

news, even those who were not only in hell, but 'in prison,' the worst and most heavily punished. (It is scarcely necessary to note that for Professor Bruston the descent is to *hell*, and not to a vague Hades or Sheol, which is neither hell nor heaven.) These spirits he identifies not with Noah's *human* contemporaries, but with the *angels* who, according to Gen. 6¹⁻⁴ (cf. Book of Enoch, chaps. 6-16 *passim*), were captivated by the daughters of men. If men were referred to, we should rather have expected the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah to be selected as types of the deepest guilt (so in Jude 7, 2 Pet. 2⁶). The expression 'in prison,' as applied to these fallen angels, also finds its justification in the notions reflected in the Book of Enoch as above cited, and in Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2⁴. So much for the first two questions. The answer to the third is that the sin of these angels was aggravated by being committed precisely at the moment

when the longsuffering of God was seeking to lead men to repentance. And the intensity of the corruption which they wrought on earth is evidenced by the fact that only eight persons were judged fit to escape the Deluge.

For further particulars we must refer readers to the interesting *brochure* itself, in which not only the above-cited passages, but many other knotty texts, are discussed with fulness and candour. Professor Bruston does not shrink from the logical consequences of his exegesis. He finds in John 12³² an assurance by Jesus that He will draw ALL (not all *men*) to Him, and that all that suffer themselves to be drawn will be saved. Hence he holds it permissible to believe that many rebels in the world of spirits have ere now bowed the knee to the glorified Christ, and, owning Him as Lord, have obtained pardon and salvation. J. A. SELBIE.

Maryculter.

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

JOHN. xiv. 8-10.

'Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in Me doeth his works' (R.V.).

EXPOSITION.

'Lord, show us the Father.'—It was an old craving. Moses expressed it most passionately. But it could not be. 'Thou canst not see My face; for man shall not see Me and live' (Ex. 33²⁰). Only God's back could be seen then, and all through that dispensation. Then the Word was made flesh. The only-begotten Son revealed God.

'It sufficeth us.'—Was it a mild apology on Philip's part? They were troublesome to Jesus; too slow of heart to believe. Well, this one request was the last. But it was also the greatest. If they had the Father, they had all things.

'Have I been so long time with you?'—How long? Some three years? Yet it was enough. For they had been much together. If Philip is *capable* of knowing Jesus, surely he knows Him now.

'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.'—What

a claim! It passes beyond the bounds of our theology even. We cannot get it to fit in easily with our schemes. And yet they say this Jesus was and is no more. It is not the bodily eye that sees, however. Many a one saw Jesus, and did not see the Father. Have you seen Jesus? Nearly all men have seen him, and to-day they all are forward to acknowledge that He is altogether lovely. But have you seen the Father in Him?

'Believest thou not?'—It seems accidental, this introduction of belief; but it is the whole matter.

'I am in the Father, and the Father in Me.'—Take the second first. The Father is in Me, when I do what the Father wills, and do it perfectly. Then it is not I that do it, but the Father dwelling in Me; and so he that sees Me sees not Me, but the Father in Me. Then I am in the Father. The love you see in Me is the Father's love. I lay down My life, and greater love hath no man than that. But the Father so loved the world that He gave the Son. Thus, when you see Me you see the Father, and when you see the Father you see Me.

The Messiah and the Father.

Three questions have now been asked and answered: Why Jesus is going away, where, and how? The second question was, Where? Its answer was, To the Father. On that answer, Philip fixes his mind. Perhaps he did not understand the other answers. Perhaps he saw that

the second answer settled the other two. He fixes his mind on this, that Jesus is going to the Father. He probably understands also that *he* has to go to the Father. For Jesus has made that very plain. 'No one cometh unto the Father but by Me.' So Philip has an interest for his own sake, as well as for the sake of Jesus, in knowing the Father. And with Philip to see is to know. 'Come and see' was his short way with the hesitating Nathanael. Lord, show us, let us see the Father, is his earnest entreaty now.

The request was earnest, but it was impulsive. For the moment Philip has forgotten the Scripture: 'Thou canst not see My face; for man shall not see Me and live.' But it is the entrance for Philip into the second great discovery of his life.

Before Philip became one of the disciples of Jesus he knew about God, and he knew about the Messiah. He knew that God had chosen Israel for His own in order that in Israel all the families of the earth should be blessed; and he knew that the blessing was to come through the Messiah. Then Philip *saw* the Messiah. That was the first great discovery of his life. Jesus said, 'Follow Me'; and in a little Philip went to his friend Nathanael, and said, 'We have found Him.' Now Philip is to learn that, having found the Messiah, he has found God also. His first great discovery was the Messiah, his second God in the Messiah. Seeing the Messiah he sees God also. 'He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.'

It is not the sight of the eye that gives it. Philip has to know. 'Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know Me, Philip?' He is in the flesh certainly, but He is the flesh, working, living, loving, saving. And Philip has to believe. 'Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?' The flesh profiteth nothing, and the vision of the flesh. He that sees the Messiah in the Father, and the Father in the Messiah, sees with self-surrender, sees with love.

It is, no doubt, the works of the Messiah that prove He is in the Father, and the Father in Him. But the works must be understood. Many saw the works who did not see the Father. They must be seen to be good, gracious, saving. They must be seen to be Godlike, God's. 'The Father abiding in Me doeth His works.'

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Philip.—In the records of the other evangelists, Philip the apostle is a name only. In St. John's Gospel he appears as something more than a name, as a well-defined character. Very early tradition represents him in later life residing in Asia Minor, in the same region as the beloved disciple himself. It may be therefore that the evangelist had local reasons for dwelling on those few incidents in which Philip takes a prominent part. At all events, few though they are, these incidents seem to reveal the man's character very clearly. His is a precise, careful, matter-of-fact mind. He is wanting in spiritual insight, but he is prompt and ready in action. It may be, as some have thought, that he was the steward of the little company; just as Judas was the treasurer. If so, we have an easy explanation of the fact that our Lord puts to him the question how the five thousand are to be fed. If so, again, we may see how on another occasion some Greeks, when they wish to obtain access to our Lord, would naturally come in contact with him, and address themselves to him first. At all events, whether or not he had a business vocation connected with his discipleship, he had at least a business turn of mind. There is a preciseness and minuteness in the few sentences ascribed to him by the evangelist, which cannot be quite accidental. 'We have found Him, of Whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.' 'Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that everyone of them may take a little.' He is anxious for himself, and he is anxious for others, that everything should be subjected to the faithful testimony of the eyes. In answer to Nathanael's question in the opening of the Gospel, he says eagerly, 'Come and see.' In reply to our Lord's declaration in the text, it is his first impulse to seek ocular proof, 'Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.' A very ancient tradition relates that this Philip was the disciple who in another Gospel pleads, 'Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father,' and is answered by the rebuke, 'Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.' This tradition is true to character, and I can well believe it true to fact. It is not so much the request, as the temper which dictates the request, that our Lord there rebukes. And such a temper is Philip's.—J. B. LIGHTFOOT.

'It sufficeth us.'—There is a word in Philip's question full of meaning, 'It sufficeth us.' What children we all are in our constant dreaming that some plan of our own, something we could fancy, could give us a rest and satisfaction that God's plan does not give!

I often see in sick-rooms this feature; the patient fancies if he only had this remedy, that doctor, that food, if only this had been done or could be done, it would bring such help. As if the patient knew better than the physician or the loving anxious friends, and as if life and health hinged on some trifle rather than on God's care and keeping.

So many spirits hunger for finality. Faber gave up his evangelical creed, longing for what Rome calls 'satisfaction'; many swing to other extremes, and give up everything. Few have the nobility of mind of Lessing, who said, 'If God offered me final and full truth, all clear, in the

one hand, and the search for it in the other, I would at once choose the search.'

Let us learn this; the richest and best discipline of life is the ever new seeking for the fuller truth. In Him 'are hidden' all the treasures, and only very stupid persons wish to see or have them all at once. I have Christ, and in Him 'all things'—this is life's satisfaction.—R. H. LOVELL.

'For long time.'—If we have any true knowledge of Jesus Christ at all, it ought to be growing every day; and why does it not? You know a man because you are much with him. As the old proverb says, 'If you want to know anybody you must summer and winter with them.'—A. MACLAREN.

'I and the Father.'—There are some of you who admire and reverence this great Teacher, this pure Humanity, who know much of Him, who seek to follow in His footsteps in some measure, but who stand outside that innermost circle wherein He manifests Himself as the God Incarnate, the Sacrifice, and the Saviour of the sins of the world. Whilst I thankfully admit that a man's relation to Christ may be a great deal deeper and more vital and blessed than his articulate creed, I am bound to say that not to know Him in this His very deepest and most essential character, is little different from being ignorant of Him altogether.—A. MACLAREN.

IN the life of Henry Ward Beecher there is a very striking passage. A young man wrote to the great preacher and said to him: 'I am sinking down into the depths of shame: preach the terrors of hell to me—anything to me—I shall be at the church next Sabbath—anything that will save me.' The preacher said, 'That night I preached about the Fatherhood of God: I felt if that would not save him, nothing would.'—W. J. DAWSON.

He doth give His joy to all;
He becomes an infant small;
He becomes a man of woe;
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy Maker is not by;
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy Maker is not near.

Oh! He gives to us His joy,
That our grief He may destroy;
Till our grief is fled and gone,
He doth sit by us and moan.—BLAKE.

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