

find that Salkinson's work, *in parts*, possesses high merits; but its excellence is not sustained. Passages may be pointed to in which it is not inferior to Prof. Delitzsch's work, or which contain even a happier turn or phrase; but far more frequently its inferiority is evident; it is too often a torso of heterogeneous phrases, culled indiscriminately from the most dissimilar parts of the O. T., and strung together without regard to unity of style; and it is throughout sadly disfigured by unidiomatic constructions and ungrammatical forms. In fairness to its author, it ought of course to be recollected that it did not receive his final revision. We are grateful to Mr. Salkinson for what he has done; we are grateful to Dr. Ginsburg for the pains which he has bestowed upon the completion and publication of his friend's work. The labour spent upon it will not have been in vain. In spite of the defects which it has been our duty to point out, it contains much both to interest and instruct; but it does not represent with accuracy the text of the New Testament, and it has no claim to supersede the version of Prof. Delitzsch.

S. R. DRIVER.

CHRISTUS CONSUMMATOR.

LESSONS FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

IV. THE UNIVERSAL SOCIETY.

"Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than *that of Abel*."—HEB. xii. 22-24 (Rev. Ver.).

WE have seen that the solemn and consolatory lessons of the priestly service of the Old Testament, which were brought together in their highest form on the Day of

Atonement, obtained their fulfilment in the work of Christ. We have seen that Christ realised in the victorious progress of a perfect life that absolute holiness, of which ceremonial cleansings were a figure ; that He, uniting in one Person the offices of priest and victim, *through the eternal spirit, offered the humanity which he had taken to Himself, a sacrifice well-pleasing to God upon the altar of the Cross, not for the nation only, but for the world ; that through the grave, and through the heavens, He bore His own blood, the virtue of His Manhood given for men, to the immediate presence of God, pleading on our behalf for ever ; that going infinitely beyond the privilege of intercession by that one entrance, He sat down as Divine King on the Father's throne, crowning the ministry of priestly compassion with the glory of universal sovereignty.*

So far the types of the Day of Atonement have been fulfilled, and far more than fulfilled ; but the last scene in the august ceremonial of the day has not at present found its counterpart. Our High Priest has not yet returned from the heavenly sanctuary to reveal on earth the completeness of His work in visible triumph. Our position therefore is, in one sense, like that of the congregation of Israel gathered round the Holy Place, waiting with eager and beating hearts till their representative should come forth to bring again before their sight the fact of forgiveness and acceptance. We too are in an attitude of expectancy. *We see not yet all things subjected to our Redeemer. Clouds and darkness are over the world which is His inheritance ; and we look for Him, in the words of the Epistle, when He shall appear a second time apart from sin, to them that wait for Him, unto salvation.*

This, I say, is one aspect of our position. We are in an attitude of expectancy ; and in this respect it is of the utmost importance that we should keep our brightest hopes fresh, and neither dissemble the sorrows of life, nor surren-

der the least of the Divine promises. *We walk by faith, not by sight.* But the reality, the intensity, of our expectancy must not hide from us the reality of our attainment. If the appearance of Christ is future, fellowship with Him and with His people is present. *Ye are come*, the author of the Epistle writes, to men troubled by doubts, by divisions, by losses, by sufferings, as grievous as any which we have to bear, by shamelessness of triumphant vice to which Christendom offers no parallel, *Ye are come*, and not, "Ye shall come," *unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. . . . and to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant. . . .* He writes, I repeat, "Ye are come," and not, "Ye shall come," and no blindness, no faithlessness, can alter the fact.

The Hebrews were, as we remember, in danger of forgetting the grandeur of their privilege under the stress of temporal affliction, and so the Apostle recalls the most memorable scene in their sacred history. He contrasts the beginnings of Judaism, and the beginnings of Christianity; the character of the old kingdom of God imaged in the circumstances of its foundation, and the character of the new kingdom made clear in its spiritual glory through tribulations and chastenings, that they might see what the Gospel was not as well as what it was. *Ye are not come*, he says *unto a palpable and kindled fire, and unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words. . . .* Ye are not come, that is, like your forefathers, to an outward, earthly, elemental manifestation of the Divine Majesty, which appealed to the senses, and even where it was most intelligible and most human, struck those to whom it was given with overwhelming dread; *but ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven. . . .* Ye are come, come

already, come even if God seems to hide Himself, to a Divine Presence nearer and more pervading than Moses knew, to an abiding communion realised in vital energy and not to a passing vision shown in material forces, to a revelation marked, as the Apostle goes on to show, not by threatening commands, but by means of reconciliation, inspiring not fear but love.

Now when we reflect upon the contrast, we shall be led to perceive that it could not fail to suggest thoughts of reassurance to the Hebrews. They were, it is true, shut out, irrevocably shut out, from the courts of the Temple, deprived of the friendship of those who claimed to be the children of the patriarchs and the prophets, outcasts from the visible commonwealth of God. But what then? When they lost these earthly privileges which gave a transient satisfaction to their souls, they were taught even through their grief to gain a larger vision of the Divine action and of the Divine presence; to see through the typical splendours of the vanishing sanctuary, *the city that hath the foundations*, or which every institution of earth is a partial shadow; to see about them the great cloud of witnesses who proclaim that not one aspiration of faith has ever failed of attainment; to see on the right hand of the Father—that right hand which is everywhere—Him in whom all creation finds its unity and its life, Jesus, Son of man and Son of God, accessible to each believer; to see that Christianity is not an etherialised Judaism, but its spiritual antitype; that the heavenly Jerusalem is no material locality, but the realm of eternal truth; that the Christian society is not in essence an external organization, but a manifestation of the powers of the new life.

And for us this teaching has, I think, a still wider application. The spectacle of divided and rival Churches is as sad and far vaster than the spectacle of unbelieving Israel. It is hard for us to bear the prospect of Christendom rent

into hostile fragments as it was hard for the Hebrews to bear the anathema of their countrymen. It is hard to look for peace, and to find a sword; to look for the concentration of every force of those who bear Christ's name in a common assault upon evil, and to find energies of thought and feeling and action weakened and wasted in misunderstandings, jealousies, and schisms; to look for the beauty of a visible unity of the faithful which shall strike even those who are without with reverent awe, and to find our divisions a commonplace with mocking adversaries. It is hard; and if what we see were all, the trial would be intolerable. But what we see is not all: what we see is not even the dim image of that which is. The life which we feel, the life which we share, is more than the earthly materials by which it is at present sustained, more than the earthly vestures through which it is at present manifested. That is not most real which can be touched and measured, but that which struggles, as it were, to find imperfect expression through the veil of sense: that which to the All-seeing Eye gilds with the light of self-devotion acts that to us appear self-willed and miscalculated; that which to the All-hearing Ear joins in a full harmony words that to us sound fretful and impatient; that which fills our poor dull hearts with a love and sympathy towards all the creatures of God, deeper than just hatred of sin, deeper than right condemnation of error, deeper than the circumstances of birth and place and temperament which kindle the friendships and sharpen the animosities of human intercourse.

Yes, the unseen and the eternal is for all of us who confess Christ come, Christ coming in flesh, the ruling thought of life. To us also the words are spoken—*Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven; and to the God of all as Judge,*

and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better than that of Abel.

Ye are come, that is, come though your way seems to be barred by inevitable obstacles, though your prospect seems to be closed by impenetrable gloom, to a scene of worship and a company of fellow-worshippers which no eye hath seen nor can see; ye are come to powers of the spiritual order which are able to bring assurance in the midst of the confusions, the uncertainties, the failures, by which you are wearied and perplexed; ye are come, in a word, to a "dispensation," not earthly but heavenly, to a dispensation, not of terror but of grace.

Each of these two characteristics of the Divine order to which we are admitted, that it is heavenly, and that it is gracious, has for us, as for the Hebrews, a message of encouragement.

If the outward were the measure of the Church of Christ, we might, as we have seen, well despair. But side by side with us, when we fondly think, like Elijah, that we stand alone, are countless multitudes whom we know not, angels whom we have no power to discern, children of God whom we have not learnt to recognise. We have come to the kingdom of God, peopled with armies of angels and men working for us and with us because they are working for Him. And though we cannot grasp the fulness of the truth, and free ourselves from the fetters of sense, yet we can, in the light of the Incarnation, feel the fact of this unseen fellowship; we can feel that heaven has been reopened to us by Christ; that the hosts who were separated from Israel at Sinai by the fire and the darkness are now joined with us under our Saviour King, *ascending and descending upon the Son of man*; that no external tests are final in spiritual things; that while we are separated one from another by barriers which we dare not overpass, by

differences of opinion which we dare not conceal or extenuate, there still may be a deeper-lying bond in *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, the apostolic notes of the kingdom of God, which nothing that is of earth can for ever overpower.

Such convictions are sufficient to bring a calm to the believer in the sad conflicts of a restless age, widely different from the blind complacency which is able to forget the larger sorrows of the world in the confidence of selfish security, and from the superficial indifference which regards diversities as trivial which for good or evil modify the temporal workings of faith. They enable us to preserve a true balance between the elements of our life. They teach us to maintain the grave, if limited, issues of the forms in which men receive the truth, and to vindicate for the Spirit perfect freedom and absolute sovereignty. They guard us from that deceitful impatience which is eager to anticipate the last results of the discipline of the world and gain outward unity by compromise, which is hasty to abandon treasures of our inheritance because we have forgotten or misunderstood their use. They inspire us with the ennobling hope that in the wisdom of God we shall become one, not by narrowing and defining the Faith which is committed to us, but by rising, through the help of the Spirit, to a worthier sense of its immeasurable grandeur.

And yet more than this: they quicken our common life with a vital apprehension of the powers of the unseen order; they break the tyranny of a one-sided materialism; they proclaim that a belief in natural law is essentially a belief in a present God; they take possession of a region of being which answers to the capacities of the soul; they encourage us to bring our ordinary thoughts and feelings into the light of our eternal destiny, and add to them that idea of incalculable issues which must belong to all that is human.

At the same time there is an element of awe in this revelation of the fulness of spiritual force active about us, of this association with invisible fellow-workers, of this communion with Him who *is a consuming fire*. And the writer of the Epistle does not shrink from dwelling on the sterner aspect of his teaching. He insists on the heavier responsibility which attaches to those who have larger knowledge. He calls for the exertion, the courage, the thoughtful endurance, the watchful purity, which correspond with the truths that he has laid open.

Life indeed is filled with awe. Its solemnity grows upon us. We may wish to remain children always, but we cannot. And here the Gospel meets the fears which spring out of the larger vision of our state. It is heavenly and it is gracious too. We have come not only to an order glorious with spiritual realities, but also to an order rich in provisions of mercy: *to the God of all as Judge, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better than that of Abel*. The words teach us to look backward and to look forward, and to draw from the past and from the present the inspiration of faith. We look to those whose work is over, we see that judgment is a deliverance for surrendered souls, and that the work of Christ has brought perfection to His servants through the sufferings of earth. We look to those who are still pressed in the fight, and we see with them Jesus the Son of man, showing in His own Person that God is their support, and applying to each the virtue of His life.

Once again then we are brought to Him, when our thoughts are turned to the widest mysteries of life. When we behold the depths of heaven opened about us, and the veil lifted from the living fulness of earth, He stands before our face—stands as He appeared to His first martyr—to

welcome those who follow Him in hope within the sanctuary of the Divine Presence.

Once again He is revealed to us as bringing the help which we need in view of the questions which are forced upon us by the circumstances in which we are placed. We have seen already that He has transfigured suffering by showing that it is through suffering humanity is perfected. We have seen that He has consecrated a new and living way for us to God, by bearing our manhood to the throne of heaven. We see now that, when we regard the innumerable forms of being which crowd the spiritual temple, He is with us still, to assure us that there is a place for us in that august company and to prepare us for taking it.

Once again He is revealed to us as communicating to His people of His own glory for the accomplishment of their destiny. He is the Firstborn, and He gathers round Him *a Church of the firstborn*, in which Divine family each member shares the highest privilege. "Cum pluribus," wrote an early commentator from the solitude of his French convent, "major erit beatitudo; ubi unusquisque de alio gaudebit sicut de seipso." Yes: "The bliss will be greater when more share it. In heaven each one will rejoice for his fellow as for himself."

Once again He is revealed to us as the Fulfiller—*Christus Consummator*—gathering into one and reconciling all things by the will of God.

And let no one think that such a revelation is fitted only to fill the fancy with splendid dreams. It is, I believe, intensely practical. He who leaves the unseen out of account deals as it were with a soulless world, with a mechanical structure of matter and force. But for the Christian all is law, and life, and love. He has *come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn who are*

enrolled in heaven . . . and to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant. . . .

For him the wilderness, desolate to the bodily eye, is thronged with joyous ministers of God's will. For him no differences of earth can destroy the sense of kindred which springs from a common spiritual destiny.

What then, we are constrained to ask, is this revelation, what are these facts to us? Do they not meet the loneliness which has depressed us, the weakness which has often marred our efforts?

It must be so if God, in His love, open our eyes to behold the armies of light by which we are encircled; if He open our hearts to feel the strength of fellowship with every citizen of His kingdom.

BROOKE FOSS WESTCOTT.

RECENT DISCUSSIONS OF THE FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

It would be a strange phenomenon in the intellectual life of our time that some of our ablest men should be found contending earnestly as to the meaning and validity of a document so old as the proem to Genesis, were it not that, as Mr. Gladstone has so well put the matter,¹ this constitutes the opening section of a book in which is conveyed special knowledge to meet "the special need everywhere so palpable in the state and history of our race." In face of this special need it is true that questions of cosmogony, or of the origin of the lower animals, become small and unimportant. Yet these bulk more largely in our estimation when we find them to be subsidiary in even a small measure to the greater questions that relate to the early

¹ *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1886.