

TARTAROS NOT HADES.

THE interest attaching to the word Tartaros is not made less by the circumstance that it occurs only once in the New Testament (2 Pet. ii. 4). Rather we are made curious to inquire why the writer is not satisfied with the more usual word Hades. I believe it is because he is speaking of fallen angels and not of deceased men. Tartarus is not Hades, and is not accessible from Hades. Hades is the underworld, but Tartarus is the nether heaven. This distinction—to recognize which is the first step to a proper understanding of the passage—is not always made. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* confounds the two places together by stating that "elsewhere in the New Testament Hades is used of the place of torment," and giving this passage as an instance. The Revised Version does the same by giving Hell as the rendering of Tartarus in this passage, and of Gehenna in Matthew v. 29. Rosenmuller and others regard the spirits in prison as the souls of men detained in Hades.

Contrary to this, as men dwelt on the face of the earth, their souls after death went to the lower parts of the earth, while angels banished from heaven went to the lower hemisphere of the skies. Let us make two concentric circles—a small one for the earth, a large one round it for the heavens—and we shall see well enough what is meant. The ancients did not always think the earth was flat—at least not all the ancients. It is admitted that Copernicus did but revise the theory of the Pythagoreans. They did not know the height of the heavens, and they had not circumnavigated the earth to learn what was on the other side; but they had reasoned out the truth that the earth "hangs upon nothing" with a starry sky all round. Because Hades was the under side of the earth, Orpheus was able

to go thither to Eurydice, and Ulysses was able to sail thither across the zone of water called Oceanus. There was land beyond that backward-flowing stream, and yet that land was the underworld. At first it was thought of as dark, and all its symbols were black; but in later time it became known that the sun visited that sky, as though to judge the dead. "Down" there the under sky was still distant, so that if a brazen anvil took nine days to fall from heaven to earth, it would take nine more to reach the bed of Tartarus (Hesiod, *Theog.* 722; comp. *Iliad*, viii. 13). But just as men could go from the upper parts of the earth to the lower, so it was conceivable that angels should go from high heaven to Tartarus, travelling along their own proper circumference. Mr. Gladstone recognizes that in Homer Aides seems to be for men, and Tartarus for departed or condemned immortals (*Juventus Mundi*, p. 374). If our explanation is right, Tartarus cannot be reached from Hades; at least not more readily than heaven can be reached from earth.

According to 2 Peter ii. 4 the fallen angels are in Tartarus. We may compare Jude 6. But Professor J. Rendel Harris is right in bidding us consult the Book of Enoch. In Enoch there is a large element of astronomy, e.g. chap. lxxi., and the lawless angels are associated with seven stars. In ancient time every orb had its angelic guardian, and even so modern an astronomer as Kepler believed the planets to be carried round by such Intelligences.

In Enoch xviii. 14-16 the Seer is shown "the prison of the stars" which transgressed the commandment of God by not coming in their proper season. In xxi. 3 he "makes a circuit" and comes to a place where the seven criminal stars are bound. And in lxxxix. 33 it is the stars which are judged and found guilty and consigned to a place of punishment.

The reference seems to be to stars which had changed

their declination through the precession of the equinoxes. While in reality the conical movement of the earth's axis brings it to point to a new pole-star, the appearance is as though the old pole-star had forsaken its place. Contemporaneously, and by virtue of the same movement, the star which had marked the autumnal equinox would pass downward (to Tartarus) and cease to be a guide to men. Ancient record speaks of seven such; and it is the angels of these stars which the Book of Enoch describes as not keeping their first estate. They were the spirits in prison. Enoch after his translation to Heaven might visit them; but Tartarus was not accessible from Hades.

GEORGE ST. CLAIR.