation of these two verses, and which, after covenant, is (in the New Testament) its acknowledged secondary sense. For if *διαθήκη* had been here rendered 'covenant,' the statement had been untrue 'that it is of force after men are dead,' or that 'there must be also of necessity the death of the covenant-maker.' On the contrary, death dissolves covenants instead of ratifying them, while it is universally true, that wills or testaments follow the opposite rule, and

are of force after men are dead. These considerations amply justify our translators in departing, in this instance, from the primary rendering of *διαθήκη*, and adopting the secondary one, 'testament' instead of 'covenant.' Still this is but removing one difficulty to create another, for 'testament' cannot be the sense of *διαθήκη* in vers. 15, 18, and 20.

CH. XXIX.
Heb. ix. 16, 17.

(1.) For, first, *διαθήκη* is used in the sense of covenant previously throughout the Epistle, and, as taken from Jeremiah and the Old Testament generally, can bear no other meaning. Covenants, not testaments, were the things recognised in the Hebrew scriptures, and these are introduced and reasoned upon in the Epistle in this palpable sense.

Because in Scripture covenant is its primary sense.

(2.) Vers. 18 and 19, containing a reference to Ex. xxiv. 6, 7, 8, equally bind us to the same interpretation. The record of the transaction referred to proves it to have been strictly a covenant. Testament, in the sense of a disposition of property by will, is in this connection an absurdity, especially when the testators must have been the calves and goats put to death to give it validity.

Because in vers. 18 and 19 the Covenant in Exodus referred to.

(3.) The argument of the chapter is enfeebled and obscured by changing in vers. 15, 18, and 20 the sense of *διαθήκη* from covenant to testament, for the design of it is to show the close correspondence of the old and new dispensations as *covenants* similarly ratified, though of immense disparity. But this argument is destroyed if both are suddenly turned into testaments, for testaments could not require sacrifices of *atonement* for their ratification,—such an interpretation would be an outrage on all customs and common sense,—but covenants might require such sacrifices, and, on divine authority,

Because the argument requires 'covenant.'

CH. XXIX. they did, not to refer to similar usages among
 Heb. ix, 16, 17. Pagans, probably originating in this divine source.
 If 'testament' be used, it alters the aspect of these
 transactions, and, as far as the argument goes from
 this point, strongly militates against the doctrine
 of atonement itself.¹

Everywhere
 save in vers.
 16 and 17.

(4.) To have been consistent, the translation
 'testament' should have been carried forward and
 backward wherever *διαθήκη* occurs in these chapters,
 whereas it is only carried forward for a single
 verse, and backward in vers. 18 and 20; whilst in
 chap. x. ver. 16, the rendering of *διαθήκη* by cove-
 nant is resumed (as if the intervening inconsistency
 might by this time have been forgotten). These
 observations suffice to show that the translators
 were in a dilemma.

From this dilemma, others have sought escape

¹ The assumption that covenants were always ratified by sacrifice is inaccurate. Confessedly, this was a solemn form of ratification, but it was limited to covenants of the utmost public importance, and could not be supposed to be a necessary form in ordinary contracts. But more than this, examples are even found in Scripture of covenants not so ratified, *e.g.* that made with Phinehas (Num. xxv. 12), for his zeal in the matter of Zimri and Cozbi, whom he slew during the pestilence. If any sacrifice was offered here, assuredly it was not that of animal, but of human life, a notion abhorrent to all divine covenants save one. A further example may be noted in the covenant of God with David, to establish his house, and to build up his throne for ever in the Messiah (2 Sam. vii. 13). In this case, too, sacrifice was excluded; the covenant was established by oath instead of sacrifice: 'The Lord has sworn unto David.' This class of covenants seems to be designated covenants of promise, either standing on God's faithfulness or on His added oath, the two immutable things mentioned chap. vi. 18. This difference is, perhaps, intimated in Ps. l. 5: 'Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice;' since this declaration would be deprived of much of its force if covenants could be ratified in no other way but by sacrifice; at any rate, of itself it strongly intimates that no necessity existed for this particular form of ratification, but that it simply rested on a great historical fact.

by adhering stringently to the primary interpretation of *διαθήκη* as covenant throughout. But, as has been stated at the beginning of this chapter, the contents of vers. 16 and 17 make this rendering inadmissible; and besides, there are invincible grammatical objections to it. For instance, is it possible to render *θάνατον τοῦ διαθεμένου* by a paraphrase like this: 'For where there is a covenant, it is necessary that the death of the appointed victim should be exhibited?' Again, it may be less straining to the construction of the passage to render *διαθήκη γὰρ ἐπὶ νεκροῖς βεβαία*, a covenant is confirmed over dead victims, though against even this it may be excepted, that the words *ἐπὶ νεκροῖς* are against the *usus loquendi* of this Epistle, which would rather lead us to expect, that if dead victims, and not dead men, had been intended here, the word commonly used for sacrifice (*θυσίαις*) would have been employed, not *νεκροῖς*. But, were even this allowed to pass, what, on this principle of interpretation, can be made of *ὅτε ζῇ ὁ διαθέμενος*? The latter clause is plainly answerable to the former in the way of antithesis, and must be rendered accordingly; *i.e.* if *νεκροῖς* signifies dead victims, not dead men, then *ζῇ ὁ διαθέμενος* must signify a living victim. But this is no rendering of *ζῇ ὁ διαθέμενος*, and obliges to the absurdity that it substitutes an animal in the place of a person, as the author of a covenant, instead of being simply the organ or means by which he ratifies it. This is sufficient to show the futility of all attempts to disturb the grammatical order of these verses, and to affix to their several expressions a meaning at entire variance with our translation.

CH. XXIX.

Heb. ix. 16, 17.

Verbal
criticism.

CH. XXIX. The validity, then, of the rendering of *διαθήκη* by testament in vers. 16 and 17 being established, it remains only to harmonize them with the context, and to point out how the difficulty may be conceived to have originated.

Solution on the hypothesis that the 16th and 17th verses are an illustration suggested to the writer by the facts of Hebrew history.

The Jews as the heirs of the patriarchs inherited the promised land.

It has been remarked, that one of the peculiarities of St. Paul's style is, that he often diverges from the logical strictness of a discourse by taking up a thought suggested by it, and amplifying this rather than commanding it to stand aside. There seems to be an example of the kind here, not without its value in determining the authorship of the Epistle, but to be noted chiefly as accounting for the divergence from the argument of the chapter. It would seem that this divergence is due to the phrase preceding these verses, 'the promise of the eternal inheritance,' which suggests the doctrine of heirship drawn from the history of the Hebrew people. They received the inheritance in the land of Palestine, first promised to their fathers; they were the heirs of the patriarchs, though they did not come to the inheritance till long after these worthies had died. Here, then, we have the rudiment of the sixteenth and seventeenth verses; nothing being more natural than to represent the Hebrew people as inheriting the covenant made to their fathers in the form of a will or bequest of territory and nationality to themselves. According to this figure, the covenant is the title, the will is the historic document transmitting this title, and giving the right of inheritance under it. This thought at once opens to us the true origin of these passages. The 'called,' or spiritual Hebrews, now 'receive the promise of eternal inheritance,' the

great thing included in the Abrahamic Covenant, CH. XXIX. and, in like manner, represented as coming to them in the form of will or bequest, confirmed to them by the death of Christ, 'the Seed' in whom the covenant stood.¹ Thus, the notion of a testament, of a testator in the person of our Lord, and of the new covenant in its finished provisions, almost inevitably suggested themselves in this connection to the mind of the writer. Heb. ix. 16, 17.

But this account of it shows that the representation of covenant by testament is *purely illustrative*, and is by no means to be confounded with the *strict* use of the word covenant in the preceding and following verses. The transactions are entirely different, but the one might be brought in to illustrate the other with great force and beauty, by a writer possessed with these associations. The object of the illustrative clauses here inserted, is to show that heirship to all the ancient promises of human restoration and blessedness, was a thing in abeyance, like a will during the life of a testator, until the death of Christ; that this death gave it full and permanent validity, and brought upon 'the called,' in the widest sense of that word, the heritage of the ages past, and the glory of the ages to come.

This use of testament purely illustrative.

On this view the two verses must be read as a parenthesis, and the argument be continued by linking the 18th verse to the 15th. This is obviously the true connection, and continues onward the subject of the day of atonement and its great evangelical counterpart.

¹ In this view, our Lord is the testator, inasmuch as the covenant, and promises contained in it, descended to Him as the true heir or seed, and consequently, the right of will or disposition: this came into force at His death.

CHAPTER XXX.

ATONEMENT THE GROUND OF REMISSION, ALIKE UNDER
THE LEGAL AND THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT.

HEB. IX. 18-22.

‘WHEREUPON neither the first *covenant* was dedicated without blood.’

Criticism.

The marginal reading is ‘purified’ for ‘dedicated.’ The true sense of ἐγκεκαίνισται seems to be ‘instituted’ or ‘inaugurated;’ the word clearly referring to something done or set up for the first time, though frequently used in the sense of renewal or restitution. ‘Whereupon,’ in this connection (though it may be understood to include the three foregoing verses as its antecedent), yet more directly looks to verse 15th, in which the two covenants are conjointly introduced and compared. ‘Whereupon,’ or whence, therefore relates to covenant ratified by atonement, or by the death of the Mediator, and strongly intimates the truth that, while both covenants agreed in the offering of atonement, it was the Levitical Covenant which was conformed to the Evangelical, not the Evangelical to the Levitical. ‘Whereupon’ signifies, for this reason, on this ground or principle, the first covenant was inaugurated by blood. This is the compendium of the doctrine of the Epistle, as well as the true ground of

the entire Mosaic institute. It was not merely a national ceremonial or a badge of distinction from the religions of all other nations, it was pre-eminently the precursory notice, the type and pledge, of the gospel mysteries, of the 'good things to come.'

CHAP. XXX.
Heb. ix. 18-22.

Verses 19 and 20: 'For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.'

This is the historical verification of verse 18, and a succinct recapitulation of the great institution recorded in Exodus xxiv. 6. The Law is here mentioned as a thing already written, which accords with the narrative: Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and these words are called the covenant, which begins with the Decalogue in the twentieth of Exodus and ends with the twenty-third. These instructions, it would appear, were first recited by Moses to the people, the people responding 'All the words that the Lord hath said will we do.' This was the essence of the covenant—proposal on the one part, and acceptance on the other. It was reduced to writing by Moses, and finally ratified by the offering of sacrifices. The account, or rather the compendium, here given looks entirely to the public ratification of the covenant, and to the ceremony of sprinkling the roll or book and the assembled people. It contains, too, what is not found in the narrative in Exodus, that he took 'water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop.' This incident probably was traditional and perpetuated in the action of the high

Historical
verification.

The scarlet
wool and
hyssop tradi-
tional.

CHAP. XXX.

Heb. ix. 18-22.

The sprinkling intimated the evangelical foundations of the legal covenant.

priest. The cedar wood, the scarlet wool, and hyssop would make a sort of brush with which expurgation could be performed at considerable distances with more effect than by the fingers. The sprinkling of the book denoted that it was a covenant founded on atonement, not an edition of moral law merely, nor of positive institutes from which grace and remission were excluded. The administration of the covenant, founded on atonement, was in keeping with it; it was indeed a form of national law, but blended with a doctrine of grace. The people were also sprinkled, to denote that there was something evangelical in their relation to this covenant, and that in some sense and degree they were accepted and sanctified by it. There was a 'spirit' in the law as well as a 'letter'—auguries of redemption interspersed with its statutes; the spiritual administration which should mark the Evangelical Covenant was foreshadowed in the Levitical.

The giving of the law coupled with atonement historically.

Two things are remarkable in this matter: (1.) The carefulness and exactness with which the precepts of the Law were announced. They were first spoken, then written, and finally read out from the writing itself, with all solemnity and emphasis, to a respondent people, thus formally pledged to obedience. (2.) Then the application of the blood of the covenant, accompanied by the solemn formula ever and anon repeated, with the motion of the wand which sprinkled the blood: 'Behold the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you.' They were to observe Law, but to look to Atonement. This reference to the institution of the first covenant, carries backward the doctrine of

atonement to the very foundation of the Hebrew polity in the wilderness, and points to an inaugural ceremony containing in it the whole Levitical system. From the way in which it is mentioned in Exodus, it no more appears that sacrifices of atonement were then for the first time instituted, than that the Sabbath-day was first observed by the Hebrews in the wilderness. Both were rescripts of primitive law which survived, in some degree, down to that age, but which, from the growing corruption of the world, were liable to become extinct, if not revived in some especial manner, and incorporated with the institutions of a particular people.

CHAP. XXX.

Heb. ix. 18-22.

Neither sacrifice nor Sabbath first instituted in the wilderness.

But the point of the chapter is, the great typical representation of the Mediatorial office of the Son in the person of Moses, the deliverer and law-giver of the Hebrew people. The institution of Sacrifice, the revelation of Law, the origination of a Covenant, and the ratification of this by sacrifices of Atonement, were things strikingly prefigurative of the Mediator of the New Covenant;—of His authority, of His redemptional offices, of His immeasurably transcendent manifestations of grace and truth, of His power to found a Covenant, to gather His Church, and to sanctify it by the offering of atonement once for all in His own person. Thus verses 15 and 19 read in conjunction, and, thoughtfully considered, are mirrors of the two dispensations, the one showing the images of the other; but that other alone looks out on the broad realities of the higher world, and makes it possible for an earthly thing to concentrate and copy things in themselves invisible and infinite.

Moses the great type of Christ.

CHAP. XXX. Ver. 21. 'Moreover he sprinkled likewise with
 Heb. ix. 18-22. blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of
 the ministry.'

Sanctification
 of the Taber-
 nacle, etc.

This is a continuation of the inaugural ceremonies of the Hebrew institute, more particularly recorded in the eighth chapter of Leviticus, which contains the account of the consecration of the priesthood by oil and blood, and the sanctification of the altar and the vessels of the ministry by the same procedure. Exodus xl. 9, 10 may be also quoted; for, although there the anointing of the tabernacle and the vessels of the ministry with the holy chrism is alone mentioned, yet, as we learn from Leviticus viii., the sprinkling with blood was a concomitant process in the consecration of the priesthood. Indeed, that the reference is to Exodus in this twenty-first verse is indubitable, though the text is silent as to the sprinkling of the blood.

'Almost'
 refers to cases
 of ceremonial
 uncleanness
 to be removed
 by bathing.

Ver. 22. 'And almost all things are by the law purged with blood.' This expression conducts us further than the tabernacle and the vessels of the ministry, since it can hardly be considered either as reiterative or exegetical. No exceptions to this mode of sanctification, agreeing with the expression 'almost all,' are recorded in the law itself, nor is there any reason to suppose there were such exceptions; the context also forbids this construction, for it speaks of *all* the vessels of the ministry. The ordinance, therefore, which excepted some things from this purification by blood, plainly carries us for its interpretation to certain cases mentioned in Leviticus xv. of ceremonial uncleanness to be removed by bathing and not by sacrifice. This probably gave rise to that intensi-

fied superstition, always more or less prevalent among the Hebrews, of various lustrations by water, an instance of which is noticed in the Gospel of John : ' There were set seven water pots, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews.' The ordinance of the red heifer, which removed defilement arising from contact with a dead body by sprinkling with water, may also be included in the exceptions.

' And without shedding of blood there is no remission.' The ἀφεσις, or ' remission,' is here probably to be understood in its primary sense of forgiveness, carrying with it release from penalty. It may include a provision by atonement for absolution, either from ceremonial or from strictly legal offences, and in addition to these, from moral offences, though not in the full evangelical sense of the word. The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters of Leviticus contain a long enumeration of such offences, appended to which we have the specific forms prescribed for their remission ; they supply a striking comment upon the words, ' Without shedding of blood there is no remission.'

CHAP. XXX.
Heb. ix. 18-22.
Remission includes release from penalty.

As far as transgressions were at all remissible, under the Mosaic institute, they were remissible by atonement alone ; nor are those passages in the Prophets (for example, Ezekiel xviii. and xxxiii.), which affirm forgiveness on repentance and reformation, to be interpreted independently of the great national doctrine of atonement by sacrifice. *This doctrine is always assumed as necessary to the completeness of the work of repentance and reconciliation ; in fact, the doctrine of atonement presupposed these dispositions and acts of the offerer, and the*

Repentance presupposes the underlying doctrine of Atonement.

CHAP. XXX. sacrifice was null and void without them. Thus
 Heb. ix. 18-22. this momentous axiom, 'without the shedding of
 blood there is no remission,' may be sufficiently
 explained by these legal references, since the doc-
 trine of atonement stood paramount in the entire
 constitution of the Mosaic Law.

Remission the
 result of
 atonement.

But it will bear a more profound and absolute
 reference to the provisions of the gospel, and, in-
 deed, its place in the argument requires this appli-
 cation, as appears from its connection with the
 following verse. The *ἄφεσις*, whether understood
 simply of the forgiveness of sin, or in addition to
 this, of the entire removal of its principle, its
 nature, and its consequences, is, in the most abso-
 lute sense, the result of atonement. In any other
 way the *ἄφεσις* of the crime or the criminal is the
 abrogation of the law to which he is amenable. It
 is impossible that an act of simple prerogative can
 rectify the relation of a criminal to law; since its
 direct consequence is to set law against the law-
 giver himself. If the law cannot be abrogated,
 because it is founded in the truth and righteous-
 ness of a relation between the Creator and His
 creatures, then the result of such abrogation is to set
 law, as a witness, against the very Being who gave
 it, and it becomes more an implied arraignment of
 His rectoral equity in giving law than an impeach-
 ment of the creature for transgressing law. There
 can be little harm in breaking a law, if the lawgiver
 himself cares not to enforce it. Besides this, there
 can be no *grace* in the exercise of a sovereignty
 which abrogates law, since this implies that justice
 is not the ground of legislation to which all acts of
 government must be conformed; it is hardly even

Because the
 Lawgiver
 cannot abro-
 gate His own
 laws.

If indulgence
 can put aside
 law, there is
 no room for
 grace.

so much as a rule of expediency, because whenever it is required to be put in force, it is made to give place to the dictates of indulgence. Further, on this showing, even indulgence must be without a moral character to him who exercises it, and without any power of conferring happiness on its recipient. Principle underlies all virtue; and virtue, in the broad sense of moral excellence, is the *sine quâ non* to the happiness of the creature. So far, therefore, from the gospel revealing a paradox, when it sets forth the doctrine of atonement, it appeals to our reason and moral convictions, in their very purest form, as a doctrine most worthy of, and honourable to, God, and most beneficent in its effects upon man. While it reveals a constitution for man far higher than that of mere law, law nevertheless, in conjunction with grace, is the basis upon which it is reared. God is put before us as just, and yet a Saviour; the Justifier of the ungodly, and yet exalted in righteousness; a Father, but also a Ruler—the object of an absolute veneration and trust, and yet of filial delight.

CHAP. XXX.

Heb. ix. 18-22.

Indulgence cannot confer happiness on moral beings, because it implies no excellence.

Atonement, therefore, the only reasonable ground of mercy.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FINALITY OF ATONEMENT, DEATH, AND JUDGMENT.

HEB. IX. 23-28.

Blood-purification necessary to 'the patterns of things in the heavens.'

'It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.'

Because mediation always underlay revealed religion.

The occurrence of this word 'necessary,' as relating equally to the type and antitype of sacrifice and its administration, shows that the foregoing notice of the *ἁφesis* is justified by the mind of the writer. First, the ordinance of blood-purification for the tabernacle and the vessels of the ministry, is affirmed to be 'necessary' on the ground that these were 'patterns of things in the heavens,' *i.e.* of things in the heavens when this Epistle was written, though not when the legal institutes were framed, except inasmuch as the principle of Mediation underlay all revealed institutions from the world's beginning. Atonement and mediation were things in the heavens in counsel and preparation from the first, and things *actually* in the heavens when our Lord had entered upon His kingly priesthood. Hence the draft, the semblance, the shadow, of these exhibited on earth must all be characteristic. These heavenly mysteries could

be foreshadowed by the doctrines and institutions of the law alone, and these were true to them as patterns which transcribe originals; simply because sin, atonement, priesthood, remission, and purification were made the grand cardinals of that venerable system. The relation of the law to something at once prior and ultimate to itself determined its whole character, and gave it a fixedness and a peculiarity which admitted of no interpolation, much less of any radical change. The sun and the shadow are as essentially related as the sun and the light.

CH. XXXI.
Heb. ix. 23-28.

The law a coherent system, relating alike to the past and the future.

The second sense of 'necessary' in this verse refers, not to the relation between the pattern and the purifications of legal atonement, but to the relation between the 'heavenly things themselves' and the atonement of Christ. It has been before noticed that this language has been framed on the typical principle, and that the exposition hinges on it accordingly. To this nothing requires to be added but the remark, that, as typical things require typical sacrifices, so heavenly things require the true sacrifice for the same reason, that they are verities, archetypes, not drafts nor copies. Consonancy in lower things between one portion and another is characteristic of the nature, and necessary to the perfection, of a work; consonancy in the highest things is the result of their natures and relations. THEY CANNOT BE OTHERWISE, any more than the attributes of Deity, or the purposes and operations which issue from eternal sovereignty; they rest on their respective natures, brought into combination by the sovereign will of Deity, and they so remain even till heaven and earth de-

Relation between the heavenly things and the Atonement 'necessary.'

Consonancy in lower things a note of perfection.

CH. XXXI.

Heb. ix. 23-28.

In things
relating to
the divine
government a
necessity.

The Day of
Atonement
closely ad-
hered to in
the antitype.

part. Thus there is a consonancy between the person and office of Christ as Mediator and the perfections and sovereignty of God in relation to the world.

Ver. 24. 'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.'

This verse, equally with the former, shows that the great annual festival is still dwelt upon, particularly the solemn entry of the high priest within the holiest of all. The teaching seems to be emphatically intended to contrast these entries, and to exalt the one without disparaging the other. In fact, the type only rises to its true grandeur when seen, in this connection, as a veritable miniature of the infinite. The 'holy places' are mentioned because the high priest must needs pass through the one in order to enter the other; but heaven is rather the antitype of the second, the holy of holies, than of the first, unless we suppose that the Hebrew doctrine of several heavens, or the third heaven, is here glanced at.

The last clause of the verse has been previously noticed, so that it remains only to mark the order of thought developed from verse 23 in verse 24. The gist of this appears to be simply the exaltation of the Atonement as entitling our Lord to claim, as the representative of man, this transcendent position. It may be repeated here, because of the very emphasis of the inspired writer on this point, that our Lord's official elevation is demonstrably the true correlative of His atonement. He claims His entry into heaven as the God-man; His presence and glory there are entirely answerable to the pur-

Our Lord's
exaltation
official, not
personal.

poses of His previous sacrifice, *i.e.* to the office of a mediator.

CII. XXXI.

Heb. ix. 23-28.

Verse 25: 'Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others.'

The annual celebration contrasted with the one offering.

This formula, 'nor yet,' marks the introduction of a new thought or fact in the same subject, exhibiting a further point of comparison between the offices of the high priest on the day of atonement and our Lord's on behalf of the world. The former was an annual ceremony, the latter only once for all. The one was repetitive, because finite; the other was singular, because it was infinite. Waning and terminableness belong to all human acts, whether national or individual, and even to the course of nature, which continually rounds and repeats its cycles, themselves but the hours of the world's day. Our Lord's atonement and ministry are inclusive of the whole history of humanity in its forward direction; they as little admit of interruption as of repetition. Christ is not offered 'often,' simply because infinite redundancy may be predicated of this ONE act. Nothing could be added to it by repetition, nothing can be taken away from it by the flight of time, the multiplication of the race, or the vastness and diversity of its needs. As it concentrated in itself, in the hour of its offering, the whole past of man, so it forestalled his entire future.

Ver. 26. 'For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.'

This is a divine pause, so to speak, as of one who has scaled the summit of a mountain. The retro-

CH. XXXI. spect of the world shows to him a long line of priests
 Heb. ix. 23-28. and altars, of offered victims and elaborate ceremonies; but all melt away and disappear under the last effulgence of the Atonement and Priesthood of the ONE. While the forward gaze of the evangelical Seer penetrates to the very horizon of humanity, and overlooks the scenes and ages of the world's great drama, amidst all its complications, its infinite diversities, nationalities, moral phases, social progress, and religious changes, one Light is all-pervading, one Being all-controlling, one Cause ever supreme,—the ONE Sacrifice of the ONE Mediator. So absolutely does this vision detain and fill the inspired man, that he beholds in the event of our Lord's sacrifice the end of the world; not in point of time indeed, but in the sense of confluent times and seasons, and of providential arrangements consummated in their relation to the ONE SIN-OFFERING.

How can sin
 be put away?

'To put away sin' is an expression equivalent to Daniel's 'finishing the transgression,' and 'bringing in everlasting righteousness.' Of itself, it expresses a seeming paradox; for how can the same thing be and not be? or an end be put to that which in its own nature seems eternal? Can this happen by casting into oblivion the acts or even the existence of fallen creatures? or, by means of a fanciful metempsychosis, an endless roundabout, which at last restores to and absorbs all finite nature in the infinite? Law cannot put away sin; for it perpetuates it by penalties, and expands it into infinity by identifying it with the very existence of the creature. Purgatory cannot put away sin; for the lustrations of fire cannot touch a moral subject, nor bid him, like the Phoenix, rise anew from his own

ashes. The one grand secret is here told us, in brief but wondrous words, not of the mere possibility of putting away sin, but that it is really done by 'the sacrifice of Himself.' Language was not made to expound so pregnant a thought as this,—it is a theme for eternity, and a master-study for angels.

CH. XXXI.
Heb. ix. 23-28.

Vers. 27, 28. 'And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.'

The collation of the Atonement in these verses with death and the judgment is a position strikingly adapted to invest it with characters of ineffable greatness. (1.) It is made to take rank with them as a matter of immediate divine appointment; for, while death is an universal matter of fact to humanity, its 'appointment' is a mystery to be searched for in a higher realm than that of nature. The 'appointment' is carried out, indeed, by the laws of nature; but the *why* of these laws is the secret, only to be told by revelation, which tells it thus: 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' This is 'appointment,' not nature.

Atonement
collated with
death and
judgment.

Death an
appointment.

The same may be said of the doctrine of a general judgment. It is an 'appointment,' not a necessary issue of a moral government, much less is it indicated by the moral nature of humanity, or the course of providence. It is an appointment, and therefore a revelation. It is also a New Testament doctrine as distinguished from the Old, which, though it records many and signal judgments of

Judgment not
a necessity,
but an ap-
pointment.

CH. XXXI. God upon men for their sins, is silent on the subject of a final race-judgment. This judgment appertains to the Mediator, and is entirely the result of the Atonement, which has brought upon the world a long day of probation under very peculiar conditions, and as the counterpart to this, the great World-judgment. In like manner the Atonement also is an appointment, and therefore also a revelation; it cannot be inferred from the constitution of a moral government, and to us at least, it is as destitute of precedents as it is of analogies. It stands alone, both as a fact and a doctrine, on the mere authority of Revelation.

Probation the
correlative to
judgment.

Atonement as
broad as death
and judgment.

(2.) The Atonement is collated with death and judgment by the idea of commensurateness. There is put before us here, a race-death, a race-judgment, a race-sacrifice. The 'many,' whose sins Christ is said to have borne, answers precisely to the 'men' appointed 'once to die,' and after this to appear for judgment. No restriction can be placed upon the meaning of the 'many,' which does not apply with equal stringency to the mortality of the race, or to their amenableness to judgment; the expressions are severally race-comprising, and to alter their proportion to each other is obviously to destroy the truth of the comparison and the force of the teaching. The eclectic or partial view is presented in the following clause, obviously meant to distinguish the subjects of final salvation from those for whom a provision was made, not issuing in salvation: 'To them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.'

(3.) There is the comparison of unity or single-

ness; men die once, they are judged once, they are atoned for once. Death, the one sentence on sin, was not re-enacted; it was a race-sentence, a race-doom; it was never retracted, modified, or reinforced. It passed over no sections or generations of the race, as if due to accident or contingency, or as if it were a strange or recurring phenomenon. All were doomed in one, and once. Judgment, however protracted and however incomprehensible in its modes of administration, is also a thing of once, equally searching to a race as to a man. It is just as incapable of repetition as death is of return:—it may be heralded by many judgments, as is intimated by its nearest parallel, the flood; but the race-judgment itself is, one and once. The Atonement is, in like manner, one and once; it is sufficiently comprising for all purposes of relief and restoration, of grace and judgment. Historically it is clear, that if we have not this ‘one,’ we have none. This oneness of an event must indicate in each instance its immeasurable importance, and its completeness in the eye of God. It contains, as it were, a summary of His counsels, agency, and will, from which incalculable consequences issue; just as the single work of creating the world and establishing the present order of providence, was also ‘once,’ though it comprises almost an infinity of things.

(4.) Death, judgment, and the atonement, are here compared in their finality. The appointment of death, though to us seeming everlasting as humanity, is really not so. It is an episode, though a dark and dreadful one, not a completion of the history of man; a suspension, not an extinction; an

CIL. XXXI.
Heb. ix. 23-28.

Death, judgment, and atonement unrepentive.

Finality, in the sense of facts, never repeated.

CH. XXXI. eclipse, and that only for an hour, after which he
 Heb. ix. 23-28. passes into the full radiance of immortality. In
 truth the next stage of race-existence cannot be
 reached till this is ended. The judgment pre-
 supposes the resurrection, and demands a recon-
 stitution of humanity, on a scale proportionate to
 the nature and consequences of its administration.
 The judgment Judgment also is final, by reason of its position at
 passed once. the end of the world, of the completion of the pro-
 bationary state of the race, and of the consummated
 work of the Mediator. There can no more be
 eternal judgment than eternal death; both are tran-
 sitive, and numbered among the former things that
 have passed away.

Atonement
 offered once.

So also the Atonement is a finality. This is
 strongly marked by the expression which follows,
 ‘without sin unto salvation,’ *i.e.* without a sin-offer-
 ing; not as one any longer bearing sin, or exercis-
 ing a priesthood founded on its existence. Thus
 the entry into, and the appearance of Christ from
 heaven, are in opposite characters. He enters as
 a Priest, but He reappears as a King. The epoch
 of priesthood and mediation, however long extended
 and complicated in its issues, really comes to an
 end, as truly as it had a beginning.

Thus, these three cycles may be said to be con-
 centric, like the wheels in the prophet’s vision, all
 belonging to the great chariot of the cherubim,
 the throne of the Mediator. For though the chariot
 has wheels, its course is not a circle, and it does
 not return by the way it went, for it is reined and
 ruled by the Lord of Eternity. It keeps therefore
 the line of endlessness, not the circle of limitation.
 Deeper and deeper does it penetrate into the

still opening firmament of the future, without the least deflection from His eye who launched it into existence, and surmounts it with His glory.

CH. XXXI.
Heb. ix. 23-28.

‘Without sin unto salvation,’ *i.e.* in order to perfect salvation, the salvation of those who look for Him. The position in which salvation is placed here, with respect to its three great antecedents, is mightily pregnant. It is not placed in the ‘once’ category, even of the greatest things, but as an eternal consummation. It is not transitive, not one of a series of unfinished measures awaiting time and further developments or accessions from collateral sources; but salvation is the goal, and there is nothing beyond it; it is at once the prize of existence and the crown of mediation. Salvation is the last fulness of all accessory and combined causes, the boundlessness of perfected life, not merely environed by, but charged with, the very ‘fulness of God.’

Salvation not transitive, but final.

‘The second time’ is the antithesis of the first, and seems directly to relate to the first as the period of sin-offering and priesthood. It intimates an entire contrast in the purposes and modes of the manifestations of Christ. The first was in order to atone; the last is in order to glorify. The first was marked by extreme lowliness and unparalleled suffering, even to agony and death; the second is the epiphany of majesty, of judicial grandeur, and more, of bridegroom royalty.¹

The second appearance of Christ contrasted with the first.

¹ It is worthy of notice also, that only two appearances of Christ are mentioned, as if, at least in the apostolic age, there was no doctrine of an intermediate coming, any more than of an intermediate office of Christ between His priesthood and His royalty. As the one was joined with the other, in the facts of His history and the doctrine of the apostles, so the two comings were coincident on this principle,

CH. XXXI. 'Looking for' is here put as the true posture of the faithful, during the epoch of the priesthood, throughout which He is enshrouded within the veil of the heavens, high and deep in the sanctuary of these inaccessible realms. But the same heavens which veil Him are finally the heavens which disclose Him. 'Looking for' is answered to only by vision of the object looked for, and persistently waited for through the long periods of delay, till at length, as if the clock had struck the hour, the vision bursts upon the sight, and the heavens embrace the earth. It is not unlikely that there is still a covert reference in the mind of the writer to the day of atonement, and to the reappearing of the High Priest to the congregation of Israel, after the consummated offices of the holy place. While concerned in the sacrifices and the lustration of the holy places he had appeared in his undress; but now, on his reappearing, he is arrayed in his pontificals,—his golden mitre, his embroidered ephod, his spangled breastplate lit up with gems, his superb outer robe, his bells and his pomegranates,—in short, a gorgeous presence hardly assimilating with men, though in the midst of them,—more a minister of God than a child of mortality. While amidst breathless silence, or meek prostration, of the concourse which awaited with fixed eyes the moment of his appearance, he lifts his hands and were to be developed accordingly. Here this second coming is directly related to an object to be consummate, salvation. But can this be supposed to forestall either the resurrection or the final judgment? If so, something would still remain to be done in order to perfect salvation, which is contrary to the text; if not, the second coming must be the final coming, and beyond this nothing is to be anticipated but the eternal fruition of His fellowship, as of the Head with the body, and as of the Bridegroom with the bride.

Covert reference to the Day of Atonement.

utters words of blessing in tones as awful as they are melting: 'The Lord lift His countenance on thee.' CH. XXXI.
Heb. ix. 23-28.

Such was the faint image, gathered from the great day of Atonement, of the day of the second coming of the High Priest and King of the Church. His departure from the Mount of Olives was with blessing, His reappearing must be in the same attitude. What those hands can give, or those lips pronounce,—the fruit of victory, the wealth of sacrifice, the returns of prerogative, and the complacency of love,—in a word, whatever His past history had accumulated of good for His people, or His finished work can yet bestow,—the tree of life, the living fountain ever flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, perfected fellowship amidst the citizens of the New Jerusalem, and the opened vision of His Father's countenance,—these are all the behests of that hour of His reappearing: 'Behold I make all things new.'

CHAPTER XXXII.

SHADOW AND IMAGE.

HEB. x. 1-4.

‘FOR the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect.’

Reason of the inefficacy of the law.

This chapter opens by assigning the reason why the administration of the law was, in respect to its individual application, inefficacious. The Day of Atonement is still before us, and the national and collective offices of atonement are thus emphatically exhibited; since whatever may be affirmed or denied of the efficacy of the sacrifices of this day, must be equally true of all the rest. Great attention is therefore to be paid to the contrasted signification of the terms ‘shadow’ and ‘image,’ the former as applied to the law, the latter to the gospel. Shadow is to be taken in the sense of outline more or less defined, as the representation of a body, but giving no internal and exact resemblances,—it is no more than an opaque surface. On the contrary, ‘image’ is not an outline merely, but a perfect representation of a body, as by statuary or painting, *i.e.* it is as finished a likeness as can

‘Shadow’ and ‘image,’ different representations of the same object.

possibly be made, of an object not actually present to the eye. 'Image' is therefore here not to be confounded with the essence or reality of a thing, but as representative merely. This points us to the fact, that the writer did not intend to contrast shadow with substance, *i.e.* a representation with reality, but rather *two* representations of the same object, only immensely differing in the degrees of truth and finish appertaining to each.

CII. XXXII.

Heb. x. 1-4.

This further appears to be the case when it is considered, that the writer had been speaking before both of the law and the gospel as administrations of redemption. They had not been viewed at all apart from this relation, but were compared with each other throughout with respect to certain capital points of resemblance, with difference. As revelations, both refer to the same objects,—those objects being, at least in their ultimate form, heavenly and invisible. Hence the Law, as the earlier revelation, projects the outline or the shadow of these merely. The Gospel, as the later revelation, gives the entire image, to which nothing can be added; it is absolutely perfect, since it contains the history of the personal Son made flesh,—the model Humanity with the ineffable Divinity,—the record of the Passion and the Resurrection of the Christ, the doctrine of the Atonement, of the priesthood, of the exaltation, of the given Spirit, and finally of the Sovereignty of the Mediator, and of a present and eternal salvation as the fruit of His prerogatives. These comprise the 'very image of the things,' here emphatically termed 'good things to come.'

These 'things,' as to their essence, are spiritual

CH. XXXII.

Heb. x. 1-4.

The reality
inaccessible
to us in this
life.

'Perfect,' i.e.
freedom from
power and
condemnation
of sin.

and heavenly, appertaining to the nature of the Godhead and the human soul, and therefore, like these, are only cognizable to men by representation or image, through the medium of speech or written language, by presentation as facts or doctrines, or, best of all, by such visions, intuitions, or experiences of them as the divine Spirit may vouchsafe to individuals. As naked realities they cannot come before us any more than the glorified Saviour Himself, or the mysteries of His mediation on man's behalf in heaven. Still, enough is suggested by the comparison of 'shadow' with 'image' to certify that the latter is beyond comparison superior to the former, and may do for men, in their spiritual concerns, what to the other was impossible. This, indeed, is the very gist of the passage to which exclusive attention should here be directed. With respect to the law, it is denied that it could 'make the comers thereunto perfect,' on the ground that it was but a 'shadow' or rudiment. What this perfection means might be left ambiguous, but for several definite expressions found in the following verses; as, for example, the latter clause of the second verse: 'The worshippers, once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins.' Thus again (verse 10): 'By the which will we are sanctified;' and again (verse 14): 'He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;' not to cite the terms of the New Covenant, with the added comment of the writer in verses 16, 17, and 18.¹

¹ 'This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.'

From these collated quotations it is evident that the word 'perfect' is used, not in its broadest sense, but as in the ninth verse of the ninth chapter: 'Perfect as pertaining to the conscience;' *i.e.* freedom from condemnation by the remission of sins, freedom from the power and in-being of sin as a subject of direct spiritual consciousness, is given, and a consequent access to, intercourse with, and fruition of God. This, in brief, is the 'perfection' which the law could not give, simply because it was a 'shadow,' and therefore administratively, itself imperfect.

CH. XXXII.

Heb. x. 1-4.

This perfection never conferred by the law.

The second verse emphasizes this statement by an argument appended in the form of a question: 'For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers, once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance made of sins every year.' It may be conceived that the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement might need annual repetition on other grounds than this,—that fresh worshippers in succession might come in, one year after another, as youth ripened into manhood, and sought congregational recognition and privilege; or persons who had received the benefits of the Day of Atonement, and subsequently lapsed into sin, might need the same benefits to be renewed at the end of the year; much as days and seasons of confession are appointed for shriving penitents in professed Christian communities.

But these are not the cases contemplated by the author of this Epistle; for he does not here impute such faultiness to the recipients of the legal ordi-

CH. XXXII.

Heb. x. 1-4.

nance, or say that they were burdened in their conscience because they had again fallen into sin, but rather that they had never been pardoned at all, or, as he says, 'purged,' or perfected in their conscience. The ground of this, therefore, did not lie in themselves, but in the office, which conferred no such benefits. The worshippers came, returned, and came again, year by year, with precisely the same results; the whole was ceremony, show and shadow, nothing more. Such was the Law; when brought to the test of individual requirement, it failed to bestow the thing most needed, and left the worshipper yearning and dissatisfied. It is on this ground only that the question becomes pointed: 'then would they not have ceased to be offered?' for if one sacrifice had effected this purpose, why repeat it? If it could 'purge the conscience' of the worshipper, he required nothing more, as he needed nothing less. Hence the annual repetition of the sacrifices proved that they were unavailing for this purpose, whatever other they might be intended to accomplish, since a repetition of the same sacrifices could not possibly add to the virtue of the first. This is a very striking statement, both as ascertaining the spiritual condition of the Church under the law, and the reason of this condition; it could not be otherwise.

The law
founded on
the divine
purpose.

In order to understand this more perfectly, it will be requisite to reflect that even in respect to God, the possible is always to be distinguished from the actual, and the intention from the performance; because there may be sufficient reasons for separating the one by a vast interval of time

from the other, and, consequently, we are required to distinguish between His purpose to give His Son and the gift itself.

CH. XXXII.

Heb. x. 1-4.

The Incarnation and Atonement must, therefore, become *facts*, and not remain intentions only. As facts, they develope and carry out those divine intentions, and are to be regarded as the means to the end.

The gospel
founded on
accomplished
fact.

These principles are fundamental to the dispensations of the law and of the gospel. The latter is founded on actual atonement and reconciliation offered by Christ; the former intimates and embodies intention only. Between these there must be an infinite difference. All that could come of intention merely seems to be this, that God should act conformably to it, in the way of manifesting benign and gracious dispositions toward men generally; and also that intimations of such dispositions should be given out, in the way of promise and institution. Had not these existed before the Incarnation and Atonement were actually accomplished, the race would have been inevitably severed into two parts, the *ante* and the *post*, and placed under dispensations entirely opposite to each other. But as this is absolutely impossible, the only alternative was, to place the Incarnation and Atonement coeval with the Fall, that Christ might be, in another sense than inspiration intends, 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.' These doctrines suffice to show the bearing of the Mosaic law upon the worshippers.

(1.) The gracious intentions of God by His Son with respect to the world maintained to individuals the conjunction of indulgence with the moral law ;

The condition
of worshippers
under the law.

CH. XXXII. so that, though the guilt and defilements of sin
 Heb. x. 1-4. were not thereby removed from the conscience and heart, they were not rendered damnatory, but were cancelled by a reserved and heavenly dispensation, precisely similar to that accorded to infants and non-responsible persons. For, if the fault that he was not purged from sins, however he sought it, lay not with the worshipper, but with the existing provision (which undoubtedly presupposed grace), this conclusion is infallible.

(2.) The law was a 'shadow' or a programme of Christ and of Redemption, and therefore, though it did not confer the benefits of the gospel, it undoubtedly gave what we may term the sign and the seal of these blessings as 'good things to come.' It had in it, thus viewed, the nature of a sacrament, or form of external attestation, compact, or covenant, given in lieu of the internal or direct attestation of the Holy Ghost. They were 'sealed unto the day of redemption,' but in another manner than the disciples of the New Covenant, viz. by sacrifices and priestly ceremonies. In a word, it was Churchism as a temporary substitute for Christianity.

(3.) Select persons occasionally rose to a glimpse even of the 'image' 'of good things to come,' but this was not the status of law-worshippers generally; it was mostly associated with inspiration and the prophetic gift; prophecy itself is indeed far more than the law, and, as we may say, a mirror reflecting the 'very image' afterwards exposed to open vision. These considerations show why the spiritual status of law-worshippers was what is here represented; the effect could not rise above the cause; figurative

atonement could not as a mode of administration take the place of the true one. The mind of God, reciprocated in individual consciousness of redemption, is simply the counterpart of the Atonement regarded as a fact in His presence, and regarded in a Person in whom He has infinite complacency. The Christian life and inward kingdom reflect this complacency; it travels from heaven to earth, and enshrines itself in those hearts which, by receiving the atonement, receive God Himself. It would have been an anachronism, therefore, if not a dishonour put upon the Atonement, to have linked its special benefits with any other sacrifices whatever; all they could do was to bear witness to this, not in the least to interfere with, much less to supplant it. The ministry of redemption could not be a possible fact apart from redemption itself, and apart from the position of its Author toward both worlds, heaven and earth.

CH. XXXII.
Heb. x. 1-4.

Ver. 4. 'For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.'

To amplify the statement of this verse would be merely to recapitulate the doctrines of verses 1-3. The value of a negative statement appended to the foregoing is, however, not trivial, for it is one of the strongest modes of putting an affirmative. For why declare solemnly the utter impotency of animal sacrifices to take away sins, if sin could not be taken away by any sacrifice at all? Or why elaborately and recurringly expatiate on the atonements of the law, if the gospel had not an atonement of its own? Inquiry obviously would have been foreclosed had the latter been an impossibility or an unproven fact; not to urge the utter impertinence of the

Ver. 4 argues the necessity of true atonement from the inefficacy of typical atonement.

CH. XXXII. whole comparative argument of these chapters, Heb. x. 1-4. had not this great doctrine of atonement been first assumed. And further, it is instructive to mark, that the mind of the writer never, for a moment, seems to diverge into any other path of inquiry as to how sin could be dealt with either as a fact in human consciousness, or in the government of the world. He entirely confines himself to these two lines of thought, opened by the law and the gospel respectively, ignoring a third as impossible. Is not this powerfully suggestive? •

CHAPTER XXXIII.

QUOTATION FROM THE FORTIETH PSALM: ITS TEACHINGS.

HEB. x. 5-9.

‘WHEREFORE when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me: in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God.’

The quotation here is from the fortieth Psalm. The first thing which strikes us, is the ascription to the Messiah personally, of this language, ‘Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not;’ for it is prefaced in the Epistle by the expression, ‘When He cometh into the world, He saith.’ This makes indubitable what the writer’s judgment was as to the person speaking. But the truth of this judgment is manifest from the Psalm itself, which is wholly Messianic, and may be regarded as a fellow Psalm with the twenty-second. Both describe the Messiah in His manhood and humiliation exclusively, and are almost equally pointed in their references to His Passion. There is something strange and profound in these utterances of His suffering manhood, which arises from the exclusively human view of Him

Quotation
from Ps. xl.
6, 7.

This language
that of the
human Son.

CH. XXXIII. given us in these Psalms, altogether away from our preconceptions, and even from our evangelical propensions respecting the Christ. He speaks of Himself as 'a worm, and no man,' as 'poor and needy,' as standing upon the very brink of an overwhelming calamity, pursued by infuriate foes, and even brought into the dust of death. His deep wailings and passionate entreaties to God for help, His evidently overcharged mental distress and feeling of abjectness and desolation, seem more suitable to the experiences of sinful suffering humanity than to the all-perfect and glorious Son of God. But this unbefittingness, as it seems to us, is, nevertheless, profoundly accordant with His nature and position as the representative and sin-atonement Man, since in these Psalms He is deeply charged with the sympathies and the lot of man; He feels and speaks as one of the race, as a brother and as a sufferer for righteousness' sake; He even speaks of His 'iniquities taking hold of Him,' as being 'more in number than the hairs of His head,' so that He was unable to look up, and His heart failed Him. Here we see the sin-bearing 'man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,' and have the scenes of the Agony and the Crucifixion anticipated in language almost historical.

Both in Prophecy and in the Gospels Christ's Godhead allied with His glorification, and His humanity with His passion.

It is remarkable how closely these Psalms and the Gospels agree in the purely human descriptions of the Saviour as exhibited in His passion and its circumstances. Throughout it can hardly be said that we have a glimpse of His Godhead, but the demonstrations of His *supreme* nature are, both in prophecy and in the gospel (His miracles excepted), allied with His glorification as the Mediator, and

with His prerogatives on behalf both of the world and of the Church. CH. XXXIII.

‘Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me: in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure.’

Heb. x. 5-9.

The ‘body’ of Christ takes the place of the typical system.

This comprehensive reference to the sacrifices of the law seems obviously intended to array the great sacrificial system, as such, in antithesis to the body of Christ. The one ‘body’ or person of the Messiah stands alone, opposite to this array, as an all-sufficient substitute for the entire system; the one represents the many; the human, the animal; the real, the typical; all are represented in Him alone, in Him absorbed, in Him abolished. And again, the sacrifices of the law are drawn out as antithetic to the ‘pleasure’ or will of God; they did not spring from this ‘pleasure’ or ‘will,’ but from the ante-dated true sacrifice; nor do they fulfil that ‘will,’—this is done only by the body of Christ which God has prepared. Thus, in a sense, prophecy itself disparages and condemns the Law. Overtly the fact would seem far otherwise; else, why have inaugurated such a system by prodigies of unprecedented grandeur; or, why have separated a people and a priesthood for the maintenance of such a service, if God had no pleasure in it? The whole history of sacrifice looked the other way; it was a religion of blood and propitiation, not of sentiment, of reason, or of nature; its whole aspect was strange and artificial; why then did God ordain this, if He had ‘no pleasure’ in it? The answer can only be taken from this very oracle of the Messiah, ‘A body hast Thou prepared me;’ and again, ‘Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.’

CH. XXXIII.

Heb. x. 5-9.

This the *doctrine* of the quotation, however rendered.

It has been familiarly noted, that between the Septuagint, of which this expression is a truthful rendering, and the present Hebrew text, there is some discrepancy. As rendered from the latter in Psalm xl., it is written, 'Mine ears hast Thou opened,' instead of 'a body hast Thou prepared me.' But however this discrepancy may be disposed of by ingenious conjecture, the *doctrine* of the passage is not in the least compromised or obscured. The Psalm, as well as the context, settles that it is the Messiah who utters this language; and as He was therefore already possessed of humanity, or a body, it is of small consequence whether we translate from the Septuagint or from the Hebrew text. If from the Hebrew, 'Mine ears hast Thou opened,' it is certainly to be understood of the disclosed mystery of His passion; that it was to be by the offering up of Himself for the sin of the world, that He could fulfil the Father's purpose, by taking away the sacrifices in which He had no pleasure. It implies that the doctrine of Atonement was hardly, in relation to the Messiah, the earliest divine communication, but a profounder thought of the Father's mind, brought to His willing ear, when He was in the body prepared for Him.¹

The reason in favour of the reading here adopted is almost decisive, since 'body' is put in antithesis to 'sacrifices and offerings;' the victims were all bodies, nor is it possible to conceive of sacrifice, *i.e.* of the offering up of life, without them. Indeed,

¹ Should it be rendered bored, instead of opened, as some contend, in allusion to the Hebrew custom of piercing the ear as a badge of perpetual subjection, the meaning certainly is not advanced; the interpretation may therefore be dismissed.

the repetition of the word 'body' in the 10th verse makes it certain that, in the mind of the writer, this was the main idea in the Messiah's oracle, viz. that He put His own body as a sacrifice in the place of all legal victims whatsoever, and that He viewed this sacrifice as that which He came into the world to offer, and as being that one thing which to the very uttermost fulfilled the good pleasure of God: 'Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God.'¹

CH. XXXIII.

Heb. x. 5-9.

Ver. 10 proves this was the idea of the writer.

Heb. x. 7.

The language of the Psalm is even more full and emphatic; the form of expression, 'Lo, I come,' is sublimity itself. It seems to concentrate the entire human intelligence of Christ, His profound adoration of the Father, His most complacent acceptance of His will, His immutable resolve, and His perfect self-consciousness of His resources, His willingness and His ability to undertake and perfect the whole counsel of God in the redemption of the world. The Gospels supply the comment on this sublime saying, 'Lo, I come.'

Reading of the Psalm, 'I delight to do Thy will, O my God.'

'In the volume of the book it is written,' or rather the roll of the book, because it was wound and unwound by means of rollers during the reading. It seems unlikely that the entire Old Testament is here referred to, because its books were not contained in one roll or volume; only the book of the prophet Isaiah was found on the roll given to our Lord in the synagogue of Nazareth. These facts point to the true interpretation of 'the volume of the book' as being some one particular example of sacred authorship. It has been supposed that

¹ Query, is this an abridgment also from the Septuagint?

CH. XXXIII. the Pentateuch alone must here be referred to,
 Heb. x. 5-9. because in David's time, to whom this Psalm is
 ascribed, none of the prophetic writings existed.
 The prophecy realized after the Incarnation; but its reference to Scripture prospective and retrospective.
 This objection, however, is of no weight, since our Lord is not here represented as speaking *before* He came into the world, but out of the 'body' which was 'prepared' Him. The *prophetic* utterance was many centuries earlier, but the realization of it took place when He was on the earth, and consequently He may be supposed to look back upon the entire Old Testament records respecting Himself. Indeed Luke gives us direct proof that such was the case: 'Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.' Yet, even this broad retrospection on the Old Testament does not oblige us to interpret the phrase, 'the volume of the book,' so largely.

The restricted view is supported not only by the phrase, 'volume of the book,' but by two facts:
 Isa. liii. 10. (1.) That only one *prophet* has expressly designated the death of Christ as an offering for sin; and (2.) That only one prophet is actually quoted by our Lord Himself as putting down an incident in His death: 'For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And He was reckoned among the transgressors.' Putting these two facts together, it is, to say the least, highly probable that 'the volume of the book' here referred to, is that of Isaiah the prophet; and the very writing in our Lord's mind when He said, 'Lo, I come,' was none other than the great fifty-third chapter, at once a summary of all prophecy respecting the atonement, and the one irrefragable

voucher (if we may so distinguish prophecy) for the Messiahship of Jesus, and for the doctrine of Atonement. CH. XXXIII.
Heb. x. 5-9.

Verses 8 and 9: 'Above, when He said, Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offerings, and offering for sin, Thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second.'

This expresses the conclusion of the writer, drawn from the relation of our Lord's Atonement to the sacrificial system of the law: 'He taketh away the first,' *i.e.* the first covenant, that He may establish the second covenant; for, since we have no antecedents in this discourse, but the two Covenants, to which these terms can apply, it is proper to reproduce them and not to invent new ones. The statement amounts to this: Our Lord expressly came to fulfil the will of God by offering His body as a world-atonement for sin. He did not therefore come to perpetuate the ancient ritual, or to give it new significance; He did not come to bind this system to His own, *i.e.* to continue and sanction priestly offices for men; He came 'to take' them 'away,' as things not merely superfluous, but incongruous, prejudicial, and neutralizing. He said and did all this, on the double testimony of prophecy and of the gospel: 'He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second.' The old system could not be built into the new; to use our Lord's own figure, the new wine could not be put into the old bottles lest it should be spilt, or the new piece put upon the old garment: the new wine required new bottles, the new cloth must form a new gar-

Absolute incompatibility of the law with the gospel.

CH. XXXIII. ment. This declaration is remarkable, as opening
Heb. x. 5-9. the true doctrine of providence in the dissolution
of the Jewish polity. Its continuance was incompatible with the establishment of pure Christianity in the world, and its removal is here expressly referred to the hand of Christ Himself, as it were, in vindication of the truth of His atonement and of its regal honours; 'He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second.'

CHAPTER XXXIV.

OF THE NATURE AND DOCTRINE OF EVANGELICAL SANCTIFICATION.

HEB. x. 10-14.

‘BY the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.’

Here the will of God is declared to be the primary cause of Christian holiness, and the offering of Christ the grand means of producing it. In New Testament theology, every truth and every effect is traced up to the personal relations and manifestations of the Godhead. God, or the Father, is ever presented as absolutely supreme; the Son and the Holy Ghost are presented to us as powers emanating from Him,—the one mediative, the other executive. Accordingly, every truth and every effect must bear a triune character, and express the great baptismal formula. ‘Will’ is a designation of absolute sovereignty; it is a synonym for power in its very highest form, at once originating and directing all creatures as instruments to its own ends. The ‘will’ of God is the ultimate doctrine of the universe; its rationale, its philosophy; the principle of all existence, the goal of all events. This ‘will’ is most impressively set forth as the

Evangelical truths and results rest on the doctrine of the Trinity.

The divine will the ultimate truth of the universe; sanctification its highest exercise.

CII. XXXIV. cause of sanctification, and not unfitly, since, if it
 Heb. x. 10-14. be worthy of God to produce creatures, it must be more worthy still to impart to them His nature. This is the highest exercise of His will, and its most perfect effect in the creature. Absolutely He cannot will otherwise, since we cannot imagine the all-perfect Being to will that His offspring be other than His image. It is impossible that He should will either sin or sinfulness in the creature, without supposing that His own nature is different in that degree from perfect rectitude. The 'will' which is here exercised is, from the nature of the case and the argument of the chapter, a restorative will, not a creative one; while it is an impressive truth suggested by it, that no cause short of an infinite will can reproduce lost holiness in a human soul.

Again, 'sanctified,' as applied to the subjects of this 'will,' is a relative term. As light would not have been equally intelligible without darkness as its opposite, or enjoyment without misery; so sanctification could hardly have been fully understood had not crime and defilement been incident to humanity. Probably even unfallen natures understood this far better than if no sin had ever been committed; just as we appreciate beauty more fully by its contrast with examples of ugliness. Sanctification thus must mean separation from sin and sinfulness; and it must mean also, as a consequence, fitness for divine service and euphony with the Divine Nature.

Again, sanctification was always through sacrifice; it was something brought *to* human nature, not arising *out* of it; it was a gift, not an endow-

Sanctification,
 not discipline,
 but a divine
 gift, the
 result of
 Atonement.

ment, and the order of means was appointed. CH. XXXIV.
 It was not a culture or discipline,—these were Heb. x. 10-14.
 its human parody, more or less prevalent in all
 ages, and among people existing without as well
 as within the pale of the Church. They were very
 especially an element in oriental forms of religion,
 and are as rife as ever among them to this day.
 In contrast to this, sanctification by sacrifice was
 the great practical doctrine of the law; few forms
 of pollution were removable without it. To the
 congregation as sprinkled with the blood of sacri-
 fice, the covenant was opened and assured; to the
 congregation as sanctified, the law was delivered
 from Mount Sinai; to the priesthood as sanctified,
 the altar was accessible, and even the way to the
 holiest was licensed. In a word, all great occasions
 of God's showing to His people, whether by vic-
 tories in war, by manifestations of His glory in the
 sanctuary, or deliverances from national perils and
 miseries,—these were always preceded and accom-
 panied by their sanctification. The entire scheme
 of the law was one of sanctification; its lessons
 were brought into every-day life, and its violations
 were matters of disqualification and peril; its
 sanctification was very distinctly practical as com-
 pared with the evangelical; not so much pertaining
 to the conscience as to the actions; not essentially
 spiritual, but personal, social, and national; a
 sanctification ruled by institute and prescription,
 by a code of negatives and positives, by tradition,
 race, and religion broadly considered; not by the
 law of the heart, the work of the Spirit, and the
 power of the one true Atonement. The people
 of the law, as well as the law itself, exhibited,

Differences
 between Heb-
 rew and evan-
 gelical 'sanc-
 tification.'

CH. XXXIV. even in their sanctification, the shadow of 'good things to come,' not the 'very image' of the things.
 Heb. x. 10-14.

The gospel takes up the terms of the law, but gives them a new and profounder signification: 'Sacrifice,' 'saints,' 'sanctified,' 'sanctification,' these are assumed as familiar by old usage, and therefore all the better adapted for evangelical purposes. This is the case throughout the New Testament, particularly in the Epistles; and here 'sanctified' is used in evident contrast to the use of the term under the law. We are sanctified really, and not typically; spiritually, not externally; that is, we are endued with a true personal holiness.

Nature and characteristics of sanctification.

As taught by Christ.

The great indices of sanctification in the New Testament are exhibited in the very origin of the humanity of Christ Himself, for it is called 'that holy thing,' and in the absolute faultlessness of His character from childhood to the grave. There are also special notices of sanctification in our Lord's teaching, drawn from John's record particularly. The sixth chapter of his Gospel is a declaration *in extenso* of this mystery. There it is represented, not as a quality, but as a life issuing from communion with the Son as sacrificed, and as the effect of His indwelling in the spirit of His people. This discourse is particularly noticeable as giving prominence to the Atonement, there forestalled, and to His personal attributes, through its virtue transmissible to His disciples. The New Testament does not contain a more perfect view of the doctrine of sanctification than is found in this discourse in the synagogue of Capernaum.

A second example occurs (chap. xiii.) in the narrative of the feet-washing of the disciples during

the Last Supper. Nothing can be imagined symbolically more impressive than the action of Christ when He girded Himself with a towel, and proceeded to wash His disciples' feet, one by one. This action was undoubtedly anticipative of the virtue of His Atonement, and of His priestly ministry in heaven on behalf of His disciples. It could not, therefore, be understood presently, but awaited the revelations of the Holy Spirit. True, its immediate design was to teach humility and mutual self-sacrifice; but whence was this lesson to be enforced? Not by the example merely, but by the mystical washing of the Holy Ghost hereafter to come upon them as the effect of His Atonement and Mediation; or, in other words, by their perfect sanctification from the domination of petty jealousies, ambition, and self-seeking, by that reproduction of His own lowliness, which could never be approximated, except by the washing pre-signified on the occasion of the Supper. It was, therefore, both a type and a prophecy soon to be fulfilled,—a divine augury of good things *then* to come, but which this Epistle witnesses had now really come. All this is demonstrated by Christ's reply to Peter: 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me.'

The next example is the profound teaching of John xvii. 17, 19: 'Sanctify them through Thy truth . . . and for their sakes I sanctify myself.' Here we have the recognition of the Father's 'will' as the originating cause of sanctification; and He is besought to exercise it. Further, our Lord says that He 'sanctifies Himself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth'—the very doctrine of this tenth verse; for our Lord cannot be under-

CH. XXXIV.

Heb. x. 10-14.

CH. XXXIV. stood as speaking of personal, but of official, sancti-
 Heb. x. 10-14. fication, *i.e.* of such sanctification as the priestly
 office required, which consisted in the offering of
 sacrifice. Here again there is coincidence with the
 verse of the Epistle: 'Through the offering of the
 body of Jesus Christ once for all.' The doctrine of
 the Gospel is the same as that of the Epistle. By
 'sanctifying Himself' our Lord means the offering
 of His body as an act of His own priesthood; and
 He states the result of this offering in almost the
 same words: 'That they also might be sanctified
 through the truth.'

Lastly, in the
 institution of
 the Supper.

The institution of the Supper tells in the same
 direction, for it commemorates and represents the
 Atonement and its offices. 'His body' and 'His
 blood' are participated in by the faithful, and their
 sanctification is the direct issue. The doctrine of
 sanctification, in its evangelical aspect, may be
 thus stated: Our Lord's humanity is an all-per-
 fect type of humanity in general; but its personal
 perfection is not transmissible, even by Him, as a
 federal representative of humanity, save by its offer-
 ing as an atonement. In this character only is His
 perfection communicable to us; while, by virtue of
 His Atonement, His entire humanity, as a redeem-
 ing power, is conveyed to us, and the glorified man
 is but its correlative. 'He that sanctifieth and
 they that are sanctified are one, and for this cause
 He is not ashamed to call them brethren.'

Vers. 11-13. 'And every priest standeth daily
 ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacri-
 fices, which can never take away sins: but this
 Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for
 ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from

henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool.' CH. XXXIV.

Heb. x. 10-14.

The eleventh verse is simply a *resumé* of previous statements, and occurs here, not for the purpose of giving additional distinctness or emphasis to these, but merely to give effect to the contrast exhibited in verse 12 between the priesthood of the Law and the priesthood of Christ, for which purpose the whole discussion of these chapters is recorded. The very posture of the high priest or his representative, and the repetitive nature of his functions, standing 'daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices,' are strong points of contrast between his office and that of the Christ. The one 'stands,' the other 'sits down;' the one 'offers daily,' the other 'in the end of the world;' the one offers 'many' and the same sacrifices, the other but 'one,' and that one Himself. To stand, implies an unfinished ministry; to sit down, a consummated one. The one is doing, but never done; no progress is made, no efficacy can be noted, no results come forth. It is the bodily exercise which profiteth little. It is as the inanity of a dream to waking thoughts, or as theatrical representations to real life. It is a shadow, nothing more. Countless centuries fail to advance the system one iota. It is where it was and ever will be, until it is 'taken away.'

Contrast between the Levitical Priesthood and that of Christ.

On the contrary, our Lord's priesthood is founded on a perfect sacrifice, and draws all its virtue and prerogatives out of it. It is so perfect and self-satisfying, that, as it were, He does not refer to it, but assumes a new posture in consequence of it, and that posture a permanent one. He seeks not

CH. XXXIV. to atone or to inaugurate anything new, but only
 Heb. x. 10-14. to carry out His purposes, and patiently to wait until His enemies are made His footstool. This is a very noble view of the perfection of our Lord's sacrifice, and of its prospective results; it includes all the principles and resources of the world's government. Instead of being retrospective on sacrifice, He, as it were, turns His face from it, to contemplate its issues; looks under the whole heavens as when He made 'the weights for the winds, or a way for the lightning;' regarding future things as present, and all the elements of the future world as being as perfectly comprised in His Atonement, as were the *quantum*, properties, and forces of matter necessary to perfect the material world.

Ver. 13. Roy-
 alty and
 Priesthood of
 Christ.

This 13th verse, taken with its antecedents, supplies a New Testament comment on the doctrines of the 110th Psalm. The priesthood and the royalty of Christ are here presented in combination; mutually co-operative, and triumphantly portending their last issues 'till His enemies be made His footstool.'

Ver. 14. 'For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.'

Peculiar diffi-
 culties of
 Hebrew con-
 verts.

The one offering is still contrasted with the many, perhaps with somewhat special reference to the Hebrew disciples, who had been accustomed to witness these great traditionary ceremonies, and to associate with them the perfection, nay, the very existence, of religion. To them, as ritualists by birth, education, and habit, the annihilation of the national system was a thing with which they could hardly familiarize themselves, even in thought; and

its reality must have produced a chasm in their daily life, as it has in their history as a people. Nor is it possible for *us* thoroughly to realize the position of these converts, who were called upon to accept unseen verities as a substitute for visible pageant, and to adhere to a religion purely doctrinal and unclothed of images of every kind, in place of one infinitely fruitful in its appliances for the imagination. To them it must have been hard indeed to sever themselves from all hereditary, cherished, and sacred associations, from ancestral example, from historical precedent, and, in fact, from the whole fibre and soul of the Hebrew nature. To initiate a new faith, to break off from the principle of nationality as inseparable from religion; to enter for themselves and their descendants on an untried path, oppressed with the conviction that they were regarded as apostates by their brethren; to be disinherited of blessing, if blessing were not in the road they took;—such considerations must have made it particularly difficult for Hebrews to become Christians.

It is not easy for ordinary minds at any time to pass through such a revolutionary crisis as this; nor is it less difficult to identify simplicity, rather than multiplicity, with perfection. The history of the human mind, religiously considered, reveals its bent in another direction. It loves to idealize and embody, to weave systems for itself, and to rejoice in the elaborateness and subtilty of its own creations. It delights in symbols and sensible representation of every kind, in priesthood and ceremony, in enlarged positivism and in recondite suggestions; but it abhors simplicity as nakedness, and

CH. XXXIV.
Heb. x. 10-14.

CH. XXXIV. the absence of the visible as akin to atheism. It is no mean proof of the purity of primitive Christian worship, that sensuous polytheists and jealous magistrates brought against it the accusation of atheism. Even the divine unity has been debased into multiplicity, and the great foundation truth of the universe has been distorted and falsified by pantheism on the one hand, and polytheism on the other.

Explain the emphasis laid on the 'one' and 'once' of Christ's offering.

These observations may assist us to understand the accumulated emphasis laid, in these chapters, on the ONE and the ONCE of Christ's offering. It was as necessary to receive this truth, as it was the truth of the divine unity; for, if the latter stood out in grand relief against the pagan systems then rife in the world and doomed to be overthrown, the former was not less placed in relief against Judaism, which it was destined to destroy. In both instances, the doctrine of unity was opposed to that of multiplicity, and both are equally assertions of the doctrine of the infinite—the infinite God, the infinite Christ.

Sanctification eternal perfection.

'He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' Perfection here, in whatever sense understood as belonging to the 'sanctified,' is emphatically marked as eternal, since the words 'for ever,' in the New Testament, are nowhere capable of a lower interpretation. Generally, this verse asserts that the endowments conferred by redemption are inexhaustible, and absolutely perfective of the human nature in all its powers, both of body and soul, rendering it entirely answerable to the divine idea in its creation. Humanity has no capacity and no destiny beyond those secured

by redemption ; it has no relations to the universe for which this does not provide, no minor developments for which it does not find space ; and, above all, there are no perfections of the divine nature, no heights, no depths in the Being who is 'first and last,' inaccessible to the creature recovered by the Atonement, and admitted to the fellowship of the eternal Son by His humanity, and through it to the bosom of the eternal Father. Doubtless it is intended here to teach that the perfection of the 'sanctified' is correlative with the one offering which sanctifies. To suppose imperfection in 'them who are sanctified' by this one offering, is to limit the offering itself ; for, assuredly, that perfection cannot be less than eternal which is simply the reflection and return of the one offering, and, consequently, can as little need supplement to its resources as extension to its duration. If this were not true, a second offering or a succession of offerings might be possible, and even needful, to carry onward 'perfection' in the 'sanctified.'

CH. XXXIV.
Heb. x. 10-14.

Because the
reflection of
the Son's
offering.

But it has been shown before that the perfection conferred by the Atonement pertains to the conscience (where the law was powerless), and that it destroys sin in the human nature by the double power of pardon and renewal. This renewal is the only germ of perfection in itself essentially eternal, because it is spiritual, and must assert its power under all possible conditions of existence. Hence evangelical perfection is an inward rather than an outward thing, a thing directly subject to the judgment of God, even as it is the creation of God. It is not to be confounded with high gifts or extensive knowledge, nor does it exist apart from idiosyncra-

CH. XXXIV. sies of nature and from human imperfections. It
 Heb. x. 10-14. is not amenable to human judgments, except so far as there are palpable indications of insincerity and contradiction; nor does it imply the highest exhibitions of human character, any more than it implies the bestowment of new capacities. On the contrary, it is the old nature refashioned, but not obliterated; stamped with spirituality and divine characters, but not taken out of its antecedent stamina, nor so far made different from itself.

Distinction
 between sanc-
 tification and
 morality.

Hence it appears, that as morals do not imply sanctification, so sanctification is not fully interpreted by morals. There is infinitely more in it than can be expressed by the secondary aspects of our nature; while in not a few cases those secondary aspects may, through training or a superior character, be strongly expressed without any spiritual counterpart whatever. The difference seems to be this: the one is human, the other divine, virtue; the one has the world for its theatre, the other the heavens; the one is the sacred and temple-aspect of humanity, the other the secular and the social.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE OFFICE OF THE HOLY GHOST IN REFERENCE TO DIVINE TRUTH.

HEB. X. 15-18.

‘WHEREOF the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us : for after that He had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them ; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.’

‘Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us,’ *i.e.* to this effect, or, moreover, the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us. Here the plenary inspiration of Jeremiah, and, by implication, that of the other prophets, is directly asserted and enforced by the inspired authority of this Epistle. Indeed, there is no point on which the New Testament writers are more at one than the plenary inspiration of the Old Testament prophets, whether of Moses in the Pentateuch, of David in the Psalms, or of the prophets generally. From this we collect the will of God to be, that all believers in the New Testament should be believers in the Old, since the authority of the New Testament writers cannot be respected if their testimony in this matter be impugned : the Testaments stand or fall together. It

Inspiration of
Old Testa-
ment writers
always
affirmed by
those of the
New.

CIL. XXXV. is not a little remarkable, too, that Old Testament writers are always quoted as authorities and witnesses to the truth of New Testament *doctrines*: nothing but their plenary inspiration could for a moment entitle them to rank as witnesses and vouchers for *after*-teachings. Thus 'the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us,' not Jeremiah; this is confirmed by the language of the prophet: 'Behold a day is come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel.' This 'Lord' is here affirmed to be the 'Holy Ghost,' the great Revealer under both Testaments. He is put forth as a distinct witness to the truth of the foregoing doctrine of this chapter, which must imply that the writer knew himself to be inspired to interpret the words of the Holy Ghost rightly, and to perceive that his own doctrine was in perfect accordance with it. This cannot be said of the interpretations of any uninspired men; they can hardly plead that the Holy Ghost absolutely puts their interpretation upon His own words. If this be the case where interpretation only is concerned, and no new doctrines are professedly advanced, how necessary must it be where new truth is propounded, and made to seek attestation from an older record?

'The Lord'
the Holy
Ghost.

There is some obscurity in the last clause of verse 15. 'He had said before' is equivalent to predicted, *i.e.* predicted in the words of Jeremiah immediately following; but what is the meaning of the expression 'for after that?' It cannot refer to any later prophetic communications, since none are here mentioned, but this one of Jeremiah; it must therefore relate to the pre-eminency of this testimony, and its intentional effect in corroborating

future revelations. The Holy Ghost becomes a witness to us 'after that,' *i.e.* in accordance with, or in consequence of, this prophecy. This is His relation to evangelical doctrine: in virtue of this prediction as well as many others, He may be confidently appealed to as a witness to New Testament theology, and particularly here to the subject of this and the foregoing chapters. He has, as it were, pledged Himself to this service with conclusive effect; for, the quotation from Jeremiah, introduced for the second time in this Epistle, forms the climax to the discussion respecting the priesthood and its offices of sanctification. Looked at in this position, it completely authenticates the evangelical doctrine preceding it, in respect to the nature of Christian sanctification, *i.e.* it makes perfect as 'pertaining to the conscience.' Sin is so absolutely forgiven as to be no more remembered, and so entirely purged away, that the divine laws are said to be written in the heart and in the mind, in distinction from the tables of stone given from the Mount.

There is also a special relevancy to be noted in this testimony of the Holy Ghost to the evangelical doctrine of these chapters; for what is the fact to which He bears testimony? and what is His work as declared by the New Testament? It is simply to fulfil this prediction in its length and breadth, and depth and height. The religion of the Atonement is the religion of the Holy Ghost, and the anticipations of prophecy therefore are in this, as in many other examples, but the programme of His own operations and the earnest of His work.

Ver. 18. 'Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.' This concludes the

CH. XXXV.

Heb. x. 15-18.

The Holy Ghost the witness to New Testament truths.

Appositeness of the quotation from Jeremiah.

CII. XXXV.

Heb. x. 15-18.

Ver. 18 concludes the argument for the oneness of Christ's sacrifice.

argument for the unity of our Lord's sacrifice, on which so much stress is justly laid in these chapters. As before noticed, the greatness of this truth was not the only barrier to its entrance into a Hebrew mind; it was met by the whole gist of the legal institution. It is doubtless here intended indirectly to assert the coming extinction of the legal offerings; seeing that, if our Lord's offering was incapable of repetition, all other offerings must needs be annihilated.

The *ἀφεσις* here appears to stand comprehensively for the great promises of the New Covenant, evangelically fulfilled and expounded in this discourse. Nothing more than these was possible, nothing less than these was given; all were bestowed by the evangelical dispensation, and all were the direct issues of the Atonement. Hence there could be no future offering for sin; there is no place for it in the records of prophecy, in the structure of the New Testament, in the range of human consciousness when renewed, or in the purposes of God with respect to man yet remaining to be accomplished. These purposes are, indeed, of illimitable sweep, both with regard to duration and grandeur; but they include no provisions of moral restoration beyond those which are absolutely the subjects of human history. From these, as facts of the past, the divine purpose moves onward to the interpretation of all which they include and portend; the resurrection of the body, the gathering of the Church, and the eternal glorification of redeemed manhood; but in all this, God only 'requires that which is past,' without originating anything new. Nothing is lost or wasted, nothing eschewed

Redemption
an ultimate
measure.

or put aside in the march of His purposes towards consummation. His thoughts stand for ever, they are embodied in acts, are ramified in His government, and all made one in the final account of His matters and the display of His glory.

CH. XXXV.
Heb. x. 15-18.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE 'HOLIEST,' THE 'WAY,' THE 'VEIL.'

HEB. X. 19-21.

'HAvING therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God.'

Summary of
Christ's
Priesthood—
contrast to
the Levitical.

These verses, together with the twenty-fourth of chap. ix.,¹ contain a perfect summary of the previous discourse respecting the priesthood of Christ, and its spiritual efficacy in its practical aspect. This summary is put before us in a representative fashion, as akin to the whole foregoing discourse; to which it is a practical sequel. The scene is yet the day of atonement, the supposed entrance of the high priest into the most holy place, and the effect of this entrance upon the outworshipping congregation. Here the contrast is most striking, since, on the day of the great Jewish festival, the offices of the high priest were entirely personal and solitary; he could admit no priests within the sanctuary, much less the congregation standing

¹ 'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.'

without the court, until he had made reconciliation for the holy places, and offered the sacrifices for himself, his house, and the congregation. The entire edifice was closed, and every individual barred out until this was done. It is necessary to bear in mind the historical part of the subject, and to keep it vividly before us, in order to comprehend the statement of these verses. The figure exhibits a wonderful contrast, since the whole congregation is here represented as actually following the high priest into the very holiest of all, and into the immediate presence of God. This is no partial privilege, no right of the apostolate, or patent of the ministry; it belongs equally to the brotherhood, taken either singly or collectively. In fact, this very verse is a death-blow to the doctrine of priesthood or caste-distinction in the economy of the New Testament, which here recognises only the 'BRETHREN' as partaking of this privilege in common. The fact of the old distinction of departments being annihilated and one sanctuary only remaining, is the figure here given us, all and every one having common right of entry. If there be yet a priesthood, it is that of the mass, not of the officers of the community. Priesthood, as determined by this passage, is the common basis of the relation to God; so that it is plain that, whatever distinction obtains between the *cleri* and the *populus*, it has nothing to do with *priesthood*; in this respect every one stands on the same level, all have access to the innermost sanctuary, and all alike worship in the immediate presence of God. This is a very wonderful doctrine, as determining the common relation of believers to God by Christ Jesus, as indicating

CH. XXXVI.

Heb. x. 19-21.

CH. XXXVI. the platform of the Church, and, in this particular,
 Heb. x. 19-21. the vast disparity between the Old and New Covenants.

Change in the
 use of the
 word 'taber-
 nacle.'

Turning now to the imagery of the verses, as derived from the Day of Atonement, we obtain a consistent view of the doctrines to be inculcated. It would appear that the image of the ancient tabernacle, as a whole, is generally in these chapters made to set forth the heavenly sphere of our Lord's ministry (see ix. 24); but here 'the most holy place' seems separated to signify our Lord's glorified humanity. So far a change seems to be adopted in the use of the imagery. The tabernacle no longer signifies a place, but a person, or rather a person enshrined within a place, and that place the heavens.

Applied here
 to Christ's
 'glorified
 humanity.'

It is necessary, in order to preserve our ideas from confusion, to note (1) That the holiest (mentioned in the 19th verse) really stands for the glorified humanity of Christ, not His humanity in its earthly and historical phase; and yet that this humanity, as it is in His Godhead, and His Godhead in it (but One Person in a double aspect), is to be conceived of as having a real ubiquity,—so that, though it be a heavenly thing in respect to its condition and enshrinement, it is also an earthly thing with regard to its all-embracing presence, and its accessibility to the people of the New Covenant. (2) This also is to be particularly noted, that within the shrine the Atonement itself is contained,—set forth not as *offered* merely, but as *presented*, according to the legal ordinance, by sprinkling immediately before God: *i.e.* the Atonement subsists, and is actually presented to God in

Atonement
represented
 before God
 by Christ's
 glorified
 humanity.

heaven by the glorified humanity of His Son. In Him it is the memorial offering of the Cross itself; and the recognition of the acceptance of that offering by God, is the glorification in the very heavens of the Person offering it.

CH. XXXVI.
Heb. x. 19-21.

(3) God Himself is supposed to dwell in this tabernacle or 'holiest,' according to our Lord's words: 'Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me. . . . At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father.' The relation of Christ to the Father, as human, and not divine merely, and consequently the relations of the Atonement to both as subsisting in the heavenly world, is the mystery of the personal relations of the Godhead presented to us in the gospel. It is this fact which rules the outgoings of these relations, *i.e.* the reconciling grace of the Father and the mediatorial offices of the Son. The Atonement is really, as it were, brought into the very fountainhead of all being, and thus holds mastery over all dispensations.

God dwelling in the Holiest expresses the mystery of personal relations of the Godhead. John xiv. 11, 20.

(4) The way to this 'holiest' is said to be 'through the veil,' in conformity with the legal image. Observe, the Atonement is represented as *already* exhibited within this 'holiest;' the High Priest is supposed to be already there. It is incorrect, therefore, to construe this 'way' 'through the veil,' as if His was a transitive or unaccomplished ministry; much less does the figure admit of such concurrence as is often inconsiderately expressed by the phrase, 'bringing the blood' (in idea much the same thing as the sacrifice of the Host). By 'the blood of Jesus' is meant, not the offering in any sense accompanying the worshipper,

'The way' expresses the connection between offered and presented Atonement.

CH. XXXVI. but, that entering into the 'holiest' is *by virtue* of
 Heb. x. 19-21. the blood of Atonement already within the veil in
 the person of the glorified Christ.

The 'new and living way' only denotes the connection subsisting between the Atonement as offered on the Cross and the Atonement as presented in heaven. 'The new and living way' is traced between these two; but it is rather to the latter that faith turns itself, as from an historical fact to one perpetually living and all-efficacious in the presence of God. Believers are represented rather as facing towards the heavenly sanctuary, the presented sacrifice, and the mediating priesthood; and as moving toward these objects by this consecrated 'way' from beyond the outer court, or the spot where the sacrifice was offered. 'The veil,' therefore, through which entrance is made, does not set before us the humanity merely as crucified, and the veil as a rent veil (which is the usual gloss on the passage), but rather the veil uplifted by the hand of faith,—and more than this, by the hand of the great High Priest Himself, who stands within.¹

The epithets 'new and living' applied to the

¹ This gloss of the rent veil probably originated in the supposed apt illustration of the text found in the narrative of the crucifixion (Matt. xxvii. 51). This, however, signified the virtual abolition of the law, that it had no holy place henceforth, no mysteries to divulge, and no service to be offered by its high priest beyond that time. But it is inapplicable to the passage before us, because it happened at the very hour of His death, and not when our Lord, as High Priest, entered into heaven. It could therefore only illustrate the relation of the gospel to the law, not the parts of the gospel to itself. It was not designed to anticipate what was not already a fact, nor could it illustrate the doctrine before us, viz. that of the entrance of believers into the holiest, conjointly with the blood of Jesus, supposed to be already presented there.

The rent veil at the crucifixion signified abolition of the law.

But here the entrance of believers into the Holiest.

‘way’ do not seem to refer (as some suppose) to the typical resemblance between the blood of newly slain victims used by the high priest on the Day of Atonement and the sacrifice of Christ, but rather to express the perpetuity and perfection of this ‘way’ into the ‘holiest’ as contrasted with the temporary and expiring character of the old Hebrew economy. In this view, ‘new’ or fresh simply means that which takes the place of something going before, intended to be a vast advance upon it, but not differing in principle. ‘Living’ is exegetic of ‘new;’ for, if it be ‘living,’ it cannot be temporary; it cannot wax obsolete; it cannot give place to any other; it is lasting, everlasting. Such is the distinguishing glory of the evangelical ‘way.’

CH. XXXVI.

Heb. x. 19-21.

Perpetuity
and perfection
of ‘the way.’

‘Consecrated for us,’ or rather re-made or renewed, is exactly in harmony with the epithet new or fresh, while the appropriation ‘for us’ is implicitly an abnegation of national Jewish right, such as belonged to the old way, about to be abolished. It is the bestowment of right to this privilege in perpetuity on the elect race, whether Jew or Gentile, believing on Himself; the High Priest is shown as thus completing the correspondence between the evangelical and the legal day of atonement. According to this, our Lord’s glorified humanity exhibits: (1) the holiest of all; (2) the presented Atonement; (3) the ‘way’ between the Atonement as offered and presented; (4) the veil as a constituent part of the tabernacle itself; and (5) the priesthood. He is Himself all these in one. The whole are included in our Lord’s words: ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but my me.’ He is here the High

Summary.

CH. XXXVI. Priest, or ruler 'over the house of God,' by which
Heb. x. 19-21. is meant His congregation, His Church. He is a
sovereign power, as He is a priestly one; He
undertakes for the full administration of all gifts
and blessings for His Church as from God; He is
the one mid power between God and His people;
and He also undertakes for the maintenance of all
laws and ordinances binding on them by this New
Covenant.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

EVANGELICAL WORSHIP: ITS QUALIFICATIONS AND PRIVILEGES.

HEB. X. 22.

‘LET us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.’

This verse sets forth the grand practical correlative to those preceding it. The innermost tabernacle is supposed to be opened, and the High Priest to be engaged in His ministry, though unseen, in behalf of the Church. Veiled though He be in the heavens by His glorified humanity, yet the ‘new and living way,’ made accessible by His presented sacrifice, passes through this veil, and brings the worshippers at once into the fellowship and glory of the manifested God. Veiled as He is from the world of human creatures by the surrounding and elaborate system of the visible, which neither sense nor reason can penetrate, God is nevertheless accessible within that veil, which opens to faith in the Atonement, mysteriously enshrined there. Here He is seen, but nowhere else,—no, not in Christ Himself in His merely human aspect; Christ is veiled, and God too, to them who dis-

Hebrew and evangelical signification of ‘to draw near.’

CH. XXXVII. allow His Atonement. Such is the mystery and
 Heb. x. 22. wonder of this Tabernacle.

‘To draw near’ is an Old Testament phrase of frequent occurrence, particularly in the Pentateuch and Psalms, for a deliberate and solemn self-presentation of the man or the congregation before God, for the reception of commands, for purposes of worship, adoration, thanksgiving, praise, and prayer. ‘To draw near’ is to be moved strongly by desire, by the sense of duty and of need, and by an inexpressible complacency in the privilege and its fruition. Anciently, ‘to draw near to God’ was to approach the altar of sacrifice, to offer prayer and intercession, and to await divine appearances or communications. It was exemplified at the giving of the law, when the people were arranged about the foot of the mountain, and ordinarily in the ancient tabernacle and temple services. The God of Israel was supposed to dwell within the veil, and, through that veil, but only by means of the intervening priesthood, to look upon His worshipping people. Here the phrase ‘to draw near,’ transferred to the evangelical dispensation, primarily imports congregational communion with God, by whatever forms and at whatever seasons congregational exercises are carried on. It is designed to teach us that routine, bodily service, and mere conventional exercises, do not embrace the nature of divine service under the gospel; that the status of a congregation, evangelically constituted, differs from the status of one under the law in this great particular, that the former ‘draws near to God through the veil,’ *i.e.* it has actual communion

with Him by the Mediator. Thus there is a mystery in evangelical worship unknown to legal worship, arising out of this very fact, that the actual presence of God is a matter of divine consciousness to the worshippers, and His glory a revelation, an experience, in a sense altogether ineffable and sublime. As the interposition of the 'veil' signified both separation and concealment to them of old time, so, to those who pass within it, manifestation and fellowship are the surpassing characteristics. It is an all-realizing worship, pervading every act of any particular service or season, imparting to them a higher significance, and converting them into means of yet profounder and more transforming fellowship.

CH. XXXVII.

Heb. x. 22.

Relation of
this passage
to congrega-
tional and
individual
worship.

Such is the congregational aspect of this passage, but its full interpretation admits of a second and a still more impressive one. The tabernacle, together with its related doctrines (as before interpreted), has a rendering personally subjective, and comprises the whole mystery of the inner life. The objective, as before explained, and the subjective, as now appended, comprise the two great correlatives of the evangelical system, which answer to one another as the die and its impression on the wax. The doctrine of the temple-nature of redeemed humanity, and the divine indwelling within it, are great New Testament truths, only foreshadowed by the Old; still they are foreshadowed; as, for instance, in Ps. xv. 1, xxvii. 5, xxxvi. 7, xci. 1. 'The pavilion,' 'the secret place,' 'the wings,' the 'shadow of the Almighty,' are strong prefigurations of the higher evangelical doctrine expressed by our Lord: 'We will come unto

Temple-
nature of
redeemed
humanity
foreshadowed
in Old Testa-
ment.

John xiv. 23.

CH. XXXVII.

Heb. x. 22.

Col. i. 27,

iii. 3.

him, and make our abode with him.' This is what St. Paul teaches as 'the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles;' and again, 'your life is hid with Christ in God.' This 'mystery of Christ' is, in fact, the translation of Himself into His people; the production in them by His fellowship of a resemblance or answerableness to His own official fulness as the God-man.

Thus the 'entering into the holiest' is a mystery as little opened by the notion of a future admittance into heaven as it is by a collective or congregational access to God in worship. Both these are glorious truths, but they depend upon a third, *i.e.* on the status of individual believers resulting from an actual present in-being in Christ, and thus in God. This brings the shrine of the glorified humanity into the very innermost nature of man, gives presence to the Atonement in the heart, and gives the sublime offices of the priesthood to the individual conscience. Thus 'the mystery' is no longer that of public service, or of a future heaven, or of any special conditions of life, or of any order of privileged persons; the evangelical status is man in Christ, man in God, man in the Holy Ghost. His nature made sacred,—a tabernacle consecrated and replenished,—He becomes a priest related to the entire aggregate of redeemed humanity, and to the unrevealed scenes of futurity.

Approach to
the Infinite
always a com-
parative term.

But, in this view, how, it may be asked, may we be invited to draw near unto God, since He is supposed to dwell in us? The answer is, that 'drawing nigh' is a phrase which admits of boundless meaning; that nighness to the Infinite must always be a comparative term, and even oneness with Him

an idea which admits of endless expansion. The 'way' may be well called 'everlasting,' since the mystery of the Infinite in relation to the Finite must imply eternal progress in the latter; and the last advance of the series must leave all the former ones at differing distances in the rear.

But, further, 'to draw near' in this sense is to concern ourselves with personal and private worship, with divine meditations, with prayers and spiritual exercises, as our necessities arise and our duties demand. No status, as such, excludes specialities any more than it does duties and obligations, temptations and sufferings. The status may confer sufficient for all these, and may rise to an entire compliance with the Divine Will, but it is no apotheosis; it is consistent with human infirmities and with influences resident in life as it is, and in the probationary characters of that life. The human nature itself has two phases: the one turned outward, by means of the senses and social powers, on the outlying world and its affairs; the other, spiritual, looks in the opposite direction, upon itself, upon invisible realities in affinity with it, and possesses power of self-abstraction, and upward reach to the infinite. Hence one or other of these realms alternates with the seasons and moods of life. The same man may live within or without the veil, by turns, yet without quitting his status with respect to the higher life or the lower. 'To draw near,' therefore, expresses the purely religious action of the soul, its withdrawal within the veil from outward things, and its fuller realization of its own powers in these exercises by which it is thoroughly hidden from the world.

CH. XXXVII.

Heb. x. 22.

'To draw near,' *i.e.* religious action of the soul, as distinguished from its outward relations.

CH. XXXVII.

Heb. x. 22.

Boldness,
i.e. freedom,
right of access.

'To draw near' is here to be understood as correlative with 'boldness to enter into the holiest' (verse 19). 'Boldness' is hardly the proper rendering of *παρρησίαν*; in this connection, it rather means freedom or right of access. Boldness is a mere inferential rendering from the divine prohibition, which barred out the high priest from the inner sanctuary except on the day of atonement, which may be supposed to have caused that annual privilege to be strongly beset with fear. On the contrary, 'boldness' is the result of a chartered right, removing altogether from the individual the sense of trespass or peril, and may be understood here to reflect the opposite characters of the Law and the Gospel; one being 'the spirit of bondage unto fear,' the other that of 'adoption,' which creates freedom and assurance. On this doctrine the exhortation 'to draw near' is obviously founded; the duty rests upon the privilege, and is the appointed means of realizing its infinite blessings. If *παρρησία* could be here more literally rendered by freedom of speech, it would add somewhat to the force of the interpretation, 'Let us draw near,' as if it were meant to intimate a face-to-face converse, like that of Moses with God at the door of the Tabernacle, or his position within the Tabernacle while solemnly awaiting the utterances of the voice from the Mercy-seat; in a word, a position is indicated by this interpretation proper for hearing God's words or for God hearing ours.

A 'true heart'
the first qualification for
evangelical
worship.

The expression 'with a true heart,' here standing first as the qualification for evangelical worship, seems appropriately referred to the foregoing representation of privilege of access. 'A true heart' is

a heart answerable to our relations to the evangelical mysteries, a heart in unison with them in its dispositions and convictions, its yearnings and cleavings. It seems to glance at the historic faultiness of the Hebrew people, against whom heavy accusations are registered throughout the Old Testament of the want of this 'true heart' in their professions of service, and pledges to observe the Covenant. Hence the brief characteristics of their kings, that their hearts were 'perfect' or 'not perfect' before the Lord their God; that they 'set not their heart aright, and their spirit was not stedfast with God;' that they 'flattered Him with their lips when they drew near unto Him, but their heart was far from Him;' that 'their heart was not right with Him, neither were they stedfast in His covenant.' This expression, 'a true heart,' is the entire reverse of all Hebrew proclivities, as attested both by the Law and the Prophets. The 'true heart' is a sincere, honest, upright, stedfast, changeless heart; the fruit-bearing heart which, according to the doctrine of our Lord's parable, brings forth a hundred-fold. The prime qualification of a Christian worshipper is, therefore, not a highly cultured intelligence, but a 'true heart.'

'In full assurance of faith.' This expression denotes not an initial but a strong and well-exercised faith,—not one that 'feels after God, if haply it may find Him,' but a faith corroborated by exercise which brings with it all the results of previous experience, visitations of God, and the powers of the Holy Ghost. It is faith opposed to all doubtingness and to the alternations of weak-

CH. XXXVII.

Heb. x. 22.

ness; faith more as a power than as a principle, an effect of all the spiritual forces to which at first it gave birth; the eye which opens on every object within the field of evangelical vision, the very instinct and heart which draws toward the Infinite, and rests only in His fruition.

‘Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.’

Evangelical worship the result of the application of the Atonement to the conscience.

This last clause is not an exegesis of the two former, but is intended to suggest one of the two great fundamental qualifications for their maintenance and exercise. It strongly lays down this truth, that the qualifications for evangelical worship and communion with God, arise directly from an application of the Atonement to the conscience. ‘Having our hearts sprinkled,’ *i.e.* delivered from a sense of guilt and condemnation; in other words, ‘justified by faith.’ An ‘evil conscience’ is a sin-burdened conscience, which the Atonement alone can remedy, and without which ‘the true heart and the full assurance of faith’ can have no existence; consequently the worship itself is a nullity, a form without the power, a ceremony, not a living act.

‘Heart,’
‘conscience,’
and ‘body,’
collated to
denote entire
personal holi-
ness.

‘And our bodies washed with pure water.’ It is evident from this antithetic collation of the ‘heart’ and ‘conscience’ with ‘the body,’ that the two great constituents of redemption, righteousness and sanctification, are emphatically represented. Taken together, they make up a full personal holiness, and a full qualification for all evangelical exercises and fruitions. They obviously refer to the forms of absolution and lustration under the law, as may be seen by a reference to

the book of Leviticus; they may have particular reference to the lustration of the priesthood, either on the day of consecration, or as a preliminary to ordinary duties. 'Blood' and 'water' were the elements of lustration under the law, and they are represented as the elements of lustration under the gospel. John notes these as an extraordinary phenomenon in the crucifixion, while he adds this mystical signification in his first Epistle: 'This is He that came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth;' *i.e.* this double fact enters into the perpetual ministry of the Holy Ghost in the human conscience: He interprets it individually and experimentally, He gives 'perfection as pertaining to the conscience,' and that 'sanctification' which perfects for ever. This is substantially the exposition of the double clause, 'having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.'

CH. XXXVII.

Heb. x. 22.

'Water and blood,' elements of lustration under the law, figure sanctification under the gospel.
1 John v. 6.

That the latter clause cannot be understood otherwise, is evident from the fact that Christianity abolished all legal ordinances, 'divers washings and carnal ordinances.' That it cannot refer to baptism (the only open question respecting this phrase), is also clear from the consideration that the writer does not go back indefinitely to a period of baptism, but speaks of the washing as a present fact or state of a man; whereas, had baptism been intended, it must have been reiterated again and again to meet all the occasions of the Christian life; not to add that baptism cannot be a *synonym* for washing, which is a process for removing defilement, the

Baptism not intended; it is an act, not a state.

CH. XXXVII.

Heb. x. 22.

No mystical efficacy ascribed to the *waters* of baptism in New Testament.

thing intended here by the phrase, 'washed with pure water.' Besides, there is no warrant in the New Testament for ascribing a mystical efficacy to the *water* of baptism, merely for the 'sanctifying of the flesh': this was an efficacy belonging to Jewish rites which the gospel altogether discards. Nor would the most strenuous advocates for the efficacy of baptism consent to restrict it to a mere office for the body, they make it regenerative and synonymous with the birth from above. It is clear, therefore, that this phrase is to be understood as descriptive of evangelical sanctification in Old Testament language, and that it has as little reference to baptism, literally taken, as to Jewish ceremonies. What is meant is simply the redemption of entire humanity, agreeably with St. Paul's expression (1 Thess. v. 23), 'The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;' or (Rom. xii. 1), 'That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' Here the body cannot be taken without the soul, nor is it, in the text, with its washing with 'pure water,' to be separated from the same administration which sprinkles the heart from an 'evil conscience.'

End (ver. 22) of section on the priesthood.

Priesthood the perfecting doctrine of the evangelical system.

Thus ends the great section of this Epistle devoted to the revelation of our Lord's priesthood with the correlative priesthood of His people—the grand perfecting doctrines of the evangelical system. Taken as a whole, the exhibition is one of wonderful distinctness, comprehensiveness, and power, greatly heightened by the comparison being drawn

out of the leading institute of the law, without strain or fancy, without any undue minuteness of particulars, but causing the older dispensation simply to forecast the later, as the sun revealed in its zenith power drinks up its own shadows.

CH. XXXVII.
Heb. x. 22.

It may not be out of place here to mark the relation of these great doctrines to the Church, which is their proper sphere, not the world at large. World-truths are here and there interspersed with the earlier portion of the Epistle, but the PRIESTHOOD is a Church doctrine to be numbered among the mysteries of its faith, and appropriate to the study and consolation of its members. We see no world-vision here, but simply a replacement of the old favoured people, of their institutes and solemnities. In the Christian Church their faith bears its last and ripest fruit, and their hope embodied in cardinal facts is to be expanded to a world-compass indeed, but is first to encircle themselves. An Epistle to the Hebrews could be none other than this in structure, but it is not the less precious to the Gentile Church, as adding to the New Testament a perfecting revelation of the common salvation.

A Church doctrine.

The difference is striking which is suggested by a review of the two days of atonement presented to us in this discussion. The one was a fast as well as a festival; the other the joy of the opened 'wells of salvation.' The one was a call to repentance, humiliation, sackcloth, and wailing, scarcely relieved to the more thoughtful spirits by the most impressive offices of the priesthood, since 'remembrance was again made in those sacrifices of sins every year.' But if the evangelical day of atonement be accompanied by proclamations of penitence and

Contrast between the legal and evangelical Day of Atonement.

CH. XXXVII. confession, it is because 'the kingdom of heaven is
11**Heb. x. 22.** at hand;' and the day of Pentecost showed how
speedily 'beauty might be given for ashes, the oil
of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for
the spirit of heaviness.'

* * * * *

ADDENDA.

COMPILED BY THE EDITORS FROM NOTES, MSS., &c.

HEB. XI. 1 : 'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'

From the beginning there has been a succession of men, believers in the Unseen. Their faith necessarily pointed to an after-life, and it gave them an objective realization of the idea it had itself created. This faith had all the assurance of fact, but without its reasons or its philosophy—a settled presentiment of destiny, without so much as guessing at what it shall be, because that destiny as yet subsists in the Divine Mind only. Faith is a grand fact in experience, at present solitary, and subsisting amidst nothing but anomalies and contradictions to itself; nevertheless it has its reason in something *real*, however remote, as the magnet has in the pole, however distant, and to this faith is set, and by it its course is ruled.

The doctrine of the chapter is the sovereignty of faith in the guidance of a religious life; it is set forth as the main-spring of piety. It is stated to be 'the evidence of things not seen;' a definition which makes it a something quite different from an opinion or an intellectual conviction, for 'the *evidence* of things not seen' is not drawn from reason, it is the faculty by which the soul corresponds with God. It is called faith to separate it from all philosophy or mystical intuitions. Faith, intellectually, is a belief in divine testimony, which testimony constitutes the data of divine science to man; it rests on facts; it begins with

ADDENDA. history; it takes Scripture as a sure witness and exponent of what has been, is, and shall be. But, though faith differs from reason as exercised on the facts of science, being a something brought to man from an extraneous source, yet it may be defined as divine reason exercised on the facts of Revelation. Faith, as a source of knowledge, is to us instead of reason, because it leads us where our reason cannot reach, tracing for us the line between things knowable or not, which we could not do for ourselves. The faith that is commended as the root of all true religion is never supposed to originate in anything but divine revelation, either particular or general, and consists in a constant and unfaltering adhesion to it as infallible truth. Still, to believe by computing the force of evidence, and to believe morally with pious dispositions, are things widely different. Many of the witnesses of our Saviour's miracles, and probably some of those who wrought them in His name, were among believers of the former class, while the latter only could be said to have faith in its proper essence as a spiritual principle.

Revelations are supposed in every instance as the ground of faith; nor is it difficult to perceive that in no other way is the knowledge of God accessible to man. God, as a Spirit divine and infinite, is as inscrutable to angels as to men; His essence is infinitely removed from all creature inspection; we know no more of Him than He is pleased to reveal, and the measure of our knowledge is defined by the measure of His own revelation, which faith alone can receive. Doubtless the knowledge of God came to man originally in the way of direct spiritual endowment, and was essential to his perfection as created in the 'image of God;' but it does not follow that it does so *now*,—indeed facts prove the contrary. It no longer belongs to the mental powers as such, but it is restored to us by Revelation and by the light of the Redeeming Spirit. In whatever degree the divine knowledge exists now, it is derived from sources distinct from man, for there is no instance of any people who have lost the knowledge of God ever having recovered it of themselves; the testimony of Nature may confirm the discoveries of Revelation, but can never

be a substitute for them. The evidence of the Being of God gathered from nature is doubtful and tedious, while an appeal to Revelation must be made at last if we are to turn the discovery to any practical account.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

The supposition that the Patriarchs gained the elements of their faith from the light of nature, is entirely false to the facts given us in the book of Genesis, which states that Revelation had its source in Paradise, and was afterwards dispersed and diffused among the nations of mankind. That the first man was profoundly skilled in the knowledge of God, is a necessary inference from his history, both before and after the Fall. That terrible event, whatever were its moral and physical effects upon him, would certainly not obliterate the knowledge of God in which he was created, and which he had acquired previously. It is evident also he received the outline of the plan of his own recovery and that of his entire progeny, together with the principles and ordinances of that worship which was suited to express and perpetuate it. The knowledge of the first man became the great fountainhead of tradition to his descendants, and was copious and profound beyond what we generally imagine. Indeed, the probability is, that the theology of the antediluvian patriarchs was far superior to that of their post-diluvian descendants, and that, for many ages after, religious knowledge declined rather than increased in the world. The evidence of Scripture, whether taken from its history or from its doctrinal comments, is, that a comprehensive theology existed from the beginning; nor could there, with respect to the antediluvians, be any error or uncertainty about it as in after-times. Adam was contemporary with Enoch, with his son Methuselah, and with Lamech the father of Noah, dying only a few years before Noah was born. Thus Enoch might have received his knowledge from the lips of the first man; he communicated it to his son Methuselah, he again to Lamech, and Lamech to Noah: or, more briefly still, Methuselah and Lamech were contemporary with Adam, and Noah with both of them, so that between Adam and Noah there was only one hereditary link to be supplied, and none between

ADDENDA. Noah and Abraham;¹ Noah living nearly sixty years after Abraham was born. Looking at these Scripture facts, we are at no loss to discern the source of patriarchal faith, or in what that faith consisted. It must have included a very comprehensive knowledge of the perfections and works of God, both in nature and providence,—of His moral government, of His law, and of the certainty of rewards and punishments. It must also have included all the duties pertaining to religion,—that God was to be worshipped both in public and in private,—that the Sabbath was a standing testimony to man that religion was his end, as it was God's in the perfection of creation. It must have included the knowledge of the Fall in its general consequences, and the knowledge of the Redeemer; the original promise delivered in the anathema pronounced on Satan is sufficiently in proof of this. The rite of sacrifice, too, was doubtless delivered to the first man; for there is no intimation that Abel was the first who practised it.

Faith, then, has always been based on divine testimony. It is a spiritual intuition, the sole conveyancer of divine influence, the one principle connecting God with human creatures, though this can only be affirmed of it when its objects are rendered entire and substantial by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the mind. God cannot influence us morally in any other way. Faith is everything *now*; it will be nothing by and by.

Verse 2: 'For by it the elders obtained a good report.' Submission to believing is a great moral test which God has set for us, and which has been successfully passed by His faithful people in all ages. We see the identity of the faith of Old Testament saints with that of Christian disciples. To the former promises were given, holding forth to faith the same blessings more or less amplified, urging to the same general course of duty, and calling into exercise the same general class of graces.

Verse 3: 'Through faith we understand that the worlds

¹ This extraordinary length of life seems to have been conferred only on one line. We have no hint in the narrative what the ordinary term was, probably not greatly in excess of our own. Pharaoh's question to Jacob suggests that the Patriarch's age was remarkable.

were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.'

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

This is an inspired comment on the first verse in Genesis, which, whether written by Moses or not, is here indorsed as a divine revelation. That God is the Creator is the primary truth on which all religion rests; it is therefore placed first in order; further revelations were built upon it. Reason is unable to demonstrate the fact of Creation in the proper sense of the term. It is asserted to be a miracle, a making of something out of nothing, in opposition to the development of one thing out of another, the germs being eternal; a theory understood by the Greeks quite as well as by any moderns. A Christian faith rejects this; it believes in Creation; and if it did not believe in Creation, it could not believe in Resurrection: they rest on the same foundation, the foundation of express testimony. This by no means contradicts the great law of progression; for in the action of Deity one thing is made the foundation of another: everything we know, begin where we may, indicates laws of relation and sequence. When God made man, He gave him a revelation of Himself; but He also surrounded him with facts which confirmed this revelation, and were meant to unfold it. There is progression also in the doctrine of Redemption; we still find one thing made subservient to another. We are not called upon to stake our faith on mere declarations; even from the infinite God we want something done as well as something said. Revelation never takes us by surprise; it appeals to something that answers to itself in fact or in consciousness; it requires no violent effort of mind to comprehend it.

The 'Word of God' here has a personal as well as a literal meaning, and the Hebrews, to whom the Epistle was addressed, were quite familiar with this use of the term.

Verse 4: 'By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.'

We are told in Genesis (chap. iv. 3) that this occurred 'at the end of the days,' which appears to mean the Sabbath or some great occasion, when both brothers brought

.ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

their offerings to the Lord. It seems probable that a great public trial took place before the primeval families of the earth, on the question of the true meaning of the oracles of God; the rather as a careful examination of the narrative gives one the idea that there was a much more considerable population than is generally supposed. Cain's complaint that he should 'be hid' from the 'face' of God suggests that the primitive worship was performed before some visible manifestation of the divine glory, consecrating a particular place for their services; for, according to the narrative, in primitive times God held frequent communications with man. Had not Abel's *faith* rested on some special revelation that such acts of worship would be acceptable to God, it would have been groundless, and would have been fancy and not faith; nor, in the absence of such revelations, could we satisfactorily account for the acceptance of his offering and the rejection of Cain's, who as truly believed in the general truth, that 'God is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him,' as Abel himself. Moreover, we cannot conceive that animal offerings, which involved the destruction of His creatures, would be acceptable to God, but by His own appointment. Cain, probably a very able man, interpreted the revelation deistically: it was all symbolic, and the fruits of the earth were as true an offering as the bloody sacrifice. He fatally erred in refusing to approach God in a way expressive of guilt and wretchedness; he homaged God as the Creator, not as the Redeemer of the world. That this was the cause of his rejection, is plain from the narrative: sin, *i.e.* the sin-offering, lieth at the door; his breach of duty was well known to himself, and the means of retrieving it were within his reach. The controversy is brought to a formal trial, and God testifies to Abel's gifts, and witnesses to his righteousness. We must conclude that some sensible demonstration was given by God of His approval, otherwise it would be difficult to see how Cain would know that Abel's offering was received while his own was not. Probably Abel's was consumed by fire, while Cain's was left untouched (see the priests of Baal, 1 Kings chap. xviii.). Mortified by the public rejection of his offering and the preference by which

Abel was honoured, though exhorted and warned by God Himself, his anger continued to burn against his brother, and could only be quenched in his blood. The awful catastrophe followed: it was not that Cain was without natural affection; it was religious hatred that prompted the murder. Abel was the first martyr, a martyr to the doctrine contained in the rite of sacrifice. He enjoyed the distinguished honour of being pronounced 'righteous' by God. His was probably the first human spirit that, in the very morning of the world, winged its way to glory.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

The history of Abel shows that no man is or can be accepted, who rejects, as Cain did, the revelation of God, and, for the system of truth and worship which He has prescribed, substitutes his own. The victims of reason, preferring to spell out with difficulty, and even to mistake, the character and purposes of that Being who has discovered Himself in His word, choose the cobwebs of their own imagination instead of the imperishable temple which God has erected to be the place of our refuge.

Verse 5: 'By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.'

Of Enoch little is said in the canonical Scriptures: the only mention of him in the Old Testament is in the fifth of Genesis; and in the New, here, and in the Epistle of Jude. This verse is a plain reference to the history in Genesis, confirming the relation of his extraordinary removal from the earth, and the exalted piety by which he was distinguished. The genealogy in the fifth of Genesis consists of a record of the Patriarchs pertaining to the races of Cain and Seth only; the surrounding families and colonies of each race are passed over in silence, as is the entire family of Adam, except Cain, Abel, and Seth. It relates in what portion of the human race the true religion was maintained, together with the cause of its corruption. It also enables us to trace the line of the great Redemptive Covenant through the *ante* and *post*-diluvian worlds: from Seth to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, and from

ADDENDA. Abraham to his descendants, through whom, according to the flesh, Christ came.

Heb. xi.

Enoch was of the posterity of Seth, which composed the Church then existing in the world, called the 'Sons of God,' and distinguished from the progeny of Cain, who, as wearing the badge of apostasy, are called the 'Sons of men.' That he was a man of extraordinary piety is attested by his history. Of all the antediluvian race he was singled out for the glory of a bodily translation to heaven. His life on earth was scarcely more than a third of the length of the patriarchs of his race, but it was entirely devoted to God. He walked 'by faith, not by sight,' though there can be no doubt that he was favoured with extraordinary manifestations; this is implied in the fact that he was a prophet. His faith was founded on divine revelations; not merely upon a particular promise, but upon other and more general truths, faith in which qualified him to receive the particular promise of the translation, as the testimony that he had pleased God.

Our ignorance of the extent and arrangements of society before the Deluge excludes the possibility of forming an accurate opinion of the influence and dignity of Enoch; but, as he was the seventh from Adam in the direct line, he must be presumed to have been a man of exalted rank, a prince among the tribes of his people. What Noah, Abraham, and Moses were in their several generations, that Enoch was in his—a great character especially raised up by God for the service of his age, a chief pillar of the Church when the apostasy was fast spreading which had well-nigh terminated in the extinction of religion. It is evident from the passage in St. Jude that Enoch had a supernatural foresight of the judgment by which it was overtaken; it is therefore probable that, like his illustrious descendant Noah, he taught and admonished the world with all the urgency and industry which this revelation inspired.

'Enoch was translated that he should not see death.' This is the comment of the Epistle on the words in Genesis, 'He was not, for God took him;' *i.e.* he disappeared from the earth, he was removed from the society of men. God took him, not death,—his entire nature

being transformed, and his entire person removed to the celestial world by a special ordination of Almighty God. In the translation itself the faith of Enoch was personally honoured by the removal, in his case, of the appointment for 'men once to die.' This exemption was the noblest favour God could confer; it was the original boon awarded to innocency, forfeited by the Fall, but given back to an individual belonging to the fallen race, and probably bestowed under the very eye of Adam, who himself had once exulted in the prospect of it. Enoch was not dealt with even physically and temporally as if he were a sinner, but in conformity with the law of innocency. The standing, visible, soul-appalling penalty of sin, is, in his behalf, reversed: for him death had no sting; over him the grave had no victory, the law had no sentence, for the Law-giver had suspended it. The curse of sin was never to blight the goodness of the flesh, nor to turn its beauty into corruption, nor lay his honour in the dust, nor leave so much as a momentary trace on that frame, the shrine of the Spirit and the temple of God. In him the outer man never suffered divorce from the inner; the two natures were never severed from their intimate embrace; his entire being was continued without parenthesis; not an iota of his person was left behind; there was no grave, no funeral rite, no corpse, no remains,—nothing left as when the presence of death is beheld,—nothing to embalm, to weep over, or to bury. He was not 'unclothed, but clothed upon,' and 'mortality was thus swallowed up of life;' the earthly house of his tabernacle was not dissolved, but refashioned in a moment by an afflatus of divine glory, so as to become, what Christians wait for in the resurrection, 'a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' 'He was not found, because God had translated him.' A grand phenomenon was exhibited in the sight of the intelligent universe—a human being of a fallen race taken out of the midst of his fellows, carried up to the throne at once, and crowned with the glory and honour which await the body of the faithful at the last day.

Probably this example, as well as that of Elijah, was intended to show to the heavenly powers, and especially to

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

the spirits of the just made perfect, the glory of the consummation, as it should be brought to pass by the Mediator, and to give a kind of visible pledge and demonstration of it to the Church in heaven. Both Enoch and Elijah seem to have been in some sort types and shadows preceding the glorification of Christ's humanity in the heavens. If this be true, the reason is at once apparent why no translations have followed the entry of Christ into heaven. They are now utterly superfluous; for the federal character of the Messiah, and His intrinsic connection with the whole plan of man's recovery, rendered His demonstration absolutely transcendent, 'they having no glory in this respect.'

Enoch's faith was rewarded by his early transference from a scene of care and grief to one perfectly congenial to his extraordinary spiritual attainments. Thus the most holy man then living was a second instance of an apparently premature removal, as Abel by martyrdom, so Enoch by translation. He was taken from the infelicity of living to witness the progress of the Church's apostasy and the growth of wickedness to such an extent as gave the visible prognostic of that awful judgment which he saw would close the scene. Even to have foreseen both the one and the other must have had a saddening and dreary effect; but to have lived to witness, in its multiform details and manifestations, the declension of religion, through the intermarriages mentioned in Genesis of the sons of God with the daughters of men; the marked degeneracy of each new generation above that which preceded it; the prostration of faith; the triumph of error; the wreck of morality; the domination of cruelty, oppression, rapine, and bloodshed, without any prospect of mitigation or recovery;—this, to a holy soul like Enoch's, must have been a perpetual martyrdom,—a burden of woe and lamentation; hence his removal was a dispensation of peculiar favour.

Enoch's translation was a public seal to those great doctrines of primitive theology which he had embraced and endeavoured to maintain in the world. In the instance of Elijah this was remarkably the case; he was the chief witness to the truth in that generation so awfully sunk in idolatry and wickedness. The translation of Enoch was

God's testimony to His own truth in the person of His most illustrious witness. The doctrine of immortality was especially demonstrated by it; the doctrine of the immortality of the body, as well as that of the soul, both of which, there is every reason to believe, had been greatly obscured, if indeed they had not entirely vanished from the minds of men. By this translation, life and immortality were again brought to light, surrounded by their primitive splendour even as they were before the Fall. By it that tremendous catastrophe was beheld in its full light,—that to die was contrary to nature, to live for ever the primitive law. The grand prologue of recovered man, thus presented to the contemplation of the world, was intended to elevate this great doctrine to a perpetual and practical ascendancy.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

The objects and results of Enoch's faith are substantially the same in God's elect; for it respects the life to come, and the glorification of redeemed man in heaven. In this faith the patriarchs lived and died, as well as the followers of our Lord; their views of life and of death were the same, they confessed themselves 'strangers and pilgrims.' Enoch and Elijah were translated, but the whole body of the faithful have the same glory secured to them by covenant; while the spiritual enjoyments of the new dispensation are so abundant that our Lord declared that His people do not 'see death.' The spirit is translated directly, but the *body* sleeps; they are conformed to Christ,—He died and rose again, and became the first-begotten from the dead. Translations are reserved in multitudes for the final scenes of the Redeemer's Advent: 'We that are alive and remain shall be caught up together.'

It is the purpose of God to glorify His Church in a body. The saints fall asleep in succession till the number of the elect be fulfilled in the end of the days; until the saving plan is fully wrought out, the resurrection must be delayed.

Verse 6: 'But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.'

The declaration of the second clause, 'for he that cometh to God,' etc., is introduced simply to demonstrate

ADDENDA. the principle, that without faith it is impossible to please
 Heb. xi. God. It does not, in the slightest degree, imply that men ever did, or could know, that God is, and that He is the 'rewarder of them that diligently seek Him,' without a divine revelation as the basis of the knowledge. On the contrary, it asserts the impossibility of any man ever coming to God acceptably, or indeed at all, without it; at the same time, the very reason assigned why men cannot come to God without it, viz. that they must have something definite to believe concerning God, supposes adequate instruction as to what they were to believe. How this could exist without revelation it is difficult to conceive. The religion of revelation is the only one that promises reward in this life, the enjoyment of God in the soul: 'Thou art my exceeding great reward.' Faith alone is thus rewarded; no other principle ever professes to seek or to find this recompense. The doctrine of reward is always associated in Scripture with great moral elevation. A loyal subject finds his reward in his sovereign's approval; and this is the sort of reward the Christian seeks: it effectually rebuts the charge of meanness and self-interest.

Verse 7: 'By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.'

All these examples refer to faith in unseen facts. There was nothing in nature to indicate the Deluge; it was delayed a hundred and twenty years; yet Noah preached and emphasized his preaching by building the ark. It was in vain; only 'eight persons' were saved, though it by no means follows that all who perished in the waters were lost everlastingly. The progeny of Cain, numerous, beautiful, gifted, and apostate, were extirpated, because they had, from the days and after the example of their progenitors, been enemies of the true religion; they had brought about the corruption of the earth, and the extinction of the Church, except as it was found in Noah and his family. Therefore wrath came to the uttermost: not a representative of Cain was left, his whole posterity was annihilated; their destruction being probably the only

mercy the case admitted of. The earth was re-peopled by Noah and his family, the only remaining descendants of Seth, and the conservators of primitive religion. Noah's first act on leaving the ark was to build an altar, and re-institute the religion of sacrifice.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

Verses 8-10: 'By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.'

Abraham enjoyed the righteousness of faith before he received this call to go out into a 'strange country,' which he clearly understood was to be the inheritance of his posterity, not his own. Hence he never attempted any settlement there, which under other circumstances would have been both natural and easy to a man of his rank and prowess. He was always a sojourner, a mere settler, and his example was followed by Isaac and Jacob. This pilgrim state, the result of their 'call,' was but the visible embodiment of their faith before the world. They thus declared plainly that they sought a country, while their separation from the moral enormities of their neighbours, and visible devotedness to the One God, were still more striking signs of the same fact. In the midst of ages of increasing darkness, when the primitive religion was all but extinct, one holy family bore aloft the beacon light. The covenant rite, the altar, the sacrifices, the Sabbath, marked them as the true Church of the Living God, while their very migrations became those of a missionary ministry, a travelling gospel among the nations. They dwelt in 'tabernacles,' which are elsewhere made the symbol of our earthly life, and the 'city' the symbol of our enduring life. Here, again, we have faith in the unseen. If Abraham had understood the promise as referring only or chiefly to the *land*, why did he not take possession of it? But it was a matter of indifference to him in comparison with the 'city whose builder and maker is God.'

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

Verses 11, 12 : 'Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.'

The birth of Isaac was contrary to the course of nature, and so shadowed forth the Incarnation.

The Jews, to this very day, answer to the description of the twelfth verse ; they are the most ancient race in the world, and the only one of unquestioned descent. They sprang from one pair, and even in their exceptional origin foreshadowed the Christian Church.

Verses 13-16 : 'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly : wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God : for He hath prepared for them a city.'

It is very probable John Bunyan got the idea of his 'Dream' from these verses. The things promised were seen afar off, but very distinctly as things are seen in the East ; there was, nevertheless, the sight of them, the clear perception of their divine and glorious substance ; they were so persuaded of their reality that they left everything else in order to press after them. There is persuasion which is opposed to doubt and uncertainty : there is recognition, as we recognise the persons of friends even when 'afar off ;' a firm persuasion that they are what they seem to be. 'Embracing them,' casting the arms of our affectionate confidence about them, after the manner of Eastern salutation ; laying hold of them and welcoming them 'as the desire of our eyes, and the rejoicing of our heart. They might have returned to the country from whence they came out (Bunyan's city of Destruction, for

example), but they followed on after these unseen realities. 'A city' is prepared, not the country, not a solitude; giving a grand idea of a perfect life and perfect society after the toil and travail of the pilgrimage.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

Verses 17-19: 'By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.'

The great point of Abraham's faith was the offering of Isaac, in whom all fulfilment of the promise rested. It is here said he did offer him, *i.e.* in will and faith he did. The type—for the whole transaction was typical—is followed no further; perhaps, lest God should seem to countenance human sacrifices; perhaps, because a type being but a figure, it was carried far enough. Abraham perfectly understood the figure; he fully expected Isaac would be raised again. In the sacrifice of Christ it was a transaction between the Father and the Offerer only; no one concerned in it, not even His disciples, had the least understanding of it, much less the Roman soldiers or the Jewish persecutors; so that no sanction was in the remotest way given to human sacrifice. (See p. 309.)

Verse 20: 'By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.'

It is clear Isaac believed in his own inspiration, and that the vision before him would assuredly be fulfilled. Jacob and Esau had personally little to do with it; but the succession was altered; it was transferred to Jacob. During their lives Esau seems to have been the more prosperous person; but the Edomites, his descendants, are rarely mentioned, they were comparatively obscure, while the descendants of Jacob are the most remarkable people in the world to this day.

Verse 21: 'By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.'

Not literally when he was dying, but failing, as we say—when he felt death drawing near. He makes Joseph's

ADDENDA. sons his representatives in the tribeship, Joseph's own name not being mentioned. This act of worship is not narrated in the forty-eighth of Genesis; it was probably something special, answering to that remarkable expression of Jacob's faith recorded in the forty-ninth chapter, 'I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord,' and which interrupts so singularly the vision opened to him by inspiration of the glory of his family. The faith of Jacob is here ranked with that of the most eminent of the patriarchs. He had dwelt with Abraham and Isaac in tents, looking for 'a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God;' he had heard from them the glorious revelations of former ages, as well as those given to themselves; his was the birthright and the blessing; he had seen the mystic ladder; nay, in his many and often sorrowful wanderings he had seen Jehovah Himself in mystic converse with him, a stranger, a shepherd, 'the worm Jacob;' he had been bidden by Him to go down into Egypt to die there; and above all, he had predicted the coming of the Shiloh, whom he had before adored as the ANGEL who had 'fed him all his life long and redeemed him from all evil,' whose doctrine he had learned in the course of his pilgrimage, and whose spirit had given him a minstrelsy in his dying hours;—he at least, therefore, could be no stranger to evangelical faith and consolations at such a season. He turns to the Angel who had redeemed him as to a Saviour long known; he was not the recipient of unlooked-for succour in his dying hours,—it was but the issue of his long life of faith soon to be exchanged for sight.

Verse 22: 'By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.'

Joseph had served the Egyptians for eighty years, probably the longest tenure of power on record; but his work for them is over now, and his last thoughts are given to the future of his own people. He is quite cognizant of the sufferings they were to undergo, but he expresses his faith in their deliverance, and concludes his grand life with a prophecy, in view of the fulfilment of which his body was not to be interred in the ordinary way, but to be

carried to his own estate given to him by his father, probably near to the well where our Lord met the woman of Samaria. It is likely that the value of the place arose from its springs.

ADDENDA.

 Heb. xi.

Verses 23-27: 'By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.'

Revelations of divine truth were probably, from the earliest times, held in some documentary form not specified, as it seems unlikely that the history of the Creation and the early events of the world should have descended to the days of Moses by tradition alone. There is a probability, amounting to a moral certainty, that the knowledge of letters was a leading element of primitive civilisation, and that the great body of theological truth was always preserved as a written record, and kept in the custody of the faithful. The *particular* revelations given from time to time implied pre-existing ones; for in no one age, except the first, did truth originate. These particular revelations are here referred to as being the basis of a special faith; but in no instance are they the original seed of it; they perfected it, but they did not create it.

These verses contain more of the personal history of Moses than we have anywhere else. It would seem that his parents had some special revelation from God as to the future calling of their child to be the Deliverer, and that in his preservation they did not follow the mere dictates of parental instinct. It was 'faith' which enabled them to brave the penalties of concealment, which were doubtless terrible enough. It was probably by divine intimation that they put him on the Nile, in the place where the Court were accustomed to bathe. He seems to have been

ADDENDA. pious from his early youth,—no doubt diligently instructed by his mother, and made aware of those revelations which were the ground of his own confidence in his future calling. It is evident that he knew his predestined course, and that it was his faith in this that constituted the ground of his refusal to be called ‘the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.’ Stephen says, ‘He was mighty in word and deed.’ He had probably given proof of his courage and statesmanship, and in consequence, if he would have renounced his people and accepted the Egyptian faith and adoption, even the succession to the throne was open to him; for, from what can be spelt out of the Egyptian dynasties, it is clear they were not strictly hereditary. There is some difficulty in applying these words, ‘He forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king,’ to his triumphant exit, leading out the children of Israel—the rather that we have the account in the next verse of the Passover kept in Egypt. Still less does it apply to his retreat after killing the Egyptian, for then he clearly *was* afraid of the wrath of the king. I believe it refers to a first forsaking of Egypt. After formally refusing court honours, and declaring his intention of casting in his lot with his own people, it is very likely he would find it expedient to withdraw. He was not prevented from taking his own course by dread of the king’s wrath; but, having done so, he quietly bowed to the storm, and took himself away. He went into obscurity, and probably encountered privation: so the word ‘endured’ would seem to imply. He voluntarily abandoned all Egypt’s advantages, and chose the condition of his afflicted kindred. He closed his eyes definitively and for ever upon its brilliant scenes, and fixed his heart and bent his steps toward the path of ministration, exigency, and peril. It was not a blind enthusiasm that induced the renunciation of secular greatness, but the result of a deliberate choice between the course he knew God had prescribed for him, though one of unprecedented difficulty and peril, and the honours and pleasures which His hand had thrown around him, intended to supply the test of his faith, and the materials of his moral trial. On the one hand, there was Egypt, with

Heb. xi.

all that the world could offer; on the other, the service of God, with its difficulties and sufferings,—the work of a Deliverer,—the conflict with Pharaoh,—the hatred of the Egyptians,—the sojourning in the wilderness, and the going to Canaan. There was object presented with object, motive with motive. Something analogous is found in every case involving a decision for God, or otherwise. Each has its own class of obstacles which call for the courage to surmount them, inspired only by ‘seeing Him that is invisible.’ He had not sight, but what was, for moral influence, equivalent to sight, a clear, intellectual and spiritual apprehension of God, in His being, character, and relations to us; and this so constant and habitual as to be expressed only by the apparent contradiction of ‘seeing Him who is invisible.’ It is obvious that the spiritual intuition of God must be an adequate source of courage to His servants, whether courage be taken in an active or passive sense; it must needs inspire a vigour and fortitude infinitely superior to any other. The energy of a conscience that dwells in His sight; the calmness arising from the perceived rightness of duty; the joy springing from His favour; the hope that builds upon the promised recompense of faithfulness; are all wonderfully adapted to maintain and develope the character of the servant of God in its strength and maturity.

This intuition of God could not depend on sensible manifestations. Such were, indeed, given to many of the persons mentioned in the chapter (as the burning bush; the similitude of the divine glory in the Tabernacle, etc.); but these were not the original grounds of faith. They all presupposed that knowledge of God which faith confesses, and which qualified the early saints to receive these extraordinary discoveries; but the Invisible was not seen in them: He remained as unseen as ever.

The desire for some sensible representation of the invisible God, something more palpable than revelation warranted, to worship Him through some medium which comes finally to be regarded as the Invisible Himself, originated idolatry, with all its abominations and miseries. Hence the warning of Moses to the people to beware of

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

ADDENDA. images, because they saw no 'similitude' in all the wonders of divine manifestation.

Heb. xi.

Verse 28: 'Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the first-born should touch them.'

During his absence from Egypt Moses had been living in personal communication with God, in addition to his hereditary and acquired knowledge of Him. Faith, therefore, with him was an intellectual and moral necessity, arising from his extraordinary position. He could not doubt that he had received a true communication from God; there was no intervening person, time, or country. His intercourse with God was so frequent, that he became familiarized with its wonders as with the occurrences of general life. Hence his faith had all the certainty of experience. The faith by which he kept the Passover was not merely a persuasion that he was to celebrate a particular ordinance, as a means of deliverance from a particular danger; this he could not but have, and there is therefore no virtue in it considered alone. It was rather in the dispositions of mind that his faith implied, in the spiritual, holy temper which a previous faith had begotten, that the virtue of it lies. It is obviously not the scope of the apostle to select for commendation one particular act of faith put forth at a certain time, so much as a general habit of faith previously implanted and fostered, and then emphasized in a signal act of obedience to God.

'Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood.' The latter circumstance was not essential to the rite as it existed in perpetuity; it was added only for the first and memorable night of the deliverance from Egypt. Moses enjoined the Passover on the people for ever; so that his keeping of it, recorded in an imperishable writing, became the law of keeping ever after. The fact and the law run on to this day, and will remain so long as the world shall last, a monument of the Exodus in all probability old as the pyramids themselves. The faithfulness of Moses exhibited itself in his care that the ordinance should be everywhere duly celebrated, that no family should neglect it, and that no circumstance should

be wanting. On the appointed day the lambs are killed, the hyssop is plucked, the lintels are sprinkled, and the door-posts are red with the sacrificial blood. The families are gathered, the doors are shut, they feast together, the night is come, its watches pass relieved by the vigils of holy prayer, or by the awful breathless expectancy which listens for the herald of the messenger of death.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

That night the sun had gone down shedding its last rays upon the thoughtless crowds of Egypt's families. The slave had been released from his toil, the master from his daily cares, the monarch from the pageants of his station, and even the beggar from the miseries of his lot. The engrossing topic of the national mind at that season would be the legation of Moses. The strange prodigies that had been witnessed by the court, the fearful calamities that had befallen the land, had agitated them with the wildest impulses of hope and fear. Their pride rose with their misfortunes, their hatred became more decided as judgment was prolonged, and the forcible retention of the subject-race became more and more the point to be gained; but after every visitation there was an added hardness, an infatuated resolve to be dispelled only by a still more terrible judgment. The rod of Moses is no longer to be stretched forth; Jehovah summons other agents to His work. The Destroyer has entered every dwelling; he has singled out his victim, and that victim the first-born; he is smitten, but no hand appears; he is in mortal agony, but his foe is unseen, his footstep is not heard, he has fled as noiselessly as he came; his stroke is repeated countlessly, all are made mourners in the same hour; none can pity his neighbour, or bless his own lot; death has gone up into every home and enwrapt the whole land in his darkest shadow. No embalming can take place, for the multitude of dead,—the funeral rites are utterly suspended,—they must open the graves,—they must hurry to the sepulchre, and the king and the peasant are all found on the same road.

‘Lest He that destroyed the first-born should touch them.’ Moses kept the Passover as a prescribed means of salvation, a divinely appointed security against the stroke of the commissioned messenger of death. It was a passover, because

ADDENDA. the Destroyer in his rapid flight through the Egyptian courts never paused to smite an Israelitish family. The ordinance therefore derived its name from the very promise of God, on seeing the blood to pass over their dwellings. It became the most important institution of the Jews. It was the last thing in their decay which fell into desuetude, as its recovery was the first sign which marked any successful revival of religion among them, from the days of Moses to the time of Christ. That it was the most illustrious type of Christ and of His redemption, is proved by the references to it in the apostolic writings. The institution of the Supper engrafted upon it, and the coincidence of our Lord's Passion with the time of its celebration at Jerusalem, make it a perennial prefiguration of these grand gospel mysteries. How far the faith of Moses looked beyond the immediate design of the institution itself, to its final and more glorious end, is scarcely open to question. When we consider who Moses was—his pre-eminent gifts, his peculiar office, his wonderful intimacy with the evangelical character of the Law, and his prophetic knowledge of future personages, times, and things—it seems altogether improbable that he was ignorant of the evangelical character of the Passover. He who 'esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt' can scarcely be supposed to have been a stranger to the spiritual aspects of his own ordinances, especially of this great one that so clearly prefigured the sacrifice of 'Christ our passover.'

Verse 29: 'By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.'

The Israelites must have had real faith to venture on such a march in darkness, and amidst circumstances so extraordinary. The Egyptians had no faith, nor any call in which to put faith, and they were drowned.¹

¹ Dean Stanley supposes the Israelites started in the midst of a hurricane strong enough to drive back the waters of the Red Sea (*Jewish Church*, p. 127). If a host encumbered by women, children, cattle, and household goods—to say nothing of the spoils of the Egyptians—were able to face *such* a storm, the miracle involved would be at least as great as that which was required to divide the waters.

Verse 30 : 'By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.'

ADDENDA.

Heb. xi.

It must have been by faith in God's word alone, for none of the usual appliances were tried, probably because they were quite destitute of the necessary material. Jericho was the military key to the promised land, and their leaders would fully understand the necessity of possessing it.

Verse 31 : 'By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.'

It is not probable she was a harlot at the time of the spies' visit, and it is clear she did not continue her bad life. It was not any want of patriotism that made her shelter the spies, but her belief that God had given the land to the Israelites. It seems the people of the city believed it too, but they were determined to try it to its last issue. We are by no means to conclude that all the worthies mentioned in this chapter were models of piety; Samson, for instance, was very far from it; but they are all set before us as examples of faith. They were each distinguished by some special act of obedience resting on an unflinching faith in the promise of God.

Verses 33-38. 'Subdued kingdoms' applies only to David. 'Wrought righteousness' probably refers to the government of Samuel, and to the reforms brought about by the prophets; 'Stopped the mouths of lions,' only to Daniel; 'Quenched the violence of fire,' to the case of the three Hebrew children, who are here enrolled amongst the prophets. Probably the next, 'Out of weakness were made strong,' belongs to Samson; 'Women received their dead raised to life again,' to the raising of the widow's son by Elijah. The remaining verses show how the Jews treated their prophets when they had them, proud as they were of them afterwards. Probably this record of sainted suffering, hardly to be read without tears, refers chiefly to seasons of persecution under the apostate kings of Israel and Judah. It seems to be the purpose of the writer, in this chapter, to magnify the characters introduced in the early record, to bring them forth out of the shadow of a

ADDENDA. deep antiquity, to retouch and beautify them like choice specimens of ancient statuary, the master productions of a flourishing age, but bedimmed by a long flow of intervening generations; in order to crown these illustrious specimens of ancient piety with the supreme diadem of New Testament glory, 'the glory that excelleth.'

Heb. xi.

Verses 39, 40: 'And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.'

'Received not the promise,' *i.e.* the thing promised—the resurrection—a promise not even yet fulfilled to them. Its fulfilment must precede their entrance on the kingdom, the 'city' prepared for them; this still lies over, and the reason is given, 'that they without us should not be made perfect'—that is, that the Church should not be divided. As yet death reigns over a part of our nature; but as Christ has redeemed our bodies as well as our souls, its penalty must be discharged before we can be 'made perfect.' We must be first declared to be the sons of God by the resurrection, and then as such receive the reward of the inheritance. For these Old Testament saints there was no 'earnest of the inheritance,' they lived too early; there was nothing intermediate between 'the promise' and the heavenly city; we have the historical fulfilment, we enjoy the 'better thing' God has provided for us, that is, the blessings of the gospel, the full light of the last dispensation. We have these things here, while they must enter the separate state to realize them. The faith of the elders consisted in a thorough adhesion to the revelations of God as they existed in their times, the faith of Christians to those which exist in ours. It is a progression from faith to faith, the same principle leading onward to embrace further revelations as they were given; it was the absence of this which vitiated the faith of the Jews: 'If ye had believed Moses,' said our Lord, 'ye would have believed me.'

It therefore appears there is nothing new or peculiar in the position of Christian disciples as distinguished from that of former saints. The substance of acceptable piety was the same in all preceding generations.

CHAP. XII. 1: 'Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.'

ADDENDA.

Heb. xii.

These ancient worthies are represented as congregated to look on the scene of their own ordeal, to see how their successors acquit themselves in the race. Surely with the blessings of the new dispensation they will not run worse than their predecessors. Young soldiers must fight well under the eyes of veterans. The figure is that of a foot-race. Such races would be quite familiar to Hebrews living in foreign towns. The runners must be trained, and above all, be free from anything that could trip them up, for such, I think, is the meaning of 'beset;' they must be patient, not feeling as if the continual testing and hardships of their training were too much.

Verse 2. Jesus endured the cross in full prospect of the triumphant result; now He has *power*, for 'He is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.' He could not have had this power had He remained on earth. (See p. 312, etc.)

Verse 3. Much encouragement as we may draw from the example of saints, Christ is the great example. This 'contradiction' must refer to the continual denial He met with from the Jews, their persistent refusal to accept His claims.

Verse 4. It would seem that as yet martyrdom was not common; but in the strife against sin, even it would come to them, as it had come to their great example.

Verses 5-8. The reference here is to various passages in the Proverbs and in the Psalms, especially Psalm lxxiii. It seems to have been an old temptation, that greater sorrows come to those who are striving to love and serve God than to the careless; an incidental contradiction to the popular error, that temporal prosperity was ever promised as the reward of individual piety. God's promises to the Jews were of *national* prosperity, as the reward of obedience, reaching each man only incidentally as national prosperity reaches us now. The Apostle explains that it

ADDENDA. is with 'sons,' with those of whom something is to be made, that pains are taken; the 'bastards' are left comparatively uncared for. Chastisement in old times was a family ordinance: it is a modern notion that all is to be done by indulgence.

Heb. xii.

Verse 9. Our earthly fathers corrected us for our earthly good—they cared for our earthly prosperity; but God is the Father of our spirits—He cares for the perfection of the spirit, looking forward thousands of years to remove all hindrances in the way of its perfection.

Verse 10. We are not to suppose 'pleasure' to mean tyranny, but that the correction was in pursuance of their own will and judgment, which might involve error; God's chastisements are all for our increase in holiness. The severe discipline of these primitive times would doubtless produce great sanctity in those who endured to the end.

Verses 11–13. Heavy trial sometimes leads to weakness and discouragement; we feel as if we could bear no more, but the consideration of the end is to strengthen us. We are not to sit down before a tangled path, but to gird ourselves up, to shoulder our hatchet and make a way, to look after those who are less able than ourselves, who are not only 'feeble' but 'lame;' if we waver and yield, what is to become of them?

Verse 14. Seeing the Lord Christ face to face, holding intimate intercourse with Him, is the final reward of the faithful.

Verse 15. We are to be careful over others, like a master looking diligently after his scholars. If any fail, we cannot guess the result; they may become sources of bitterness, spreading heresies and leading many away. Satan makes special instruments of such, for they know the ways and habits of Christians, where the weak places lie.

Verses 16, 17. These people are called 'fornicators;' figurative language, perfectly familiar to readers of the Prophets. The apostle speaks of those tainted with idolatry, like Esau, careless of spiritual things, and ready to sell them in order to keep their worldly goods from the hands of the persecutors. A time comes when they bitterly repent their folly, but it is too late; probably the allusion

is to blasphemous apostates, to whom no repentance is granted (see Chap. XIII. p. 140). Certainly it is not meant that Esau necessarily lost his soul, but he lost his birth-right by his own fault. He cared for temporary indulgence, and little for the rest; and when he found out his mistake, it was irrevocable. He received a blessing, but not the blessing; *i.e.* he received what he had desired, temporal prosperity.

Verses 18–21. Here we have an account of the giving of the Law, the great historical epoch of the Jews. It was spoken out of the midst of the fire with the voice of thunder, the phenomena of the divine presence. The trumpet was to call them to audience, a preparation for the voice; it was the voice, the words, that the people could not sustain. Moses himself was but a medium of correspondence between the sovereign Lord and His subjects; yet, constitutionally brave, calm, and accustomed to direct divine manifestations as he was, he is overcome. It was full of terror, type, preparation—probably the only thing for which the Jews were at all ripe, deeply tainted as they were by Egyptian idolatry, and degraded by centuries of slavery. Rationalists regard it as incredible; but from a higher point of view it was most reasonable and necessary. A law given in any other way, by inspiration or prophecy for example, would have been entirely unfit for their condition. They were but a huge rudimental mass of humanity, self-willed and petulant; in fact, the worst sort of children—men and women with children's propensities, without their virtues. The wilderness was but a vast school-area, the pupils a whole nation, and the lessons the most momentous the world ever witnessed. They were enforced by commands and prohibitions, and upheld by the imminency of inflictions upon the disobedient; *i.e.* the discipline of the school as applied to childhood was literally applied to Israel. What the parent or the tutor may say to the child, Do this or do that, or refuse at your peril, was precisely the language and spirit of the Law, or of God, to His nation-family.

Verses 22, 23. Here we have the contrast, not Sinai, but Zion, Jerusalem, the site and the city, the type of the true Church. This city is spoken of in ch. xi. 16, but the general

ADDENDA.

Heb. xii.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xii.

imagery is drawn from Isaiah. It is the city whose foundation was laid in God's eternal purpose before the world was; its building has been going on through all time; and in prophetic magnificence it is finally unfolded as the birth of all things, labouring and agonized since creation was until its end shall come. The stoop of Christ's manhood, the price of His blood, the victory of His cross, the work of His Spirit, are all stored together here; its last glories are the sum of all preceding facts, influences, and results. For this city the last judgment can do no more than remove from around her walls the unclean and abominable: 'Zion shall be redeemed by judgment.'

The 'company of angels' are now all devoted to the service of the Church. The Jews were quite familiar with the doctrine of the ministry of angels, and sad nonsense they made of it in their writings. 'General assembly' would give to a Jew the idea of a great national gathering; 'written,' or enrolled, as it was customary for every Jew to be; 'the spirits of just men,' Old Testament worthies (see *Mediatorial Sovereignty*, vol. ii. pp. 161 and 454).

Verse 24. The blood of Jesus is contrasted with that of Abel. Both were martyrs, though Christ was much more; but, while the blood of Abel was judicial, Christ's was atoning as well. The apostle here clearly intimates that the Jews were Cainites in their slaying of Christ; and they are suffering for it judicially still. There is no reason in the world why they should not be a Christian Church at this day, but their own sin.

Verse 25. He that spake on earth is Moses; he is contrasted with Him who speaks from heaven; but the great truth here is, that He who spake the Law is the same as He who now gives the Gospel, *i.e.* Christ. Probably the reference is to Dathan and Abiram; they paid for their rebellion with their lives. Under the Law transgressors were punished in the body,—it by no means followed that their souls were lost; now the penalties are altogether spiritual, but not the less sure.

Verses 26–29. Disciples have received a kingdom. They are obliged to service conformably to ancient usage, in which homage was demanded by the sovereign, giving dominion,

from the subject receiving it; service is imposed because favours have been conferred. Hence, to heighten the impression of benefaction on the one hand and of dependence on the other, the dread intimations of penalty are joined to those of forfeiture, should the required returns be withheld: 'Our God is a consuming fire.' The kingdom received is the one great motive to yield the service required; and lest we should be deceived by vague notions of the grandeur of Christian privilege awaiting us in the future, but calling forth no corresponding effort in our present life, the royal gift is represented as a *fact*, not as a promise,—a talent to be improved, a grace to be wrought out in assiduous deeds and in every variety of Christian accomplishment. 'The kingdom' can be no other than the great subject of prophetic testimony, the substance of revelation viewed as a whole, the kingdom of heaven, of Christ, of God. It means Christianity, both as a doctrine and a fact; not as a pattern shown in the Mount, but as wrought into a divine institute by as well as for men. It is here introduced as a 'kingdom;' a figure probably suggested by the Theocracy, which was its precursor, and in some respects its type. Moses says, 'Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,' *i.e.* a people separated to God, regalized by religion and its services.

This view is rendered more obvious when we attend to the contrast, or rather parallel, set before us in the preceding verses between the Church of the Law and the Church of the Gospel, Sinai and Mount Zion, the mount that might be touched and that which is impalpable; the Church which exhibited an earthly temple and a human priesthood, and that which could have none of these. This, then, is the kingdom set before us. Its gates were opened by the gospel, its people gathered from the four winds of heaven, and its general assembly already joined to 'an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.' Its members, even while on earth and overshadowed with mortality, are brought within the sphere of the glorious invisible, and hold fellowship with 'God, the judge of all,' and with 'Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant.'

ADDENDA.

Heb. xii.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xii.

This 'kingdom' is affirmed to be immutable, and is contrasted with the things to be 'shaken' and to pass away. The convulsions which ushered in the Law in the wilderness are made typical of the convulsions which should usher in the kingdom of Christ, not, as in the former case, of material nature, but of the social and political economy of the Jews: 'The sign of the Son of Man in the heavens.' The shaking and removal of the Jewish polity, the former kingdom of God, are said to have taken place in order that space might be made for the new kingdom of the gospel; it takes down what that shaking had set up. But, though the Jews were the first to experience this influence, they were not the only nation affected by it; all other dominion is either shaken *by* or *for* Christianity. This was eminently the case in the aggregate of nations bound together by the Roman yoke. Pagan empire then received its death-stroke; historically, Christianity is demonstrated to be what it was prophetically announced it would be, the moving force of the world. Everything will be, and has been, made to work for its good; still, it must do its own work, and *establish itself*, rather than be established, by seizing the mind of the world, and bowing all things to its sway.

This kingdom is declared to be final; it gives place to no successor; it is not transitive, because not initiative, but, like its divine author, the Son of God, it is self-subsisting. Christianity has no visible substitute for the warm and inspiring service of the Law; it stripped itself of this because it was inappropriate to it to wear the picture and image of itself; it could only be represented by itself because it is a sublime reality; no temple is seen, because 'the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple thereof.'

The Church is immutable, because Christ is its foundation; otherwise it would be of all human associations the most frail. It has no earthly guarantee for its existence; it refuses to assimilate all merely human elements with itself; it has no hold on human nature as such; it is so repugnant to it, that the tide of society has drifted over it only to corrupt and destroy it. The divine emblem of immutability is presented in a 'bruised reed,' prostrate beneath the blasts of heaven, or in the flickering lamp-flax,

telling of the speedy death of the vital flame. Fishermen and tentmakers turned the world upside down. How could a religion administered by such agents be maintained for eighteen centuries, and be proved immutable, save by the power of ONE to whom all things are possible? Could this kingdom be dissolved, the most solemn pledges of heaven would fail, and its mysteries of justice, wisdom, love, and power become abortions instead of fully developed facts. All our instincts and aspirations turn us to something changeless and abiding, to seek a resting-point in existence. Christianity is the embodied presentation of this idea; it is the image of ourselves as well as of God. It teaches us, nay, compels us, to look for this resting-point; it plants hope within us, and throws such a life and reality into the prospect, as gives a corresponding character to the present state, making it the mere pathway to the goal, the discipline for happiness, the precursor of all that is worthy of ourselves to desire and of God to bestow.

‘Our God is a consuming fire.’ There is an allusion here to the fearful responsibilities of the priesthood under the Law (see the case of Aaron’s sons). Under the new dispensation, grace is jealously guarded against all wantonness and profanity. God will avenge Himself on His servants when they dishonour Him, and their priestly dignity, so far from shielding them, draws down on them a fiery rebuke,—they sin ‘unto death.’ The sanctuary and the altar are perilous, because they are high places, glorious or fatal, as the case may be. Reverence and godly fear are to guard the Church.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xii.

CHAP. XIII. 1. The Church bond is to be far closer than the bond of a common origin, or a common polity: these have never prevented feuds and destructive wars; but when the ‘brotherly love’ taught by Christ prevails, they must cease.

Verses 2, 3. ‘Strangers,’ poor saints far from home, driven away by persecution. The allusion is to Abraham, and perhaps to Manoah; but I think there is also an

ADDENDA. allusion to the great dignity of these poor persecuted ones in the eyes of God.

Heb. xiii.

Verse 4. This is no doubt aimed at the Gnostics. Asceticism is always a sign of a false religion: 'Cease to be men and women, and then you will be saints.' Other Gnostic sects permitted the greatest licentiousness, on the pretext that bodily impurity could not affect the mind. They might well reject the doctrine of a resurrection, or their sins must have faced them then.

Verses 5, 6. I do not take these as special quotations from the Old Testament, but as a general allusion to its promises on this head, and a plain warrant for a personal application of them; we are to appropriate them boldly and rely upon them. However lowly our lot, it is not a forsaken one.

Verses 7, 8. This is an exhortation to remember the teaching of their dead pastors. The 'word of God' is the Gospels especially, though not exclusively. The subject of the ministry must be always one, 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,'—a most comprehensive statement of the divine majesty of the Saviour, of the changelessness of Deity. Yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow are our measures of duration; eternity can only be represented to us relatively. Carry our yesterday as far back as we will, extend our to-day through countless centuries onward, eternity is still untouched. But here we are introduced into the presence of ONE who always was just what He is, not modified in the progression of existence, not changed by the lapse of time, but retaining His identity, the full mystery of Himself, 'without variableness or shadow of turning:—Christ fills eternity.

The New Testament would have no foundation without the divinity of Christ. In the Old Testament the same truth is prominent; the Messiah is never represented as merely human.

This eighth verse is equally a comprehensive description of Christ's mediatorial office. The words are not selected by chance; they are equivalent to 'Emmanuel, God with us.' Revelation is but the history of the development of His mediation. No record of primitive times remains, save

the fragment in Genesis; but it is enough to show us Christ 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,'—that there was no age in which the Lord Christ was not with man. He appears as a Mediator immediately after He expelled the sinners from Paradise. He placed cherubim at its gates, not, as is supposed, to indicate fiery justice, but a new dispensation; that, though He could no longer meet man in the garden, He would meet him on the threshold.

What was the mighty hope of the patriarchs, what the meaning of the ecclesiastical polity of the Jews, of the glory of the High Priests, of the altars always wet with blood, of the temple itself? All is Christ from beginning to end; His name is emblazoned everywhere. The Mediator stands at the head of the whole system, just as He showed Himself to Jacob standing above the ladder by which men were to ascend to heaven, giving to every angel His mission, but most of all looking at the man lying at the bottom, through whose line the Christ was to pass;—the Christ who was to verify sacrifice, to proclaim reconciliation, to ante-date the fact by symbols, picturing out the way for weary pilgrims, to show them there was only ONE at work, and that one Jesus Christ.

We are taught here the essential unity of all truth. The essential unity of the gospel depends on Christ: take Christ out of the Scriptures, they fall to pieces. It is like taking God out of the world; there may be men and women left upon it, but where is the image of God? This unity in Christ makes the Bible eternally one; His rays illumine the beginning as well as the end. Through many ages there is a portrait drawn by a thousand hands. How many have taken up the work, and yet the portrait is ONE! We are led here and there to behold Him; we catch a glimpse of Him living, dying, rising from the dead, and taking our nature with Him to the heavens. Had not Christ been the Christ of yesterday, He could not be the Christ of to-day, of to-morrow, and of all distant centuries. The Christ of Jerusalem is the Christ of Rome, of Ephesus, of England. Wherever the gospel is received its results are the same.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xiii.

ADDENDA.

Heb. xiii.

It is not a modicum of happiness that contents Him who saw of the 'travail of His soul;' He makes each of His people a summary of the facts of His truth; the whole history of the Mediator must be thrown into each experience for ever and ever. As nature always records the same thing in the material world; so the results of divine truth are always the same in Christian souls. As there cannot be other laws of light without another sun, so there cannot be another religion without another Christ.

Everything earthly is spoiled by mutability. 'Is this Naomi?' they said when she came back to Bethlehem. David says to Barzillai, 'Go with me.' But Barzillai, at eighty, replies, 'Can I discern between good and evil? can I any more hear the voice of singing men and singing women?' He is no longer the same man. Age changes us, affliction presses upon us; riches make a difference, poverty makes a separation; the world is changing, we ourselves pass away; but there is One who is unchangeable: He will never leave us, not even in the midst of the valley of the shadow of death. Christ is the Christ of the present, and the Christ of the future, the Christ of eternity.

Verses 10-14. The doctrine here is very luminous. The Jews did not eat of their sin-offering—it was not lawful; but we eat of this altar, or offering on the altar, even Christ. The figure is from the great Day of Atonement. The sin-offering, unclean from the imputation of sin, was burnt without the camp; and our Lord is conformed to the type even in this. When He was taken from the garden into Jerusalem by the Temple guard, He went as a sin-offering, and was led out to suffer with malefactors. He went out bearing a load of cursing and ignominy; we are exhorted to bear reproach with Him—an exhortation which would come to the first Christians with a force of which we know nothing; they were not to dwell at ease as the Jews did in Jerusalem in their own city, but rather to live a pilgrim life as Abraham did.

Verses 15, 16. Even under the Law these sacrifices were held to be the highest; now we offer these only.

Verses 18, 19. It would seem that the author was not free from slanderous accusations; we know that this was

St. Paul's case from hints in his acknowledged Epistles. It is plainly stated that the prayers of the brethren may bring about his earlier release from prison.

ADDENDA.

 Heb. xiii.

Verses 20, 21. 'The God of peace,' *i.e.* God the Father He has made peace by raising Jesus from the dead, thus completing the work of reconciliation. Even now the writer can scarcely leave his great doctrine of Atonement, which is 'perfect' towards God, and is to make us 'perfect' in Him.

Verses 22-25. I think these four verses constitute the 'letter' 'in few words,' for certainly the Epistle is not in 'few words.' I take it, this was an autograph letter accompanying the Epistle, which was in another handwriting. Probably Timothy had been confined in some neighbouring town, and the writer—Paul as I believe—tells the disciples he is at liberty. He intimates that he, too, expects soon to be released, and that he will come with Timothy, if he join him in time, otherwise he will not wait for him.

INDEXES.

I.—INDEX OF TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

OLD TESTAMENT.		PAGE		PAGE	
GENESIS.		2 SAMUEL.		xxxi. 35, 36,	260
i. 26, ...	57	vii. 13, ...	330	xxxiii., ...	258
ii. 2, ...	110	1 CHRONICLES.		EZEKIEL.	
xii. 3, ...	253	xxii. 10, ...	37	xviii., ...	339
xiv. 18, ...	203	PSALMS.		xxxiii., ...	339
xv. 6, ...	253	ii., ...	36-38	xxxiv. 24-31, ...	258
xvii., ...	253	ii. 7, ...	9	xxxvii., ...	258
xxii. 16, ...	236	viii., ...	51-57	HOSEA.	
xxiii. 16, 17, ...	167	xv. 1, ...	397	viii. 12, ...	50
xlvi. 5, ...	94	xvii. 5, ...	397	NEW TESTAMENT.	
EXODUS.		xxxvi. 7, ...	397	MATTHEW.	
iii. 14, ...	96	xxxvii., ...	153	i. 1-15, ...	20
iv. 22, ...	40	xl. 6, 7, ...	363	ii. 15, ...	40
xx., ...	260	xl. 8, ...	67	iii. 17, ...	29
xxiv., ...	260	xlvi. 6, 7, ...	41	v. 17, ...	295
xxiv. 6, ...	335	l. 5, ...	330	xii. 31, 32, ...	144
xxiv. 6, 7, 8, ...	329	li. 7, ...	318, 319	xiii., ...	295
xxv., ...	270	lxviii. 17, ...	48	xix. 28, ...	163
xxv. 10, ...	273	lxxii., ...	38	xxii. 44, ...	45
xl., ...	266	lxxxix. 3, 4, ...	236	xxvii. 47, ...	31
xl. 9, 10, ...	338	xc. 1, ...	397	xxvii. 51, ...	392
LEVITICUS.		xcv., ...	104-112	MARK.	
iv., v., vi., ...	339	xcvii. 7, ...	39	i. 11, ...	29
xv., ...	338	cii. 18, ...	44	ii. 27, ...	296
xvi., ...	281-289	cii. 24, 26, 27, ...	43	ii. 27, 28, ...	123
xvii. 11, ...	311	ex., ...	203-236	x. 29, 30, ...	155
xxiv. 5, ...	270	ex. 1, ...	44	xiii. 32, ...	32
xxvi. 42-45, ...	256, 257	ISAIAH.		LUKE.	
NUMBERS.		v. 1-7, ...	150	i. 32, 35, ...	20
vi. 22, ...	211	viii. 11-18, ...	89, 92	ii. 41, ...	26
vi. 24-26, ...	289	ix. 1-8, ...	89	iii. 22, ...	29
xvi., ...	146	ix. 6, ...	9	iii. 23-38, ...	20
xix., ...	318, 319	ix. 6, 7, ...	39	iii. 38, ...	57
xxi. 6-9, ...	146	ix. 47, ...	257	xxii. 20, ...	253
xxv. 12, ...	330	xi. 11, 12, ...	258	xxii. 30, ...	163
DEUTERONOMY.		xii., ...	258	xxii. 37, ...	368
xxxi. 25, ...	273	xxxiii. 12, 13, ...	150	xxiv. 27, ...	368
1 SAMUEL.		liii. 10, ...	368	JOHN.	
ii. 30, ...	225	JEREMIAH.		i. 12, ...	89
iii. 14, ...	225	xxxi. 31-35, ...	253		
		xxxi. 33, 34, ...	383, 384		

	PAGE		PAGE		PAGE
i. 34, ...	23	iv. 13, ...	169	PHILIPPIANS.	
iii. 34, ...	13	v., ...	22, 75, 93	ii. 6, ...	60
vi., ...	374	v. 14, ...	57	ii. 6, 7, 8, ...	64
vi. 51, ...	271	vi., vii., viii., ...	321	ii. 8, ...	67
x. 30, ...	57	viii. 23, ...	326	iii. 12, ...	164
xii. 29, ...	49	ix. 26, 27, ...	260	iii. 12, 15, ...	134
xii. 31, ...	82	xii. 1, ...	404		
xiii., ...	374			COLOSSIANS.	
xiv. 2, ...	242	1 CORINTHIANS.		i. 14, 15, 17, ...	64
xiv. 8, 9, ...	19	i. 15, ...	131	i. 15, 18, ...	40
xiv. 11, 20, ...	391	ii. 6, ...	134	i. 27, ...	398
xiv. 23, ...	397	iii. 2, ...	134	iii. 3, ...	398
xvi. 25, ...	295	xv., ...	22		
xvii. 10, ...	94			1 THESSALONIANS.	
xvii. 17-19, ...	375	2 CORINTHIANS.		v. 23, ...	404
xvii. 21, 22, 26, ...	30	iii. 17, ...	291		
xx. 17, ...	30	v. 5, ...	326	2 PETER.	
xx. 31, ...	23	xiii. 9, 10, ...	134	i. 19, 20, ...	295
ACTS.				1 JOHN.	
i. 7, ...	32			i. 7, ...	64
iv. 25, 27, 30, ...	38, 39	GALATIANS.		v. 6, ...	403
vii. 53, ...	48	iii. 17, ...	212, 254	v. 16, ...	145
x. 44, ...	131	iii. 19, ...	48, 255		
xiii. 39, ...	149	iv. 5, ...	89	REVELATIONS.	
xix. 3, ...	130			i. 16, ...	120
				iv., v., ...	315
ROMANS.				v. 12, ...	210
iii. 2, ...	133	EPHESIANS.		xix. 13, ...	120
		i. 21, 22, ...	51		
		iii. 9, 10, ...	64		
		iv. 13, ...	134		

II.—INDEX OF PRINCIPAL SUBJECTS.

ABEL, 411.
 Abraham, 419, 421.
 Abrahamic Covenant, 167, 264, 324.
 Agony, the, 31, 193, 363.
 Altar incense, 270.
 Angelic ministry, 45, 434.
 Annunciation, the, 20.
 Apostates, 140.
 Ark of the Covenant, 273.
 Atonement, 61, 180, 233, 244, 300, 317, 339, 348, 359, 361, 369, 386, 390, 402; its nature, 66, 80; its unity, 380-439; not discoverable by reason, 68; rests on representation, 75; its results, 81, 381; its relations to God undemonstrable, 85; day of, 281, 344, 352, 388, 405, 440.
 BAPTISMS, 130, 403.
 'Beloved,' 153.
 Blessing, 211.
 Blood purification, 338, 342.

'Body' of Christ, the, 365, 376.
 Burnt-offering, 283.

Cain, 411.
 Called, the, 324.
 Cherubim, 277.
 Children, 92.
 Christ, His humanity, 363; His birth, 24; His visit to the Temple, 26; His temptation, 28; His baptism, 29; His prayer, 30; His obedience, 67; His sufferings, 31, 193, 197, 363; His sacrifice, 298, 302, 386; His priesthood, 182, 213, 224, 229, 249, 298, 323, 377; His unseen ministry, 238, 240, 312, 390; His second coming, 351.
 Christ, the lawgiver, and His church, 95, 102, 117; Moses a type of, 96, 337.
 Christian perfection, 134, 356; rewards, 158; status, 159; works,

- 162; diligence, 164; Church, 262, 435, 437.
 Covenants, the, 227, 252, 334, 369.
 Covenant, ark of the, 273; tables of the, 276; or Testament, 328.
 Creation, 411.
- DAVID'S FAITH, 44.
 Dead works, 320.
 Death, 347.
 Divine existence, 2.
- ELOIM, 40.
 Elements, 129.
 Enoch, 413.
 Esau, 432.
- FAITH, 407; examples of, 428.
 Feet-washing, the, 374.
 Future life, doctrine of the, 112.
- GIFTS, 188, 245.
 Golden censer, the, 272.
- HIGH PRIEST, the, 189, 231.
 Holiest, the, 272, 390, 398.
 Holy Ghost, testimony of the, 383.
- IMAGE, 354.
 Incarnation, 21, 359.
 Inspiration, 383.
 Isaac, 421.
 Isaiah, 368.
- JACOB, 421.
 Judgment, 131, 347.
 Joseph, 422.
- KINGDOM OF CHRIST, 435.
- LAMP, the, 269, 336.
 Last days, 6.
 Law, the, 220, 343, 358, 433.
- MELCHISEDEC, 203, 206, 208.
 Mercy-seat, 276, 316.
 Ministry, 208.
 Morals, 382.
 Moses, 423.
 Mosaic dispensation, 292.
- NOAH, 418.
- ORACLES OF GOD, 133.
- PANTHEISM, 3.
 Passover, 281-426.
 Patriarchs, 409.
 Pauline authorship, 128.
 Polytheism, 3.
 Priesthood, doctrine of, 175, 186, 404;
 Levitical, 212, 377.
 Primitive Church, 155.
 Promises, the, 420-430.
 Prophets, 8.
- RED HEIFER, 318.
 Rest, the, 106; the Sabbath, its type, 110.
 Resurrection, the, 131.
 Revelation, 1, 5, 408.
 Ritualism, Hebrew, 378.
- SABBATH, note on the, 121, 307.
 Sacrifice, doctrine of, 244, 307, 337, 365; Christ's, 309, 364, 378, 439.
 Salvation, 200, 230, 351.
 Sanctification, 371, 380-385-403.
 Scape-goat, 283, 288.
 Scarlet wool and hyssop, 335.
 Shew-bread, 270.
 Shadow, 354, 360.
 Sin-offering, 283.
 Sins of ignorance, 290.
 Sins unto death, 145.
 Son, the, 6, 195; His divinity, 13;
 His work, 15; His two natures, 18.
 Sonships, doctrine of the, 34, 53.
 Sonship of believers, 87.
 Supper, the Last, 376.
- TABERNACLE, 241, 266, 390, 395.
 Table, 270.
 Testament, 328.
 Theism, 4.
 Transcendentalism, 3.
 Trinity, the, 371.
- VEIL, the, 391, 397.
- WAY, the, 392.
 Worship, evangelical, 395.