

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

Syrian ready to perish was my father' (Deut. xxvi. 3-5), he casts the basket down from his shoulder, and keeps silent while the priest waves it hither and thither at the south-west corner of the altar. The whole passage of Scripture being then recited as far as the tenth verse (*i. e.*, of Deut. xxvi.), he places the basket before the altar—he worships—and goes out. The baskets of the rich were of gold or silver. The baskets of the poor were of peeled willow. These latter, together with their contents, were presented to the priests in service. The more valuable baskets were returned to their owners. They used to hang turtle-doves and young pigeons round their baskets, which were adorned with flowers. These were sacrificed for burnt offerings. The parties who brought the first fruits were obliged to lodge in Jerusalem all the night after they brought them, and the next morning they were allowed to return home. The first fruits were forbidden to be offered before the Feast of Pentecost, and after the Feast of Dedication."

2. THE WORSHIP OF MOLECH.—"The image of Molech was made of brass. It was hollow within, and heated with fire outside. It stood in the Valley of Hinnom, without the walls of Jerusalem. Kimchi says the shrine of Molech contained seven chapels. These chapels were supposed by some to represent the seven planets. In the first chapel, flowers were offered; in the second, turtle-doves or young pigeons; in the third, lambs; in the fourth, rams; in the fifth, calves; in the sixth, oxen; 'but whosoever offered his son, they opened to him the seventh chapel.' The face of Molech was like the face of a calf, and the image stretched forth its hands 'as a man who opens his hands to receive something of his neighbour.' 'They kindled the image with fire, and the priest took the babe and put it into the hands of Molech, and the babe gave up the ghost.' They called it Tophet, because they made a noise with drums (*tophim*), that the father might not hear the screams of his child and have pity upon him. And they called it Hinnom, because the child roared (*menahém*) in his anguish. Others say it was called Hinnom because the priests used to say, 'May it profit (יהנה) thee—may it be sweet to thee.'"—*Dr. Barclay on the Talmud.*
