

We see at once a beauty and significance in the employment and preservation of these Hebrew terms, if the rest of the conversation was in Greek; but if it be supposed that the language used by Christ and Mary throughout was Hebrew, the meaning of these isolated expressions being retained in that tongue entirely disappears. And the restoration by criticism of the word *Ἑβραϊστὶ* renders the proof still more evident that Greek was the language usually employed by Christ and his disciples. For why, we may well ask, should the Evangelist remark that Hebrew was the language *now* used by Mary, if that was, in fact, the form of speech which she and her fellow-disciples generally employed? It must, I think, be difficult for any one to read the entire passage in the original without feeling that it leaves an almost irresistible impression in favour of the opinion that *Greek* was the language usually employed by Christ in discoursing with his followers, and that Hebrew was used only in their more private and familiar intercourse, or for special reasons, and on particular occasions.

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RABBINIC ESCHATOLOGY.

It is not my object in the present paper to enter either directly or indirectly into controverted topics. It may be that it would be better for us all if it were more the habit of modern authorship to state, with the utmost impartiality, the historical and logical grounds for certain inferences, and to leave the reader to form his own conclusions from them, without startling him into rejection by any premature assertion of the conclusion at which the writer has himself arrived. This was the plan

suggested by the calm wisdom of Bishop Butler, and although it was perhaps more feasible in his day than at a period when leisure has become an almost extinct element in the vast majority of lives, yet there certainly are occasions on which it can be wisely adopted, and subjects to which it may be profitably applied. In this paper, at any rate, the reader may rest assured that it is my sole object to find and to register facts, and not to be influenced in stating them by any ulterior conclusion to which they lead.

It is generally acknowledged, and whether it be acknowledged or not, it is indisputable that the earlier books of the Bible contain no clear revelation upon the subject of man's immortality. It is indeed almost incredible that the wise Patriarchs should have passed through life to extreme old age without any hope of a future existence. Had they done so they would stand intellectually below the level of men of other races to whom they were in all respects superior. The thoughts indeed of an Abraham, living a life so peaceful and so highly favoured, may have been content to rest mainly in the region of earthly duties, and in the hopes of the blessing promised to his race. But even he, and much more his saddened and often harassed descendants, must have often faced the great reality of death with a serenity which could only spring from the conviction that even there God's hand would guide them and his right hand lead them. Dim indeed, and destitute of every detail, must have been the vista which opened itself to their spiritual imagination beyond the grave; too dim to form a subject of discussion, almost too dim to form the subject of a distinct and formulated faith. Yet thus much, we may be sure, must have been felt

by the grey-haired fathers of the Jewish race, and thus much at any rate they would never have shrunk from saying to their children, to the intent that they also might reveal it to the generations yet unborn—namely, that the souls of the righteous were in the hands of God, and that, little as was revealed respecting the future, yet no harm could happen unto them. All that they had learnt respecting the love of God necessitated such a trust. Nor, in forming this conclusion, have we only to rest on *a priori* grounds. Limited and obscure as may have been the knowledge of the Patriarchs, yet, on the one hand, the ancient and frequent distinction between the place of burial (*Kebher*) and the unseen world (*Sheol, Bor*), and, on the other, the extreme antiquity of a belief in necromancy, shews how widely prevalent was the belief that the spirit of man continued to be in conscious existence even after it had returned to God who gave it.

The fact however remains that no clear and humanly indisputable intimation of immortality is to be found in the books of Moses. It lies involved, indeed, in the whole of that glorious revelation of the Justice, Mercy, and Love of the Creator, but it is so far from being definitely stated, that it is always to earthly sanctions that the great Lawgiver appeals. The rewards and punishments to which he points as clear signs of God's favour or disapproval are purely temporal in their character. Paradoxical and practically worthless as may be the elaborate argument on the Divine Legation of Moses which that "sham colossus of theology," Bishop Warburton, founded on this fact, the fact itself has never been shaken. It must have been with curious interest that the Sadducees awaited the proof which

they challenged, in endeavouring to entangle our Lord in one of those stale "arguments" which have at all times been prevalent in controversial theology. But his answer was a practical admission that the proof of immortality in the Mosaic writings could only be discerned by spiritual insight.

His argument was that the doctrine lay involved in the expression, "I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," since God was not the God of the dead, but of the living. This amounted to an acknowledgment that proofs more direct and more cogent than the one which He offered were not to be found within the limits of the Pentateuch, to which alone the Sadducees attached a supreme authority. Rejecting his divine mission, and preferring their own dogmatic ignorance to spiritual enlightenment, the Sadducees would not accept the force of this reasoning, and continued to attach to that solemn designation of God its most valueless and superficial significance. They had adopted as their party motto the hard formula, "No resurrection from the dead in the Law of Moses," and were not inclined at once to give it up. But our Lord's divine lesson was not lost upon the Pharisees. The Rabban Gamaliel—whether the grandson of Hillel, who was Saul's master, or his grandson, Gamaliel II.—when pressed by the Sadducees took refuge in considerations which it is more than probable that he may have learnt from Christians, since they must have been current during those early days of the Church before any rupture had occurred between the Apostles and the Pharisees. When the Sadducees refused to be convinced by Gamaliel's citation of Deuteronomy xxxi. 16, "Behold, thou shalt lie down with thy fathers," he

called their attention to Deuteronomy xi. 21, "The land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give it *to them,*" *i.e.*, to the living and not to the dead; and it is intimated that they did not reject this argument, which it will be observed is closely analogous to the one used by our blessed Lord.

When we turn to the later books of the Bible we find many passages which prove that among the Jews the doctrine of immortality had not yet been removed from the sphere of opinion to that of faith. The expressions used respecting the world beyond the grave differed with the mood of different writers at the times when they wrote. Sheol, the unseen world, the Hades of the Greeks, was sometimes to their saddened imagination a realm in which there was neither desire, nor knowledge, nor counsel—a dreary realm of impenetrable darkness and unbroken silence.¹ But at other times, as in the magnificent vision of Isaiah, this realm of death was peopled by colossal shadows, and this silence broken by the voices of the dead.² And gradually, as time went on, and the thoughts of the chosen people were widened not only "by the process of the suns," but also by contact with other nations—who were, like themselves, though in a different way, the people of God's pasture and the sheep of his hand—and by the divinely-guided workings of that spirit of man which is the candle of the Lord, they acquired that more distinct conception of a resurrection, either to honour, or to shame and eternal contempt, of which we find traces in the Book of Job, and still more indisputably in the Book of Daniel.

¹ Job x. 21, xiv. 19-21; Psa. vi. 5, lxxxviii. 11, 12, cxv. 17; Eccles. ix. 5, 6, 10, xvii. 27, 28; Isa. xxxviii. 18. ² 1 Sam. xxviii. 7; Job xxvi. 5, 6; Isa. xiv. 9

It was natural that such views, when once accepted, should be considered as having always formed a part of traditional theology—as being in fact so essential to the life and moral well-being of man, that the Jewish teachers regarded it as inconceivable that Moses should not have revealed them in the Oral Law, or “law upon the lip,” although from the Written Law they had been excluded.¹ The fact that in the Book of Maccabees we find an unquestioned instance of prayers for the dead, shews how early as well as how deeply the belief in future life had, after the Babylonian exile, taken root among all classes of the community. In the time of our Lord, Pharisaism was the prevalent school of thought, which is equivalent to saying that a belief in the resurrection of the dead and of future rewards and punishments had become a recognized part of the national theology. It is into the phases of that eschatological belief that I now propose briefly to inquire, premising only that—just as in the times of our Lord, the Sadducees, though in open dispute with the Pharisees, were not only recognized members of the Jewish Church, but even the undisputed monopolists of priestly functions—in all ages of the Jewish Church the scriptural testimony, and even that of the Oral Law, has been regarded as so general and indefinite, that the widest differences of opinion respecting the future life have always prevailed among Jewish Rabbis, and have been regarded as not only permissible, but absolutely inevitable.²

¹ The Chief Rabbi Klein relies on this argument as an indisputable proof of the existence of a sacred “tradition.”

² It was perhaps in part due to a survival of this indefiniteness of permissible opinion that—as we find in St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians—even in the early Christian Church there were some whose conception of Christianity was so utterly imperfect, that they denied the resurrection of the dead.

How far the Pagan and Jewish eschatologies exercised upon each other an unconscious influence, can never, perhaps, be accurately traced; but it is certain that there was a close resemblance of general outline between the opinions of the Jews and those of the classical writers. Both believed in a future judgment. Both believed that the issues of that judgment depended on the character of our life on earth. Both believed—though, as far as the Greeks were concerned, with some notable exceptions—in the happiness of the good and the punishment of the evil. The Sheol of the Hebrew was closely analogous to the Hades of the Greek; Gehenna found its counterpart in Tartarus; Paradise and Abraham's bosom, in the meadow of Asphodel and the Elysian fields. The analogies are indeed much closer than this. Even in Homer we read of the "gates" of Hades, in the famous lines—

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My soul detests him as the gates of hell;

and we find the same expression in Isaiah xxxviii. 10, as well as in the imagery adopted by our Lord Himself (Matt. xvi. 18). Any metaphor of this kind at once furnished large scope for the fancy of the Rabbis, and we find, accordingly, that these gates are sometimes said to be three in number (in the desert, in Jerusalem, and in the sea: Erubhin, 19, 1); sometimes *seven*,¹ as in the Koran; sometimes fifty;² sometimes eight thousand; and, according to Rabbi Akibha, even forty thousand. In one Talmudic treatise it is said that these gates are full of holes, into which are thrust the feet of the wicked, who cry, "Oh, woe on these feet!"—a fancy which will

¹ Emek Hammelech, f. 144.

² Simeon Haddarshan, Jalkuth Shimeoni, f. 46, 1.

recall to the reader Dante's famous image of the sinners punished with flames which quiver up and down the soles of their feet.¹

In the Rabbinic hell there is also a river of deadly taste, which is the counterpart of the classic Styx.²

1. Into Jewish conceptions of the condition of the blessed we need not inquire. The Jews, like most other nations, held that they would be happy for ever. Those who have believed in immortality at all, have, as a rule, believed that to the souls of the blessed, at any rate, blissful immortality would be an indefeasible possession.³ The special fancies of the Rabbis about Paradise are not particularly suggestive, nor do they throw any valuable light on the use of the word in the Gospels. We are not very particularly interested in their assurance that Paradise was created on the third day of the creation ;⁴ that it has two main divisions, of which the upper has rivers of balsam, and the lower is called *Apirjon*, or the bride's bed ;⁵ that it is immeasurable ; that it has three gates, of which one is at Bethshean ; that it is called by seven names, namely, the Bundle of Life, the Tabernacle, the Holy Hill, &c. ;⁶ and that the righteous therein are sustained by the dew of God, which flows upon them twice every day ; that it was measured by Rabbi Jehoshua Ben Levi, and found to be 120,000 square miles ; that it has seven compartments, presided over by Obadiah, Manasseh, &c., the dwellers of which receive varying rewards of happiness. Still less do we care to read the Rabbinic

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² Clem. Alex. *Strom.* v. 14, 72 ; Tert. *Apol.* xlvii.

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description of its material splendours and sensuous enjoyments. The more interesting features to which the Talmudists allude are that one division of it is expressly set apart for those who have sinned and repented; that "every righteous man has an abode prepared for him in Paradise according to his distinction;"¹ that there is between Paradise and Gehenna so close a contiguity that the space between them is variously represented as a wall, or, as Rabbi Acha said, a hand-breadth, or, as others maintained, only the thickness of a thread.² The object of this contiguity is explained in the Midrash on Koheleth, where the question is asked, "Why hath the holy and blessed God created Paradise and hell?—That the one should be a deliverance from the other." Further, the Rabbis taught that before a child was born an angel placed on his head a burning candle—as it is said (Job xxix. 3), "When his candle shined upon my head"—and the child was then enabled to view the whole world through. Early in the morning the angel took it to Paradise, and shewing to it the redeemed sitting there, with garlands on their heads, explained that these were they who in life had kept the commandments of the holy and blessed God. In the evening the angel took the child to Gehenna, and shewed to it the wicked being scourged by the Angel of Destruction with fiery rods, and crying out, "O woe! O woe!" and explained to the child that these were they who on earth had been disobedient, and were therefore brought to shame. "Now must thou also go forth into the world. Be thou just, and not wicked, that thou mayest live."

¹ Jalkuth Chadash, f. 35, 2.

² Zijoni, f. 69, 3. For these later Talmudic references I am indebted to Stehelin's "Rabbinical Literature."

The Jews did not believe that the soul passed at once into the glories of Paradise. There was, they believed, a lower Paradise, to which at first they must necessarily go, until they had sufficiently got rid of the dulness and obscurity of corporeal life to be able to gaze on the light of God.¹ Souls in the lower Paradise were suffered on every Sabbath to climb up the pillar which separated the Lower from the Upper Paradise, and the glimpse which they thus obtained of the Divine Majesty was sufficient to support them until the next Sabbath came round.² And this Lower Paradise is the intermediate state between this corporeal world and that spiritual. It will be observed that the Rabbis never embraced that notion of the *ψυχοπαύση*, or intermediate night of the soul between death and resurrection, which was not unfrequent in earlier days of the Christian Church, and which found a supporter in Archbishop Whately. The soul of the departed righteous man, though not at once and finally separated from all earthly entanglements, yet passed into a bliss which was the dawn of its final and glorious consummation.

2. The place of punishment for those who had spent evil lives acquired the name of Gehenna at an early period after the Jews had attained any fixed conception about future rewards and punishments.

The history of the word is as follows. In the Book of Joshua we are told that the border of Judah went up by a valley outside Jerusalem, called in the same verse (Chap. xv. 8) "the valley of the *son of Hinnom*" and the "valley of Hinnom," which is a continuation of the Valley of the Giants (or Rephaim).

¹ Avodath Hakkodesh, f. 57, 2.

² Jalkuth Chadash, f. 57, 2.

Of Hinnom nothing whatever is known, and no further mention of the place is made until we find (2 Chron. xxviii. 3) that Ahaz offered sacrifice "in the valley of the son of Hinnom." That this was done in connection with the worship of Molech, we infer from the fact that Manasseh (Chap. xxxiii. 6) "caused his children to pass through the fire" in the same place. In consequence of this profanation, Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 10) defiled "Tophet, which is The valley of the *children of Hinnom*," doubtless by causing the dead bodies of criminals to be flung there unburied. The only other Old Testament writers who mention the valley by any of these names are Isaiah and Jeremiah. The latter tells us (Chap. xix. *passim*) that it was by the east, or "sun" gate; and on the very scene which the kings of Judah had "filled with the blood of innocents" in foul human sacrifice to heathen idols,¹ he is bidden to proclaim that the place shall no more be called "Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The *valley of slaughter*," because the bodies of the apostate Israelites should there be buried, "till there be no place to bury," and the whole city should be made as Tophet, and the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah should be defiled in the place of Tophet. One other allusion, and one alone, is found in Isaiah xxx. 33, where, in uttering the threat of doom upon Assyria, the prophet says that in Tophet a funeral pile, deep and large, is prepared for the king, and "the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."

¹ Cf. Jer. xxxii. 35. In Jer. ii. 23 it is called "the valley," κατ' ἕξοχὴν. This is rendered by the LXX. ἐν τῷ πολυανδρίῳ, "in the place where many lie buried." It is perhaps alluded to in Jer. xxxi. 40; Isa. xxii. 1, 5.

Chaldee *Gehinnam*. Neither our Lord nor his apostles chose, when speaking Greek, to substitute some inaccurate Greek expression for a Hebrew word which had acquired a distinct and technical meaning. They called Gehenna by its proper name, and our translators would have shewn a deeper wisdom than they have done if they had followed this sacred example. It is difficult to believe that Gehenna is not derived from the name Hinnom, as Rabbi Kimchi positively asserts. And yet it seems to be at least doubtful. Jerome says, *Vel hominis nomen, vel gratiam sonat*, and some have considered it to be an appellative¹ derived from *nahan* or *hanan*, so as to make it mean "the valley of wailing." The all but universally accepted tradition that, to prevent the ill effects of pestilential effluvia from the corpses, large fires were lit in the valley, is not intrinsically improbable, but may have been suggested by Isaiah lxvi. 24, and rests on the *sole* authority of R. Kimchi² and those who have accepted his assertion. In the traditional view of the Jews, therefore, the fires of Gehenna were originally fires of purification, not of punishment; but in the absence of corroborative evidence³ we cannot tell whether the fire of Gehenna was not a conception borrowed from the fires of Molech, or from some natural mephitic fissure of occasionally ignited gases, which gave rise (as in the case of Aver-

¹ An appellative was sometimes treated as a proper name (see 1 Chron. iv. 14). No Hinnom or Ben-Hinnom is ever heard of. It was not probable that so large a valley should be the property of, or named after, one man. See Böttcher, *De Inferis*, p. 82.

² *Ad. Psa.* xxvii. 13; 2 Kings xxiii. 10. So, too, Jehuda Levi, *Cozzi*, p. 73, ed. Buxtorf.

³ Böttcher, *De Inferis*, p. 82, and Rosenmüller, are almost the only scholars who have raised a warning voice against the too implicit acceptance of Kimchi's statement.

nus) to the notion that the valley was one of the gates of Hell, and may perhaps point to a connection between Tophet and the Greek root of *τύφος*. Certain it is that in the Talmudic treatise Erubhin (f. 19. 1) we find a passage stating that there were in the Valley of Hinnom two palms, between which smoke continually ascended, and that this was the mouth of Hell.

Passing from the Bible to Josephus, we find little of any importance on this subject, and nothing on which we can rely when it depends upon his sole authority. His numberless inaccuracies, his entire untrustworthiness when he could have had any object in giving his own colouring to the views of his countrymen, his avowed purpose of representing Jewish institutions to the Greeks in a pleasing light, would rob his testimony of any weight, even if he contributed to our inquiry anything beyond a few generalities, which are obviously coloured by notions which he had borrowed from a fragmentary acquaintance with Greek philosophy. The expressions which Josephus uses—such as “endless vengeance” (*ἀίδιος τιμωρία*, *B. J.* ii. 8, 14) and “endless prison” (*εἰργμος ἀίδιος*, *Ant.* xviii. 1, 3)—are neither scriptural nor Rabbinic, and his comparison of the Pharisees with the Stoics (*Vit.* 2) betrays the sort of spirit in which he writes. The expressions in the Targums which have been interpreted to mean endlessness are simply the usual scriptural expressions to which the Jews as a fact attached no such meaning. By the “second death” of the hopelessly wicked they appear generally to mean annihilation. In the Targums on Isaiah lxvi. 24, we find, “And the wicked shall be judged in Gehenna until the righteous say concerning them, ‘*We have seen enough.*’” This, in a

way very common to the Rabbis, is inferred by taking *לְרִיאָהוּ*, "contempt," to mean *לְרִיאָהוּ*.

Even in the Mishna and Gemara we find very little indeed about Gehenna. There are, in fact, but two specially important passages, one in Rosh Hashana (f. 17), in which we are told that a certain number of the worst offenders, unbelievers, adulterers, &c., go down into Gehenna, and are there judged from generation to generation; the other, in the Baba Metzia (f. 58), where it is said that, with the exception of the classes of offenders just mentioned—respecting whom the prevalent opinion was that they would be ultimately annihilated—"all who go down into Gehenna rise up again."

To give the various Rabbinic fancies about the size, the divisions, the varying degrees of punishment, the names, and the presiding angels or princes of Gehenna, would merely gratify an idle curiosity, and the more so as the later Talmudic treatises abound in the most flagrant contradictions. It is more important to observe that the view of the later Rabbis respecting the future destinies of Israelites closely resembled those of the Roman Catholics. The doctrine of purgatory and the doctrine of masses both find an analogy in Jewish teaching. As regards the first, most Rabbis have maintained that the souls, even of holy Israelites, must pass, by way of atonement, through penal flames. The period of punishment was, for the righteous, very brief; and it is deeply touching and interesting to find that the object of this passage through purgatorial fire is not only the burning out of the sinful stains which even good men have contracted, but also that they may cover with a garment the naked and shivering

souls of guilty Israelites.¹ The use of the *Kaddish*, or prayer for the dead, is very ancient, and by it—as by “masses”—sons were supposed to deliver their parents from Gehenna. This practice was confirmed by Genesis xv. 15, where it is said to Abraham “that he should go to his fathers in peace,” whence it was inferred that the salvation of Terah was revealed to Abraham.

As is natural in all religions, the Jews mainly concerned themselves with the fate of their own countrymen in the future world; and amid many contradictions, such as are of course inevitable when men are speaking of things unrevealed, we find among the Rabbis two broad conceptions. (1) That all Israelites will ultimately be saved; (2) That this deliverance will be brought about by redemptive agencies of the Messiah, Abraham, Elias, and those who have lived holy lives.

(1) Circumcision was regarded as being, practically, an amulet against hell. It is true that, in the *Bereishith Rabba* and other treatises, we are told, on the authority of Rabbi Levi, that though Abraham sits at the gate of Gehenna expressly to prevent the circumcised from entering it, yet, if an Israelite has been quite hopelessly and abominably wicked, he is rendered un-circumcised by being clothed with the foreskins of infants who have died before the rite, in accordance with Psalm lv. 20, “He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him; he hath broken his covenant.” Still the Rabbis are very chary of supposing that any Israelite can perish. In the *Torath Adam* we are told, on the authority of R. Jehoshua Ben Levi, that there are seven divisions of Gehenna,

¹ Emek Hammelech, f. 23, 4; Stehelin, “Rabbinic Lit.” ii. 45.

in each of which are ten of the seventy nations of the world, who are scourged respectively by the seven angels, Kushiel, Lahariel, Shafrael, Maccathiel, Pusiell, Chatriel, and Dalkiel; and with them in each division are Absalom, Doeg, Korah and his company, Micah, Ahab, Jeroboam, and Elisha Ben Abihu. But after the punishment of the Gentiles in their divisions has been described, it is added of each of these Jews in succession that they are exempted from the punishment, "because he is the one of the sons of my beloved who said at Sinai, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." In accordance with this we are told, both in Erubhin (f. 19, 1) and Chagiga (f. 27, 1), that the fire of Gehenna has no power over Israelites and over the disciples of the wise. In short, the prevalent notion seems to be most briefly expressed in a Rabbinic treatise¹ which says that "both the Israelites and the nations of the world shall go down into Gehenna: the latter shall be destroyed; the former shall come out unhurt; as it is written in Isaiah xliii. 2, 'When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be hurt.'"

(2) As to redemptive agencies, I have already referred to the notion that the righteous passing through Gehenna cover the guilty with a garment, and we have the following passages, which involve a similar conception.

Sinful Israelites, says the Jalkuth Chadash, are put into hell, not that they be consumed, but only that they may be terrified. Abraham passed through the fire (*Ur*) of the Chaldees (*Chasdim*), that by his merit he might save them, in accordance with the promise made

¹ Pesikta Rabatha, f. 171, 3; Stehelin, ii. 51.

to him in Genesis xv. 10, *et seq.*: "For the holy and blessed God set before him exile, imprisonment, and Gehenna; and he chose imprisonment, that he might deliver his children from Gehenna."

In another treatise we are told that Elijah prevents the continuance of faulty Israelites in Gehenna by taking their punishment upon himself.

In the *Emek Hammelech* we find this remarkable paragraph, which may serve as a Rabbinic parallel to the article of our creed, "He descended into hell." After telling us that the wicked are to continue in Gehenna till the Resurrection, the writer adds: "And then shall the Son of David, the Messiah, who is David himself, pass through the same, in order to redeem them."

Even individual Rabbis are invested with this power of deliverance. Rabbi Jochanan, as I mentioned in a former paper, saves from Gehenna the guilty soul of the apostate Acher.²

Thus, too, in the *Nishmath Chajim* there is a very striking legend about R. Akibha. Seeing a man running under a burden of fuel with the speed of a horse, he stops and interrogates him, and finds that he is a lost soul. He asks the spirit—who is condemned to carry fuel to Gehenna—whether he has there ever heard of any means of deliverance. "Yes," the man says. "If I only had a son who could repeat the prayer, 'Blessed be the blessed Lord,' for me, I could be delivered. But I left my wife pregnant, and neither know whether she bore a son or a daughter, nor, if it were a son, whether the child was instructed in the Law." Akibha inquired his name, his wife's name, and his native city.

² THE EXPOSITOR, vol. vii. p. 52.

The man tells him, and with patient self-denial the great Rabbi finds the city, and is told that the man and his wife had left a most evil name behind them, and that their son had not even been circumcised. The Rabbi, taking the lad and finding him wholly incapable of instruction, fasted forty days for his sake. At the end of that time a Voice asks him "whether he is really fasting for the lad's sake?" and on his answering "yes," immediately the lad is able to read the alphabet, and Akibha is soon able to teach him the *Shema*, the *Kaddish*, and the Jewish liturgy in general. Instructed by the Rabbi, the boy repeats the prayer for the dead in the proper posture, and his father is at once liberated from Gehenna, and appears to Akibha in a dream, to thank and to bless him.

As to the condition of the wicked, while a few Rabbis believed that for the utterly and hopelessly abandoned, who had in life done and desired nothing good, and had broken all the commandments, there would be endless torments, this has never at any period been a belief of the Jewish Church; and the opinions of individual Rabbis—even while they repeated the scriptural phrases of punishment for æons on æons, &c.—wavered between Annihilationism and Universal Restoration.

The final annihilation of the wicked appears to be taught in Rosh Hashana, where it is said that, at the end of twelve months' punishment in Gehenna, the bodies of guilty Israelites are wasted and their souls consumed in the fire. "And the wind disperses the ashes under the soles of the feet of the righteous, as it is said in Malachi iv. 3, 'They shall be ashes under the soles of your feet.'" Yet to this paragraph a later

treatise¹ adds "that the righteous come at the end of twelve months, and say unto God, 'Lord of the world, these are they who, morning and evening in the synagogues did pronounce the *Shema*, and did keep the commandments.' Whereupon the holy One, blessed be He, saith, '*If so, then go and heal them.*' Immediately the righteous go and stand upon the ashes of the wicked and pray for their pardon, and the holy and blessed God causeth them to rise from their ashes under the feet of the righteous, and to stand upon their feet, and *they are conducted to eternal life.*"

Undoubtedly the prevalent view was that of a final deliverance. The Rabbis, like so many of the Christian Fathers, believed in certain alleviations of the sufferings of the lost. There was "a Sabbath of the damned," in which they enjoyed a cessation from torture—at the new moons and Sabbaths—as was inferred from Isaiah lxvi. 23, so that even the lost are crowned with the crown of the Sabbath. "The holy and blessed God hath compassion on them three times a day, an hour and a half at a time." The three gates of Gehenna are at those times opened, and three angels fan away its smoke with fire-shovels, that the lost may see the light. These remissions (like the *refrigeria* of the Fathers) also take place when the Israelites are at their prayers. The only sinners whom some Rabbis excepted from the sphere of these mercies are those who had no spark of holiness, and who are confined in that boiling ordure which is the lowermost abyss.²

The limit most frequently fixed by Rabbinic writers

¹ Jalkuth Shimeoni ; Stehelin, ii. 62.

² See my paper on "Christians in the Talmud." THE EXPOSITOR, vol. vi. p. 426.

to the sufferings of the lost is twelve months, half of which, according to the Zohar, they spend in fire and half in snow—a notion which is reflected in Shakespeare's—

To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice ;¹

and in Milton's—

Thither by harpy-footed Furies haled,
At certain revolutions, all the damn'd
Are brought ; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth ;²

and in Dante's—

Io vengo per menarvi all' altra riva,
Nelle tenebre eterne in caldo e in gelo.³

In the Nishmath Chajim (f. 83, 1) is this passage. "The punishment of the generation of the Flood continued a twelvemonth. The punishment of the Egyptians in Egypt continued a twelvemonth. The punishment of Job continued a twelvemonth. The punishment of the wicked in Gehenna lasteth a twelvemonth, as doth the punishment of Gog and Magog. Afterwards the souls become pure, and return to their first elements ; and of them it is said in Zechariah xiii. 9, "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and refine them as silver." The same limit is fixed in the Rosh Hashana, the Jalkuth Shimeoni, the Ir Gibborina, and other treatises.

I conclude with one of those Rabbinic legends the essential grandeur of which appears even through their fantastic verbosity, which here, as in other instances, I

¹ "Measure for Measure," iii. 1.

² "Paradise Lost," ii. 600.

³ *Inferno*, iii. 29 ; *Purg.* iii. 11.

greatly abbreviate. It is found in the *Othoth* attributed to R. Akibha. It tells us that the holy and blessed God hath a key of Hell, as it is said in Isaiah xxvi. 2, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nations which observe the Amens (reading *Shomer amenim* for *Shomer emunim*, 'that keep the truth') may enter in." For the wicked on account of their saying Amen are delivered out of Gehenna. How will this happen? The holy One, blessed be He, will sit in Paradise and preach, and all the righteous will sit before Him, and they of the Chief Household (the holy angels) will stand on their feet. And the Holy One will explain to them the new Law which He will give by the Messiah. At his right will be the Sun and the Planets, at his left the Moon and Stars. And when He comes to the Hagada, then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel will rise to his feet and repeat the Kaddish, "Blessed be the name of the holy and blessed God." And his voice will pass from one end of the world to the other, and all the world shall say Amen, yea, even the wicked of Israel, and the righteous of the nations of the world, who still remain in Gehenna, shall say Amen! And the whole world shall be moved, and God shall ask for their sakes, "What is that voice and emotion?" And the angels shall say that "the answer comes out of Gehenna." Whereupon God shall take compassion on them, and say, "What! shall I add to the punishment they have suffered already? Corrupt nature (the *Yetzer ha-ra*) was the cause of their transgression." In the same hour He shall deliver keys to Michael and Gabriel, to open the four hundred gates of Gehenna, and to set free the lost. They shall take each by the hand, and pull him up as out of a pit, as it is

said, "*He brought me also out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay.*" Then they shall wash, anoint, heal, and clothe them in fine white raiment, and take them before the holy God. And God shall say, "Let them enter, that they may behold my glory." And when they are entered they shall fall on their faces, and bless, and praise, and worship the holy and blessed God; and the perfectly righteous will sit before Him, to give Him thanks and exalt Him, as it is said, "The righteous also shall give thanks unto thy name."

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BIBLICAL NOTES.

I. THE OFFERING OF THE FIRST FRUITS.—"The first fruits were always brought to Jerusalem with great pomp and display. The Talmud says that all the cities which were of the same course of priests gathered together in one of the cities which was a priestly station, and they lodged in the streets. In the morning he who was chief among them said, 'Arise, let us go up to Zion, to the house of the Lord our God.' An ox went before them with gilded horns, and an olive crown was on his head. This ox was intended for a peace offering, to be eaten by the priests in the Court of the Sanctuary. The pipe played before the procession until it approached Jerusalem. When they drew near to the holy city, the first fruits were 'crowned' and exposed to view with great ostentation. Then the chief men and the high officers and the treasurers of the Temple came out to meet them, and receive them with honour. And all the workmen in Jerusalem rose up in their shops, and thus they saluted them: 'O our brethren, inhabitants of such a city, ye are welcome.' The pipe played before them till they came to the Temple Mount. Every one, even King Agrippa himself, took his basket upon his shoulder, and went forward till he came to the court. Then the Levites sang, 'I will exalt thee, O Lord, because thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me' (Psa. xxx. 1). While the basket is still on his shoulder, he (the offerer) says, 'I profess this day to the Lord my God.' And when he repeats the passage, 'A