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THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

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THE  
FATHERHOOD OF GOD,  
AND ITS RELATION  
TO THE  
PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST,  
AND THE  
OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BY  
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## P R E F A C E.

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THE question of the Fatherhood of God is one closely connected with several of the controversies of the present day. The Cunningham Lectures of Principal Candlish of the New College, Edinburgh, and the reply of Professor Crawford of the University of Edinburgh, have brought the subject before the general religious public. Viewed superficially, the discussion might be regarded as a logomachy. For even those who most strenuously oppose the doctrine of the Universal Fatherhood of God, in the sense in which divines of the Alexandrian school use the expression, admit that God may be justly styled the Father of all, if by that expression be only understood that he is the Creator, Teacher, and Preserver of mankind ; a sense which might even be justified by the usage of the Old Testament Scriptures.

But the New Testament use of the terms “ father ” and “ son,” when applied respectively to

God and man, is more definite than that of the Hebrew Scriptures, and points to a much closer and more endearing connection than any which can exist between the creature and the Creator, regarded simply as such. When theologians of the new school speak of God's universal fatherhood, they, also, comprehend under that expression several notions which evangelical divines considers to be in opposition to the teachings of Holy Writ.

The differences between the two rival schools on the questions under discussion are not merely verbal. The modern disciples of Origen seem to teach that God, as the Universal Father, will deal with mankind generally, if not universally, as a tender and compassionate earthly father would deal with his children here. On the other hand, evangelical theologians maintain that God's justice must be satisfied, as well as his love be displayed, that it is only at the cross of Christ, the God-man, that mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other, and that no one is saved but by an act of free and undeserved grace. The two schools differ widely from each other as to the nature and effects of sin, and consequently as to the nature and effect of the atonement of Christ.

The study of Biblical Psychology throws much light upon the subject of the Fatherhood of God. If it be true that man is composed of three parts, body, soul, and spirit, and that the injury inflicted

by the Fall consisted in the deadening of man's spiritual nature ;—If it be true that, by the operations of the Holy Ghost, the germ of a new spirit is implanted within every individual who becomes the subject of conversion, that a veritable “new man” is created in him (Col. iii. 10 ; 2 Cor. v. 17) ;—then indeed the Fatherhood of God, which the New Testament reveals, is something much more real than is commonly imagined. For God is then seen to be, not the Father of all men, but the Father of the spirits of believers, inasmuch as they are by the Holy Ghost made partakers not only of his holiness (Heb. xii. 10), and of his divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4), but in very deed become sons of the Lord God Almighty.

It is this view of the Fatherhood of God which is advocated in the following work. It is based on the Scriptural revelation of man's tripartite nature, so ably discussed in the recent volume of Rev. J. B. Heard. It places, we believe, in a clearer light the great change wrought in regeneration. It confirms the truth of the commonly-received evangelical doctrines as to man's state by nature, and the work performed upon his spirit by the power of the Holy Ghost. It not only confirms the truth of the doctrine of final perseverance, but also points out the true foundation on which it rests ; and renders more complete the refutation of the dogma of baptismal regeneration.

Some of the expressions used on pp. 77, 78, may be considered as a misrepresentation of the views of Prof. Maurice. I should be sorry in any point to misrepresent the opinions of those from whose views I feel compelled to differ. It may be well, therefore, here to state that Mr Maurice does not himself maintain that all men are the sons of God because of their connection with Adam. Such, however, is the conclusion which many persons might deduce from statements which occur in his works. His own view fairly stated is that Christ was the archetype or idea of all humanity ere the worlds were made, and, therefore, that all men share in the relation of sons towards God, not by virtue of their simple connection with Adam, but because of their common relation to Christ.

In tracing out the logical conclusions to which the doctrine of the Universal Fatherhood of God tends, it must be clearly understood that I refer only to that view of it which is advocated more or less distinctly by the majority of the theologians of the new school. Such theories of God's fatherhood, as that put forward by Prof. Crawford, are of course entirely free from such objections.

DRESDEN, *April 11th*, 1867.

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## CHAPTER I.

### "THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD."

By Rev. C. H. H. WRIGHT, M.A., Dresden.

Owing to the work having been printed so far from the Author's supervision, the following errata have unfortunately occurred:—

Page 26, line 3,	<i>read</i> should	<i>for</i> shall.
„ 23, „	we	„ he
49, 9, „	stronger	„ stranger.
96, 18, „	threatened	„ threatening.
110, 16, „	or satisfactory	„ satisfactory or.
111, third line of note †,	<i>read</i> his	<i>instead of</i> this.
133, line 8 from foot,	<i>read</i> when	<i>for</i> where.
„ „ 4 „	„ found	„ formed.
136, „ 9 „	„ more,	<i>for instead of</i> made far, and substitute a comma <i>for the</i> semicolon in next line.
Preface, p. vi. line 8,	<i>for</i> considers	<i>read</i> consider.
Appendix, p. 283, „	techinal	„ technical.

ter 1 gives us the *possible* height man would have attained to had he never sinned, and which now he only attains in Christ; while chapter 2 sets before us the *actual* position of man when created and made. The one tells us that man was made in the image of God; the other explains more fully in what that image consisted.

In the fuller account of the second chapter, we

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY — THE TRIPARTITE NATURE OF MAN—SONSHIP NOT GRANTED IN EDEN.



THE Book of Genesis gives a twofold account of the creation of man. Rationalistic expositors have, indeed, sought to make out discrepancies between the narrative as given in the first, and that set forth in the second chapter. Such attempts, however, have generally carried with them their own refutation. Chapter 1 sets before us man's proper place in creation—the ideal celebrated by the Psalmist in the eighth Psalm—the ideal which man was intended to attain, which, as a fact, he has never reached, but which, we are told by the apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, (ch. ii. 8, 9,) is fully realized in the person of Jesus. Thus chapter 1 gives us the *possible* height man would have attained to had he never sinned, and which now he only attains in Christ; while chapter 2 sets before us the *actual* position of man when created and made. The one tells us that man was made in the image of God; the other explains more fully in what that image consisted.

In the fuller account of the second chapter, we

are told that the matter out of which man was formed was "the dust of the ground." Hence he was called Adam, from Adamah, "*earth*."\* But man was not entirely formed from the dust; there was another and more important element, by which that dust was quickened and became "very man." The Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man, as the result, became "a living soul;" or, as we might perhaps with more exactness and greater force of meaning translate, "a living *self*," or "person." His maker was God; so far there was nothing peculiar in his creation from that of the other animals. Both were made also from the same material. But there was something peculiar in man's creation. While, from the same source as the beasts of the field, he had obtained, as well as they, only in a higher degree, animal powers and capabilities, from God himself he received "the breath of life." There was a divine breathing, and the breath of God's Spirit awoke him to a consciousness of a higher than mere animal life. A higher nature had been communicated, a nature which flowed from the divine.

Holy writ is careful to avoid all confusion between creation by God and emanation from Him. While heathen accounts of the origin of the world and its inhabitants often confound together the Creator and His work—making the universe to

\* In every point of view, we think it is likely that this derivation, which seems to be favoured by the sacred writer, (Gen. ii. 7,) is the correct one. Perhaps St Paul's expression *ἐκ γῆς χοϊνός* (1 Cor. xv. 47) points the same way. There is no philological reason why we should reject this derivation.

proceed from God as the web from the spider's body—Holy Scripture is ever most clear in its statements that “the world, and all that therein is,” was brought into being by the direct fiat of the Almighty. But in the creation of man the breath of the Almighty was infused into him, and hereby man in his spiritual organization stands ever apart from the brutes, however like he may be to them in his physical frame.

In two respects the creation of man differed from that of the other animals—first, in its mode, “God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;” and, secondly, in the result thereby attained, which was that man was made “in the image of God.” What that expression signifies, we shall afterwards see.

It was formerly believed that man differed from the other animals in possessing reason, as distinct from what was termed instinct in them; and from thence it was argued that he possessed a soul, while the other animals did not.

Professor Agassiz, one of the most distinguished naturalists of modern days, thus expresses the point towards which scientific investigations seem now to tend:—“The range of the passions of animals is as extensive as that of the human mind, and I am at a loss to perceive a difference of kind between them, however much they may differ in degree, and in the manner in which they are expressed. . . . There exists, besides, as much individuality within the respective capabilities among animals as among man, as every sportsman, or every keeper of menageries, or every farmer and shepherd can testify, who has

had a large experience with wild, or tamed, or domesticated animals. This argues strongly in favour of the existence in every animal of an immaterial principle similar to that which, by its excellence and superior endowments, places man so much above animals."

Another distinguished naturalist, M. Quatrefages, observes, that the only attributes found in man which are not discoverable in any of the lower animals, are the moral and the religious. Love and hatred, constancy of affection and fickleness of disposition, pride and jealousy, cunning and forethought, are to be found among the brute creation. Articulate speech in some degree may be discovered among them, and many of them are undoubtedly as much the superior of idiots and infants as a Sir Isaac Newton is above the uncivilized Hottentot.

What, then, can be satisfactorily assigned as the great difference, not only in degree but in kind, between man and the beasts that perish? Not the possession of reason, since it cannot be proved that some animals may not possess it in an inferior degree. Nor is it that man has a soul, for beasts may have such as well as we. In what, then, lies the difference? We answer, in that which the Bible points out, namely, that man possesses in addition a spirit, which not only has self-consciousness (which animals may have likewise), but which is capable of feeling accountability to God, and of enjoying communion with him. Man's superiority over the rest of creation lies in the spiritual part of his nature, which, however, in its deadened state in the unregenerate evidences itself only in conscience. Con-

science, in relation to heaven, manifests itself as God-consciousness, and may be called the religious faculty; but when it relates to the human duties of man may more appropriately be styled the moral faculty. Herein lies the great difference between man and the other sentient creation; whatever signs or appearances of reason may be found among the latter, there are no signs whatever among them of any religious faculty, nor any traces of what may properly be called the moral faculty in its higher sense. And inasmuch as they want such emotions, they want also the organ to which these emotions belong, that is, the spirit breathed forth from God.\*

Divines have been apt to enlarge upon the glorious position in which Adam, as yet unfallen, was placed. They have told us how holy and how blessed he was, and have enlarged upon the constancy and blessedness of the close communion he had with his Maker. In doing so they have often drawn largely on their imagination, and overstepped the simple statements of the Bible. Exaggerations on the side of the theologian have produced in turn exaggerations on the side of the philosopher. If the natural talents, knowledge, and holiness of Adam have been usually overdrawn by the divine, they have been unduly depreciated by the man of science. The tendency of the latter has been to lower man, in his original position, to almost the level of the brute creation, even if he does not go quite so far as to

\* See Heard's able chapter on the Pneuma as the faculty which distinguishes man from the brute in his *Tripartite Nature of Man*, pp. 137-148.

assert that the first man was merely an improved ape. The tendency of the former has been to exaggerate man's original position, in order to paint more strongly the curse of the Fall. Guided by the lamp of inspiration we shall endeavour to steer a middle course.

Adam was created perfect. His body was a well arranged organism. It was in subjection to his soul, or to his higher powers. There was no war in his members. The body was ruled by the soul, the passions swayed by the reason. His spirit directed the whole, it was as it were the rudder of the ship. The harmony of his threefold nature was complete. He was innocent, and capable of becoming holy. Holiness we may define as innocence confirmed and strengthened by habit; matured innocence so to speak. Adam's innocence was innocence as yet immature, innocence in its babyhood. It needed practice and habit to ripen into holiness, but it broke down under the pressure of inevitable temptation. Adam's peculiar advantage in his unfallen state was that he had the capacity of becoming holy by his own innate powers, and of increasing in spiritual knowledge as well as in mental acquirements. His spirit was capable of growth, indeed growth was a law of its nature. Conscience in him was not stunted and broken as it is now in us. In its relation to God it was not "a fearful looking forward" to some punishment, undefined, indeed, but yet felt to be deserved—it was a simple trust in his Creator, and a holy reverence towards him. Adam was drawn towards God not by a "filial reverence," and, still less, by a "servile fear,"



but rather by the willing obedience rendered by a grateful subject. In its relation to himself Adam's conscience, while it would have disapproved of anything which went counter to the command of God, was (while as yet he had not sinned) of an all-approving character. Its existence was happiness, its witness was a joy.

We cannot agree with Dr. Candlish that the image of God, in which man was created, "can scarcely be proved to involve any more than that they are capable of understanding his will, feeling their free responsibility under it, and receiving reward or punishment in terms of it."\* This may, perhaps, tolerably well, describe the portion of that image that man now possesses, the broken fragments of it that survive the Fall, but it is not a true description of that proper and true image in which Adam was created, and which he, by reason of his sin, was unable to transmit to his children, whom he begat in "his own likeness,"—*i.e.*, fallen as he was.

Adam was created with a perfect body, a body which was not indeed immortal, but was capable of attaining to immortality. To obtain that boon, or to keep, perhaps, unimpaired his powers both of mind and body, he was to have recourse to "the tree of life." To become holy and spiritual, and to grow more and more capable of communion with his Maker, he was to keep from partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He was to be taught *that* knowledge by abstaining from

\* Candlish on the Fatherhood of God, Lect. i, p. 25.

sin, not by indulgence in sin. That tree, standing in the midst of the garden, was necessary to awaken his spirit to a sense of the duty of obedience which he owed to God, and to quicken his spirit to a higher life. It was, as it were, the spire of the temple of nature erected in Eden, and pointing, as it did, heavenward, would, by the very prohibition with which it was guarded, have taught man, had he only attended to its voice, that in return for the blessings he enjoyed he must not only praise but obey his Maker, that God's will, not his own inclination, was to be both his rule of life and his source of life. One reward for not eating of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" was the permission to eat of "the tree of life." Both trees could not be partaken of by the same person. Either he must abstain from the tree of knowledge and thus have "a right to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the garden," (Comp. Rev. xxii. 14), or he must put forth his hand to the tree of knowledge and be thereby debarred from tasting the fruit of the other.

As we propose to discuss the Fatherhood of God, the question for us to consider here is: whether God was revealed as a Father to Adam in Paradise? or whether Adam stood in the relation of a son?

At first sight the answer would seem to be a very simple one. One passage of Scripture (Luke iii. 38) seems to give it. St. Luke, in the genealogy which he gives of our Lord, after having enumerated an ascending series of fatherhoods, when he comes to speak of Adam, uses the very same formula of him as of all the others, "which was the Son of God;" or rather, as the

phrase is throughout elliptical (except in v. 23), "which was of God." But Dr. Candlish's remarks on this are conclusive: "This mere rounding off of the genealogy of our Lord, as traced by Luke upwards, and not, as in Matthew's gospel, downwards,—this simple intimation that in Adam the ascending line of human parentage is lost, and that *his* origin must be ascribed immediately to God,—is often brought forward as if it were not only an express, but even an emphatic assertion of Adam's proper personal sonship. . . . In reality, there is no idea suggested in this whole pedigree or family-tree but that of descent; son descending from father, until Adam is reached, whose descent is from no human father, but must be said to be of God. There is nothing like real fatherhood and sonship, as a permanent and personal relation, asserted here."\*

If by fatherhood be implied simply "the origination by one intelligent person of another intelligent person like in nature to himself, and the continued support, protection, and nourishment of the person thus originated by him to whom he owes his being,"† then we will not deny that so far forth as this definition is concerned, but no further, may Adam be styled a son and God his Father. But the expression "like in nature to himself" is ambiguous, and if it be taken to imply "such a conformity to God in knowledge, righteousness and holiness as prompts man to love Him, and cleave to

\* Candlish on the Fatherhood of God, Lect. iii. p. 120.

† Crawford on the Fatherhood of God, p. 12.

Him with all His heart,"\* then undoubtedly the relation must be supposed to have ceased at the Fall, and man by sin must be held to have forfeited all the rights of sonship, all claim to "the support, protection, and nourishment" of God. But if the relation be supposed still to continue after man's sin, then our definition of fatherhood must be materially changed, and Satan and his angels, as well as man in general, must be viewed as "sons of God." Sonship on this notion either confers no rights on us at all, or it must be held to imply that in some way or other all God's intelligent creatures will be ultimately saved, which is universalism.

Let it be clearly understood that we do not deny that God exercises a fatherly care over his creatures, that he deals with them more lovingly than human parent ever dealt with his offspring, that the indications of this his care are no less clearly discernible in the course of his ordinary dealings with us, than those of his moral government. It is not such a paternity as this that we are seeking to disprove. If it be only clearly understood that by virtue of this relation no claim can be made by man on God for any treatment but what may be warranted by individual deserts, the applicability of the phraseology becomes a matter of very small importance indeed. But the doctrine of God's universal fatherhood, as put forward in modern times, is supposed to go much farther, and therefore a phraseology is to be guarded against, which, though harmless in itself, may lead to real and vital errors.

\* Crawford on the Fatherhood of God, p. 20.

Sonship in the New Testament is not a mere name. We shall by and by see that it arises from the work of the Holy Spirit upon the spirits of the converted, and includes the notion of the believer's spirit being made the constant residence of the Holy Dove. Adam, however innocent, had not this indwelling of the Spirit, therefore Adam was not a son of God in the evangelical sense. Inasmuch as he received the spirit, his higher and religious capacities, by God's breathing into his nostrils, he might be termed in a lower sense a son of God; inasmuch, as he had not the baptism of fire, was not born of the Spirit, he was not in the fullest sense a son of God even in Paradise. The evangelical sonship, the proper sonship, implies, as we shall see by and by, first, that the individual who receives it has a permanent position in the family of God in opposition to one which is liable to change, (John viii. 35); secondly, that he has a right to a share in the heavenly inheritance; thirdly, that he is made a partaker of the divine nature (2 Peter i. 4). And, lastly, the child of God, instead of being punished for his iniquities, is chastised for them in love.

With the following remarks of Dr. Candlish on this point we coincide:—

“There is not a hint of sonship in all that is said of Paradise, or of man's sin and fall there. Nay, I hold that what is revealed of God's treatment of Adam, in the garden, is palpably irreconcilable with the idea of anything like the paternal and filial relation subsisting between them. Adam is tried simply as a creature intelligent and free—as

a subject under authority and law. : . . . Nor in the sentence pronounced upon him, is there any trace whatever of his being subjected to fatherly discipline or correction. All about it is strictly, I should say exclusively, forensic and judicial. It is the legal condemnation of a servant—not the fatherly chastisement of a son.”\*

The objection has been made, “How came it to pass that any method of recovery whatever was provided, and announced to the transgressors, at the very time when they received their sentence?” and it has been urged, “surely it will not bear to be denied, that *this* was a fatherly, and not at all a judicial, procedure. For it is not conformable to the ordinary conduct of a judge or ruler, when called to pronounce sentence upon convicted criminals, to provide, at a costly sacrifice on his part, for their free deliverance from the doom they have incurred.”† The reply we think is easy. The announcement of a coming deliverer was more than fatherly love, a love too deep to be expressed by any of the analogies of earth, a love that we must characterise not as paternal but as divine. We agree with Prof. Crawford that it cannot be too prominently borne in mind that the atonement made by Christ for the sin of man is not to be regarded as “*the procuring cause* of God’s love,” but as “*its result and manifestation.*” It was the eternal love of the Father that caused the incarnation and atoning work of the Son. That atonement is the highest

\* Candlish, Lecture iii., p. 127.

† Crawford on the Fatherhood of God, p. 37.

proof possible of the love of the Father as well as of that of the Son. The method, however, of the atonement is "indicative of forensic justice as well as of redeeming mercy." There was no hope held forth to our first parents of a universal deliverance of themselves and their progeny from the effects of the Fall, but the promise was given them that a deliverer would one day arise to overcome the evil serpent and crush his power. The sentence which had been threatened, was, however, as we shall afterwards see, literally executed on the race, though God's love has saved and will save numbers from the final ruin entailed thereby. We, therefore, cannot see in Paradise any proofs of Adam's sonship, since he was by his sin excluded from all the privileges which appertains to the family of God, however afterwards he may have received them back. He abode not for ever in the house of God, he lost the similitude he had to his Maker, and his punishment cannot fairly be said to be mere temporary chastisement, but, so far forth as the narrative relates, was a final penal infliction.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE FALL AND ITS DIFFICULTIES—ADAM NOT DEALT WITH AS A SON.

WE must briefly recapitulate the points which we attempted to prove in the former chapter. We assumed, as we think is plainly revealed in Scripture, that man consists of three parts—body, soul, and spirit\*—and then endeavoured briefly to show that the proper distinction between man and the beasts that perish consists not in the possession of a soul or of reason, (which the higher animals may perhaps also have in some measure), but lies in man's being originally created with a spirit, which is distinct from, and of a higher nature than, the soul itself. We glanced briefly at the injury done to the spirit by the Fall; we shall by-and-bye consider it more fully. Our design being to discuss "the Fatherhood of God," we noted that the possession of a real sonship, as distinguished from that which is but a mere figure of speech, implies a permanent position in the family of God, as opposed to a merely changeable standing; a right of inheritance; a participation of a similar nature; and, lastly, ex-

\* See Appendix, No. 1.



cludes all notions of punishment as a penal infliction, although such is admissible as chastisement or probation.

Inasmuch as Adam in Paradise had received his higher or spiritual nature by the breath of the Almighty, and that the creation of his spirit was not some transformation of matter, but an emanation direct from God himself, he might be fitly termed in one sense a son of God; but since he was not born of the Holy Spirit, and therefore had not all the rights of sonship, he could not be properly styled, in the New Testament meaning of the expression a "son of God."

The spiritual nature was imparted to Adam by God's breathing on him. The gift was one which could only be retained in its integrity by man's continuance in obedience. That nature would, if followed, have led him to a patient waiting for a higher and more blessed knowledge of God. It was somewhat like the partial gift of the Spirit bestowed by the Lord Jesus on His disciples after His resurrection, when He breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"—a gift which led them to wait in patience for the fuller gift of the Pentecost, when they were "born again" from above. Quite analogous to this was the gift of the spiritual nature, or the lower grade of sonship, bestowed on man in Paradise, as compared with the spirit itself—or the higher grade of sonship—bestowed on those who are "born again," and made heirs of the kingdom by faith in Jesus and by the power of the indwelling Spirit.

We closed our last chapter with a statement

that God's dealings with Adam partook not of the paternal character, but rather of that of the righteous Judge and moral Governor of the world. It may not be thought absolutely necessary to treat that matter further, but the value of the discussion on which we are now entering, and its bearing on our subject, will be seen more clearly at a later stage of our argument.

The possibility of temptation in the case of creatures who were formed perfect, presents to some minds difficulties which a little reflection, however, is sufficient to dispel. All finite creatures, because they are finite, are liable to temptation; and, if they are also free agents, may be drawn away by the temptation. For they have within them various affections, bodily or mental, tending towards particular objects; and these desires must be felt when their objects are present, whether they can be lawfully enjoyed or not. Consequently, the only security against their falling must come from within, from *habits* of goodness, from the habit of keeping their lower nature, (if they possess such), in obedience to their higher, and their higher in subjection to the divine will.\*

It must also be borne in mind that the very notion of a free moral agent implies an exemption from all forcible constraint, and the being guided only by moral persuasion. But since a finite creature cannot have infinite knowledge, and the communication even of knowledge must have its laws and limits, it is easy to understand how the very

\* See Rev. T. R. Birks' "Difficulties of Belief," an excellent little work. Some of its arguments we borrow here.

limitation may prove a temptation to highly-gifted creatures. The creature may be tempted to overpass the bounds assigned to its power or wisdom. Its only safety lies in obedience to, and trust in, God. Its danger lies in an over-bold assertion of its own independence, and in its self-will—a danger which is probably increased in proportion to its knowledge. Absolute security seems to be attainable only by a voluntary surrender of the creature's will to that of the Creator, and by the creature's partaking of the divine nature, by being invested, in short, with the dignity and the rights of sonship.

But *if* free agents should appear about to be overcome by any special temptation which may have come across their path, then, it may be asked, ought not God to remove the temptation itself when it becomes too heavy for them to bear? A deep thinker of the present day has well remarked:—"The temptation itself, apart from its special form, arises immediately out of the very laws and limitations of the created will; and hence its entire removal must be simply impossible. It is the prerogative of God alone, that He cannot be tempted with evil. While there is an active energy of thought and will, and a wide region of the unknown, which it has not yet traversed, there must be temptation to break loose from the commands of God, and rove into those fields in search of some higher degrees of unknown felicity. It is the province of Divine Wisdom to dispose and control the forms under which these temptations may appear, so far as they depend, indirectly, on positive agencies; but it is equally its province to discern that the temptation itself is the

serious and solemn ordeal which every free agent, besides God himself, must undergo.”\*

Or, it may be further asked, could not God put forth his power, and in the moment of weakness constrain the creature ready to fall to keep on in the right track? We may answer, yes; but this very constraint would destroy the creature as a free moral agent. Such a course might perhaps be fraught with deeper ills to the rest of God's universe than our limited faculties can at present comprehend. Or could not God at once, by the same Almighty fiat by which he created out of nothing, annihilate the creature which he had made? We can only answer, this He has not done, and no doubt there are deep reasons why such a course was not adopted by Divine wisdom. The only remaining course is that sin should be allowed to develop itself and show its fearful consequences, while a remedy at the same time should be provided. This has been what has taken place with respect to man; and the plan has this great advantage, that by it, at the same time, sin is proved to be “exceeding sinful,” and God's eternal love and justice has been manifested in a way which it could not have entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Such considerations considerably abate the force of the difficulties which beset the very idea of temptation itself in the case of man when created perfect. It is of importance, too, to note here the distinction between holiness and innocence. Innocence in the lowest sense is simply harmless-

\* Birks' *Difficulties of Belief*, p. 70.

ness. It is thus a lamb is called innocent, and a babe is so in the same sense. The innocence of Adam must needs have been of a higher type. He had a sense of God and of the duty he owed to Him. His nature was well-balanced, he had perfect powers of self-command. Holiness he could only obtain by perseverance in the path of innocence, by continuance in the way of obedience. He had to meet the inevitable temptation in some form before he could become holy. If he had been perfectly holy, it is impossible to believe but that he would at once have rejected the temptation of Satan. But perfection in holiness could only be obtained through probation. The tree of knowledge in the midst of the garden was no arbitrary avenue of temptation, no stumblingblock cast purposely, as it were, in our first parents' way. It was in reality a mitigation of the temptation which in some form or other the creature would have to meet. The creature must learn implicit obedience to the command of the Creator, must believe that what *He* forbids is evil, and what He commands is good. Thus Adam should have sought to learn the knowledge of good and evil from submitting to the commands of God, but should not have sought to have known it "as God," which Satan tempted him to do. As Mr Heard well remarks: "We will have nothing to say to such logical quibbles as these, that a thing is commanded because right; not right because commanded. Distinctions between positive and moral precepts may have a certain relative use in the schools, but they are not as deep as they are subtle. They seem to overlook the gulf fixed between the

finite and the infinite; and that His thoughts are not as our thoughts, or His ways as our ways. Thus while with God a thing is right because He wills it, with all His creatures the converse is to be the rule, we are to will it because it is right."\*

But if Adam had to undergo some probation, and if his probation by the prohibition to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was a mitigation of the temptation which in one form or other he must inevitably have encountered, why, it may be inquired, was Satan at least permitted to press the temptation on him? We cannot with our present knowledge completely remove this difficulty. But it may be considerably lessened, if not entirely taken away, by considering that it may have been possibly to manifest to the universe the determination of that Fallen Spirit to abide in sin and rebellion. It may have been, that up to that time, the door of return was open to him. This, however, we know not; but we do know that the form and circumstances of the temptation alone were affected by him. The temptation itself must one day have been encountered by man, and if he then fell, his moral guilt would be all the deeper, if he himself became the author of his own sin. Mr Birks has therefore, with some probability, suggested, that God permitted Satan to tempt man, ample powers having been previously given him for resisting the attack, in order that if the probability of his fall was thus increased, at least the possibility of his recovery might be insured.

\* Heard's *Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 158.

We may notice, in passing, a reason which has been assigned to account for the form under which Satan showed himself to our first parents. Joseph Mede long ago suggested (1) that there may be a *law* with respect to the intercourse of spirits and men, whereby spirits must present themselves to man under some visible appearance, and (2) that the appearance assumed must more or less resemble the condition of the spirit itself. Hence, perhaps, Satan was obliged to appear "in such a shape which might argue his imperfection and abasement, which was the shape of a beast," and could not, before man had sinned, appear in human guise.\*

Whether this conjecture of Mede's has any truth in it or not, it may be affirmed with more confidence that inasmuch as Satan showed himself under that appearance, the sentence pronounced against him was couched in language suitable to the form he had assumed. There is no occasion whatever for us to believe that the serpent itself was ever different in appearance from what it is now. The curse was pronounced not upon the animal, but upon Satan who appeared under that form, and was to the effect that Satan should never rise from the grovelling character he had assumed, but should be condemned for ever to the deepest degradation.†

To return to the temptation itself, it is worthy of notice how Satan, in order to insinuate hard thoughts of God, suggested an exaggeration of the command or prohibition which God had given: "Is it even so, that God hath said ye shall eat of no tree

\* Mede's Works, pp. 223, 224.

† See Macdonald on the Creation and the Fall, p. 138.

of the garden ?” Such is the proper translation of ch. iii. 2.\* The woman, in her reply, was faulty in several points ; first, that she failed to perceive the point of the temptation, and entered into a discussion with the tempter ; secondly, that even she represented God’s prohibition as stronger than it really was, making it to refer even to touching, of which God had said nothing, by which, perhaps, she let it appear that the command of God was in her opinion too strict ; and thirdly, she weakened the threat of death attached to the prohibition down to the mere expression “lest ye die.”† A fitting type was she in this of that numerous class of teachers in the professed Church who would, on the one hand, add on to God’s commands burdens grievous to be borne, and, on the other, tone down the solemn denunciations of Sacred Scripture against impenitent sinners.

Satan’s rejoinder was true in the letter, and false in the spirit : “Ye shall not surely die ; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened ; and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.” “Ye shall not surely die,” for though your spiritual life shall be gone, death shall not yet for a season seize upon your souls or bodies. “Your eyes shall be opened,” for you shall then apprehend God in a way that you know not now, and shall flee from beholding him. “You shall be as God, knowing good and evil.” You will be as God, for you will have made your own will your only law, you will have cast off God’s

\* See our comm. on Genesis *in loco*, and Gesenius Heb. Gram., § 149. 1.

† See Keil, and Lange’s suggestive remarks in his *Bibelwerk*.



yoke, but only to be brought in bondage to the yoke of sin. You will have obtained the gift of wisdom, but you will find that it is a wisdom "earthly, sensual, devilish."

It has often been remarked that the temptation by which the woman was overthrown, and after her the man, was pre-eminently a temptation to selfishness. She saw that "the tree was good for food"—there was self-indulgence inviting, the "lust of the flesh" alluring. It was "pleasant to the eyes," there was the first dawn of covetousness, "the lust of the eye" had appeared. It was a tree "to be desired to make one wise," there was pride unveiling itself, "the pride of life."

They took, they ate, they fell. The thunderbolt of heaven descended on their heads: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," was the sentence, and it was executed. The image of God in which they were created was gone; the light that lighted their bosoms was extinguished, their spirits were deadened; severed from the only Fountain of Life, that is God, they died the death. Innocence was gone; their spirits were empty of God, and lost their grasp of Him, their souls revolted against their spirits, and their bodies against their souls.

Thus the penalty was immediate. The spirit died through sin. That is, it died to any present enjoyment in God, and lost all the capacity it had of attaining holiness by its own powers. It lost its real life: it became shattered and fallen. Conscience was no longer a joy, it was a terror. It was felt only as a reprover, not as a comforter. Shat-

tered as it was, no longer powerful to rule, nor able to guide, it still remained in the form of a capacity for receiving spiritual influences, as the distinguishing faculty of man, whereby even though fallen he was yet superior to the brute creation, as a sense of moral accountability to his Righteous Creator. The soul or intellect and the body no doubt suffered also by the fall, but the crowning loss after all was in the spirit. Hence, whatever increase man may make by his own powers in knowledge, he can make no advance in spiritual mindedness.

We regard the formal judgment pronounced by the Lord God upon our first parents not as explanatory of the penalty which attached to the act of disobedience which immediately succeeded that act itself, but as descriptive of the effects which, as natural consequences, flowed from it. These effects have been described by Mr Heard as "partly punitive, and partly privative. The punitive part consisted in the toil and pain in which man was to eat bread and woman to bear children; the privative part, in the forfeiture of that immortality to which he would have been advanced if, by obedience, he had obtained a right to the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God."\*

And now let us ask what is the relation in which God is described as standing to Adam throughout this entire transaction? Surely in no other than in that of a Righteous Judge? Is there one word uttered which would make us think of any other character? God appears as a Gracious Creator, a

\* Heard's Tripartite Nature, p. 80.

wise Creator, a Holy Creator, a moral Governor, but in what did he manifest himself as a Father? Adam was placed in the position of a subject, tried by a simple test whether he would be faithful or no, and, on his choosing voluntarily evil rather than good, was, by a righteous judgment, deprived of that life of the spirit of "the image of God," condemned to a life of toil and suffering, and excluded from that "eternal life" which had been held forth before him as a reward to be granted if he had continued in the pathway of obedience. Or, perhaps, we should rather say, that Adam himself cast away that life of the spirit which he had in his own keeping, it being an impossibility for spiritual life to remain in the soul of one who had voluntarily espoused the service of sin.

The punishment inflicted was not purgative—it was penal. It was not the chastisement of a son, but the deserved retribution of a rebel.

But it may be said was there not a voice of love even amid the words of justice, and were not the accents of mercy spoken of even when the threatened sentence was inflicted? No doubt there was. The promise of a coming Deliverer who should bruise the serpent's head, was like the shining of the sun of love for a moment among the dark clouds of wrath, and God manifested His wondrous grace in promising, ere the sentence of expulsion from Eden was carried into effect, a blessed and glorious restoration.

But in what way was this restoration to be achieved? Was man only, like the prodigal in the parable, to be left to feel his misery and to turn

his longing eyes towards heaven, when the arms of compassion should be expanded, and the Father's greeting shall fall like healing balm on the ears of the returning child? No, not so. The New Testament might bring to us such "glad tidings," the old covenant could not. The Deliverer must descend from heaven, he must put himself in the place of those who were to be ransomed. He must contend with the tempter by which they were vanquished, and overcome "the wiles of the devil." He must place himself under the law which they had broken, and keep that law completely. He must do more. He must endure the penalty which they had deserved, and, in mortal conflict with the evil one, submit to have his heel stung and crushed by the jaws of the old serpent, while he was in the act of bruising that serpent's head for ever. He must "through death destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

Yes, the Christ, the seed of the woman, the Deliverer of man and the Saviour of the world, was, by becoming himself a subject, and bearing as such the penalty which he had deserved, to atone for our offences against "outraged authority," and bring to us pardon, and restore to us "eternal life." He was to deliver us, first, as *subjects* from the curse we had deserved in that capacity, before he could bestow upon us the adoption of *sons*. Bethlehem's manger, Nazareth's shame, and Calvary's cross must needs precede Pentecost's blessing.

I agree most thoroughly with Dr. Candlish in maintaining that "the remedial work of Christ is

always represented in Scripture,—in exact consistency with its representation of the evil to be remedied,—as purely and wholly legal, forensic, and judicial.” \*

But does this detract from the love of the Eternal Father? No, not so. Evangelical doctrine has been often caricatured, as if it set forth God as an offended despot whose anger could only be appeased with the blood of His Son. Scripture does unquestionably teach us that eternal justice required an expiation. But Father, Son, and Spirit combined in the eternal counsels as to the mode of atonement. The highest proof of love which God the Father could give was that he gave up His only-begotten Son. “God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son.” Nor is the modern doctrine that the Father gave His Son to live, to suffer, and to die, merely as an example of holiness to be followed by man, beset with one difficulty less than the old, simple, and comforting doctrine of Holy Writ, the doctrine taught so clearly by St. Paul, that Christ died in our stead, as a substitute for us, and that He bought us with His precious blood, so that justice and love are reconciled together, and that God can be “just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

In the paradise which was lost by Adam God did not reveal Himself as a Father, nor had man any claims on Him as His son. In the paradise regained by Christ we are gifted with the blessings of sonship, and in that glorious relation we need

\* Candlish, Lect. iii. p. 128.

no more a legal mediator. Yet as while still on earth we stand partly in the one relation and partly in the other, the Lord Jesus stands related to us as both our Mediator and our Elder Brother. In the realms of bliss we shall yet see the blessed unity of the two relations, when, as sons redeemed and regenerated, we shall praise and bless Him for ever.

## CHAPTER III.

### TRADUCIANISM AND CREATIONISM— ORIGINAL SIN.

WE have spoken of Adam's original position and the probation to which, for wise reasons, the Creator subjected him. We have seen how he broke down under that trial. We have also considered the sentence under which he fell—the death of the spirit, involving with it, though not immediately, the death of the soul and of the body. The effects of that sentence were partly privative and partly punitive, privative in the forfeiture of a blessed immortality, which otherwise he would have obtained; punitive in the toil, and pain, and sorrow he was henceforth to undergo.

Before we proceed farther to consider the effects of the Fall upon mankind in general, we must call attention to the different views held by theologians with regard to the formation of the human soul. Some hold that at every birth there is a fresh act of God's creative power, and a new soul is created by Him and infused into the body prepared by the laws of nature which He has ordained. Others, on the contrary, hold that the

entire nature of the child, its soul as well as its body, is derived from its parents. The divines who hold the one theory are termed Creationists, those who hold the other, Traducians. The difficulty on the former supposition is, that it seems to make God the author of sin, for either the soul must be supposed to be created pure, and to contract its defilement from the body with which it is joined, or it must have been created impure from the first. The difficulties which beset the other hypothesis are those supposed to arise from the immateriality of the soul and its inherent dignity.

Into the opinion of the Church Fathers we do not mean to enter. It has been, however, remarked, and we believe with truth, that those of the first four centuries were for the most part in favour of the Traducian view, but that the great weight of Augustine's authority induced those who succeeded him to embrace the opposite opinion.\* The Church of Rome has thrown the weight of her authority into the scale of Creationism, and maintains that God infuses souls directly into the bodies prepared for them. Although there is no direct decision of the question in the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church, yet it is certain that the divines of that Church were opposed to the views of the Romish Church on this point, and considered the transmission of evil as explainable only on the Traducian hypothesis. Delitzsch, in his *Biblical Psychology*, notes that there was scarcely a Lutheran divine of the seventeenth century who

\* See Heard's "Tripartite Nature of Man," pp. 175, 176.



did not look upon the opposite opinion as a semi-Pelagian or Romish error.\*

The question is one upon which no authoritative decision has been come to by the English or Scotch Reformed Churches. It seems to have been usually viewed as a mere matter of speculation. The general opinion seems, however, to have been rather in favour of Creationism, though without any appreciation of the difficulties which beset that view. The poet Quarles, who flourished during the reign of Charles I., well expresses the kind of balance held by many between the two opinions; the arguments seeming to preponderate alternately in their minds, till at length the attempt to solve the question was abandoned. The poem we refer to is the second in his quaint *Hieroglyphics of the Life of Man*.

Thus man begins to live. An unknown flame  
 Quickens his finished organs, now possess  
 With motion; and which motion doth proclaim  
 An active soul, though in a feeble breast;  
 But how, and when infus'd, ask not my pen;  
 Here flies a cloud before the eyes of men:  
 I cannot tell thee how, nor canst thou tell me when.

Was it a parcel of celestial fire,  
 Infus'd by Heaven into this fleshly mould?  
 Or was it (think you) made a soul entire?  
 Then, was it new-created? or of old?  
 Or is't a propagated spark, rak'd out  
 From nature's embers! While we go about  
 By reason to resolve, the more we raise a doubt.

\* Heard, p. 176. Delitzsch, "System der biblischen Psychologie," zweite Auflage, p. 108.

If it be part of that celestial flame  
 It must be e'en as pure, as free from spot,  
 As that eternal fountain whence it came,  
 If pure and spotless, then whence came the blot?  
 Itself being pure, could not itself defile;  
 Nor hath unactive matter power to soil  
 Her pure and active form, as jars corrupt their oil.

Or if it were created, tell me when?  
 If in the first six days, where kept till now?  
 Or if thy soul were new-created, then  
 Heaven did not all, at first, he had to do:  
 Six days expired, all creation ceas'd;  
 All kinds, e'en from the greatest to the least,  
 Were finish'd and complete before the day of rest.

But why should man, the lord of creatures, want  
 That privilege which plants and beasts obtain?  
 Beasts bring forth beasts, the plant a perfect plant,  
 And ev'ry like brings forth her like again;  
 Shall fowls and fishes, beasts and plants convey  
 Life to their issue, and man less than they?  
 Shall these get living souls, and man dead lumps of clay?

Must human souls be generated then?  
 Thy water ebbs; behold a rock is nigh:  
 If nature's work produce the souls of men,  
 Man's soul is mortal: all that's born must die.  
 What shall we then conclude? what sunshine will  
 Disperse this gloomy cloud? till then be still  
 My vainly-striving thoughts; lie down, my puzzled quill.

We have quoted this remarkable poem almost at full length, as it gives so tersely the arguments adduced on both sides. We adhere decidedly to the Traducian hypothesis. We cannot see the meaning of God's resting from his work of creation if every individual soul of man be freshly created. Nor do we see any escape from attributing the

transmission of evil directly to the Most High, if we adopt the creationist view. As to the difficulties raised against the Traducian hypothesis, they appear to us but slight. The argument that if nature's work produce the soul of man, the soul must needs be mortal, is a begging of the question, an assertion and no more.\* If mortal be only meant to imply the possibility of dying, we may admit it (though there is no real necessity for our doing so), and taking our stand on Scripture, and Scripture alone, we may ask for one Scriptural proof of the natural, or inherent, immortality of the soul. Does not St. Paul, in the 1st Epistle to Timothy vi. 16, tell us plainly that to God only appertains such a necessary immortality? Not one text can be cited from Scripture which speaks of any immortality belonging to man except that bestowed as a gift by Christ on his own people, or, possibly, that imposed as a punishment on impenitent sinners. Immortality, as it first meets our eye in Scripture, is a boon only to be attained by eating of the tree of life in the midst of Paradise.

We shall see now what light this theory will afford us in considering the question of original sin.

Adam, when created perfect, was possessed of a threefold nature, body, soul, and spirit. The last had been received by the breathing of God's Spirit, and must not be confounded with the indwell-

\* For if immortal beings were created with the power of increasing their species, immortals would naturally produce immortals. If, therefore, man be supposed to be of a mixed mortal and immortal nature, we see no difficulty in supposing that his offspring are also of the same mixed nature.

ing of the Holy Ghost in believers, which is the peculiar gift of the New Testament dispensation. The spirit was the mainspring of Adam's nature, the guide of his actions. It afforded him a sweet and blessed consciousness of God,—a God-consciousness, as we have termed it ; whereby he knew that God was, and that he was his creator, and his benefactor. It was this God-consciousness which taught him the duties he owed to the Most High, and made him feel what was due also to creatures like himself. By it he understood, naturally and intuitively, the divine and the moral duties of man. Had he continued in obedience his spirit would have been strengthened by habit, and would have grown apace with experience. Innocence would have ripened into holiness, and a passive harmlessness would have grown into an active goodness. Now if Adam had children born to him in such a state, they would have been possessed of the same powers as himself. They would naturally have had the threefold nature, body, soul and spirit, in all the perfection of its several parts. By their own innate powers they would have been equally capable as Adam of attaining to holiness.

But Adam sinned, and the harmony of his nature was broken ; the divine life departed from his spirit, and he could no longer transmit it to his posterity. The mainspring of the great human watch was thus gone. The loss of the higher power weakened all the lower ; how much injury it did them, we are not in a position to assert. Excluded from the renovating and quickening influence of the tree of life, the body was left gradu-

ally to its own decay, and the mind or soul was too intimately connected with it not to be affected also. But the fatal loss was in the deadening of the spirit. Conscience as a reproving and an excusing faculty,—conscious of some higher power, conscious of some law, and some duties required thereby, but unable to give any clear testimony on these points—was all that was left of the noble faculties of God-consciousness and moral consciousness which the unshattered spirit had possessed. Conscience, or the deadened spirit, has been transmitted from man to man. Often darkened, often defiled, often almost silenced, it still remains, even in the most debased of the human race, like a broken pillar reminding ever of the glorious temple once reared in Eden, and even still, ruin as it is, telling of the dignity and superiority of man over the other part of the earthly creation. “The capacity or receptivity of spiritual influences,” says Heard, “was created with the first Adam, and the bare capacity as an integral part of man’s nature could not be destroyed by the fall. As a dead organ, a rudimentary organ, without corresponding functions (as physiologists speak of the *mammæ* in males, or the toes in a horse’s hoof, or the teeth in a whale’s jaws), so the spiritual capacity has passed down from Adam through all his posterity.”\*

It is a sorrowful truth, conveyed to us incidentally in the 5th of Genesis, that Adam’s children were begotten “in his own image, after his own likeness;” that is, sinful and corrupt as he had become. We do not mean to assert that the writer of Genesis

\* Heard, p. 153.

exactly meant to intimate all this when he made use of that expression, though it is not unlikely some such thought passed through his mind. But not the less do the words, if only incidentally, declare the sad reality. Man has lost the chief part of the image of God. Inasmuch, however, as in the shape of a half consciousness, there still remained some traces of man's divine origin, these are referred to in the injunction, or statement, of how a murderer should, or would be dealt with, which is given us in the ninth chapter of Genesis.

That there is an universal corruption of human nature the experience of every age teaches. Ancient philosophers sought to account for it by a theory of the pre-existence of souls. Men were supposed to be punished here for the sins they had committed in a former state of existence. Some philosophers, indeed, have dreamed that all evil was caused by bad example, and have striven by a careful education to prevent evils from springing up in the heart. But it has been all in vain, since the seeds were there by nature. In the child the bodily powers first appear, then the mental, and then the spiritual capacities ought to develop themselves. But when the spiritual capacities ought to manifest themselves, nature is perceived to be out of order. The desires of the body are seldom held in check by the powers of the mind, and when the spiritual faculty should show itself powerful to sway the entire, it proves itself to be weak, and is unable to give more than a feeble protest against sin. Nature herself thus bears witness that we are fallen. It requires, in most cases, little or no teaching to render

the bodily senses able and willing to do their allotted share ; it takes more labour to get the mind to perform what is required of it, and too often it appears unable to discharge its proper duties. The moral consciousness may also be cultivated to some little degree, but the divine consciousness very little indeed, until both the moral and religious consciousness are awakened and quickened by the power of the Holy Spirit at conversion.

Thus original sin, the sin that we inherit from Adam, is mainly privative in its character. Adam's perfection, when created, consisted in the perfect adjustment of all the several parts of his nature, bodily, mental, and spiritual, to one another. That perfect adjustment is no longer to be found in man. The human watch has had its mainspring shattered, the human ship launched on the ocean of time has lost its rudder. This one defect necessarily mars all the rest. We all inherit it from Adam. This, no doubt lessens our responsibility, but it does not remove it. The effect of the fall, it has been remarked, is best seen in this, that just at the very time when we should expect to find the higher nature of man controlling the lower, we miss it. "As the tares did not appear till the wheat had begun to grow, so man's unspirituality is not seen till the intellectual and animal powers have begun to put themselves forth. Then we see with surprise that the young nature, like a wild vine, instead of training upward, trails along the earth. We look for grapes, but behold wild grapes ; for judgment, but behold oppression ; for righteousness, but behold a cry. Now we discover what man

ought to be from seeing what he is not. We learn the nature of the spirit from its defect.”\*

The Church of England and Ireland in her Ninth Article says that “original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians vainly talk) but is the fault or corruption (*vitium et depravatio*) of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit, and therefore in every person born into the world it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation,” and after stating that this “infection of nature” doth remain even in the regenerated, the Article closes with the statement, “that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.” This latter statement is a middle point between the view adopted by the church of Rome in the Tridentine decrees and that advocated by the Lutheran in the Augsburg Confession. Concupiscence or desire is not quite the same as sin, it only becomes so when it is not kept within the lawful limits—as is the case, however, with every fallen human being. The definition, therefore, of a distinguished Roman Catholic divine, “original sin is unbounded desire,”† possesses its share of truth. It has preferably been defined as “ignorance in the mind, and concupiscence in the flesh.” Thus as the Augsburg Confession well says, “men are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust towards God, and with concupiscence,” ‡ or as we

\* Heard’s Tripartite Nature, p. 164.

† “*Concupiscentia immoderata*,”—Bonaventuræ.

‡ Confess. August. ii., and Apol. Confess. i., de pecc. orig.



would say, with their higher nature shattered and broken, and their lower powerful beyond its proper proportions. Thomas Aquinas' definition is terse and concise: "original sin consists in a privation of original righteousness, and with this an inordinate disposition of the faculties of the soul, whence it is not a mere privation but a certain corrupt habit."\* Substitute the word "tendency" instead of "habit," and this exactly expresses our idea. Some may prefer to consider this "tendency" as rather an *effect* of the privation of original righteousness than as a distinct fact.† The difference is not material, though we are inclined to view it rather as a positive taint affecting the soul which has passed down from generation to generation; even as the tendency to disease and death is a taint affecting the body which has been likewise transmitted to us from our first parents.

The German Confession, referred to in Melancthon's Apology of the Augsburg Confession, states the whole doctrine in a very intelligible manner: "Further, we teach that after the fall of Adam, all men who are born naturally, are conceived and born in sins, that is, that they all are full of evil desire

\* Quoted in Apol. Confess. Aug.

† This must not be viewed as an unsound opinion. Even Th. Goodwin, in his work on "An unregenerate man's guiltiness before God," in the heading of chap. vi. of Book viii., says, "there is no necessity of asserting original sin to be a positive quality in our souls, since the privation of righteousness is enough to infect the soul with all that is evil." Still he shows that there is something positive even in this. But that, as Hodge remarks, (*Com. on Romans*, ch. v.), "results from the active nature of the soul. If there is no tendency to the love and service of God, there is, from this very defect, a tendency to self and sin."

and inclination from their mother's womb, and can have by nature no true fear of God, no true faith in God."

This is the truth that Scripture plainly reveals to us: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," Rom. iii. 23. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," Ps. li. 5. "Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Ps. liii. 3. "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin," Gal. iii. 22. "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not," Eccl. vii. 20. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it," Jer. xvii. 9. "The carnal mind is enmity to the law of God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, so then they that are in flesh cannot please God," Rom. viii. 7, 8. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one," Job xiv. 4. "What is man that he should be clean? and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Job xv. 14. "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," Rom. vii. 18.

The Westminster Confession agrees with what has been cited from the other Confessions in maintaining that our first parents, by their sin, "fell from their original righteousness, and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body." But it takes a step further, and proceeds

to say that : “ they being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.” There are two things here asserted, first, that original sin is conveyed from parents to children by ordinary generation, it comes as a fact in the course of nature.\* In this the Westminster Confession is in full agreement with the Article of the Church of England, and with the Augsburg Confession. But, secondly, it maintains that God imputes the guilt of Adam’s sin to all his posterity ; in this it is peculiar.

This latter doctrine is often stated as if it signified that Adam’s guilt was imputed to his innocent and unborn children, and that thus his children are punished, not for their own sin, but for the iniquity of their father. But it need only imply that God treats all men from their very birth as sinners in consequence of the sin of Adam. The reason is very plain. By that sin Adam’s children lost, by the deadening of the spirit, the possibility of obtaining righteousness by their own efforts ; and every one of them in their fallen nature would most certainly break down under any trial like that to which he was exposed. This is daily proved by their succumbing to much lighter temptations. It is no injustice, therefore, for God to *impute* to them

\* This is even more clearly expressed in the Larger Catechism, where the answer is given : “ Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin.”

a sin which every one of them would most undoubtedly commit, if they only had the opportunity. It was by the one sin of Adam that all mankind have become sinners, and as such exposed to eternal death. It is by the one righteous act of the Lord Jesus, his death upon the cross, which is counted as the highest proof of his obedience, that many become righteous, being united by faith to him as their head.

There is a deep truth in the statement that we were one with Adam, and have shared with him in his fall. There is no *life* naturally in our spirits. We have just enough of conscience remaining to make us at times turn our eyes towards heaven and feel sadly that our sins have separated between us and our God. But in ourselves we have no way of recovering that life back again, or of making our peace with God. From Christ alone, can we regain the life which we lost in Adam. From the Holy of Holies in heaven we must obtain the divine fire to light up the altar in our hearts and spirits. Other sources can but afford us "strange fire." Jesus can alone give us the Holy Spirit, can alone baptize us with fire, the fire which cometh from heaven.

If, by the captivity to sin by which man has been enslaved, the fire once lighted in the temple of his spirit has gone out, thank God, the altar to hold the fire—the capacity for becoming spiritual—has not also been taken away. Just for one moment contemplate what that would have reduced us to. Conscience would then have gone, all moral and all religious consciousness would have fled. We should have had no idea of God as a Creator

to whom we owed anything, or of his law written now within, as well as without, as anything to which we ought to give heed. Our intellect might have led us to adore arts and sciences, but not to worship heaven; if even science could be cultivated at all when the bonds of all society should have been loosened. Nay, it is more probable that we should have lived like beasts, acknowledging no law but that of the stranger, distressed by no qualms of conscience, troubled by no considerations of right and wrong; we would have sunk into the tomb and perished there. There would have been no need of an existence beyond the grave for those who, on this hypothesis, would have borne no relation towards heaven.

But the hope set before us in the Gospel is of finally becoming spiritual in the true and highest sense. "The natural man," *i.e.*, the psychical man, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," that is, does not recognize their superior excellence, "for they are foolishness unto Him," are to Him insipid and distasteful, and, by reason of the deadening of his spirit, "cannot know them," as they can only be discerned through the Spirit. "The spiritual man," in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, "judges," that is, discerns the excellence and beauty of the things of God, "although he himself is judged," *i.e.*, appreciated "by none" of those who have not likewise received that spirit (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15). But the spiritual man on earth is, at best, but the germ of what the true spiritual man shall be in heaven. The saint below stands related to the saint above somewhat

as the little child, with its feeble powers, to the man of science, with his deep stores of knowledge. He bears about with him here but an earthly body, "a natural body," that is, one ruled, at best, mainly by the soul, not by the spirit. He shall receive, in the day of the resurrection, a "heavenly body," a "spiritual body," in perfect harmony with the spirit. Enoch's close walk with God, Isaac's quiet meditation, Jacob's earnest wrestling, David's longing after God, Isaiah's raptures as he beheld His glory, Paul's fervent thoughts of Christ, John's burning love to his Lord, are but faint emblems of the blessed feelings that shall fill us hereafter. We are here "the sons of God," even though we cannot enter into the full blessedness of the relation. There the further height of dignity that awaits us is summed up by the beloved disciple in one expression: "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

## CHAPTER III.

### SCRIPTURE PASSAGES WHICH SPEAK OF GOD AS A FATHER CONSIDERED.

HAVING endeavoured to show that Adam, even in Paradise, did not stand in the relation of a son towards God, in the New Testament sense of that term, and having pointed out the fatal consequences of his sin with regard to his posterity, we now proceed more directly to discuss the Fatherhood of God. In doing so we must first call attention to the various senses in which the term of Father is applied to the Most High.

In Hebrew phraseology the name of "father" was given to a master or teacher, and the name of "sons" to his pupils. Thus the sons of the prophets, so often spoken of, signified the pupils of the prophets, those who studied in the schools of the prophets, which were the theological colleges of that day. The prophet Amos, when intimating that he was not trained up in one of these colleges, and did not even belong to the prophetic order, makes use of the expression: "I was not a prophet, nor a prophet's son." (Amos vii. 14). When Micah requested the Levite, who was looking out for a place to dwell in, to abide with him and teach

his family, he did so in these terms : "Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a priest." (Judges xvii. 10). Similarly, when the Danites made a raid upon Micah's house, and carried off his graven images and his priest, they also addressed the latter in the same way : "Go with us, and be to us a father and a priest." (Judges xviii. 19). And when Saul, the son of Kish, under a temporary inspiration, attached himself to a company of prophets proceeding in joyous procession, some of the bystanders, who knew the youth's natural character, exclaimed, in amazement : "Is Saul also among the prophets ;" while others, wondering at the sight, inquired, in astonishment : "And who is their father ?" that is, what teacher's influence has proved so marvellously powerful as to enrol the high-spirited Saul among the number of his pupils? (1 Sam. x. 12).

In the same sense Elisha, when he beheld the translation of Elijah, exclaimed : "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof," *i.e.*, Oh, my teacher, my master, the ornament and the protection of Israel and its people. (2 Kings ii. 12). The identical same words were also used by King Joash to Elisha when he visited the dying prophet on his death-bed (2 Kings xiii. 14). The title "father" was also used as a name of respect in addressing a governor or king, and therefore the servants of Naaman addressed their lord as "my Father." When Isaiah predicted of Eliakim that he would be raised to great dignity, it was also in these words : "he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah," (Isaiah xxii. 21).



As a title of respect used in reference to teachers, we find that it was the practice of the Jews to style their ancient Rabbis by that name; and we are also accustomed to call the teachers of the early Christian Church by the name of "the Fathers." It is one of the highest names of dignity given to bishops, and the ordinary title of the head of the Roman Catholic Church is Pope or Father.

It is more perhaps in accordance with our immediate purpose to note that the names "son" and "daughter" were sometimes used (by a natural consequence from what we have already noted) to signify the disciple or worshipper of a deity. Thus the proper name of many Syrian kings was Benhadad, which signified "the son of Hadad," or Adad, the sun-god, the principal god of the Syrians. And so female idolators are styled, in Mal. ii. 11, "the daughter of a strange god." Nor was this usage confined to idolators. We meet in the Bible with the name Ben-hanan (1 Chr. iv. 20), which signifies, "Son of the Gracious," or "of God;" *i.e.*, a worshipper of the true God. The same idea is less distinctly expressed in many other proper names.

Directly in accordance, then, with this usage, we find the Lord himself calling those that served and worshipped Him by the name of His children, and appealing to them in that capacity to render Him the honour due unto His name, and to keep themselves pure from idolatrous customs. "Ye are the children of the Lord your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between

your eyes for the dead," Deut. xiv. 1. So, in Psalm lxxiii. 15, the Psalmist relates how he was restrained from giving vent to the murmuring thoughts which arose within him lest he "should offend against the generation of thy [God's] children." And the wise man expresses his conviction (Prov. xiv. 26) that "in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and His children shall have a place of refuge."

Thus even the Lord remonstrates with rebellious Israel, that as He was the object of their worship, the Teacher who had taught them, and the God who had watched over them, He was worthy of their honour and obedience: "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master. If I be a father, where is my honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?" *i. e.*, the reverence that is due to my name, Mal. i. 6. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me," Isaiah i. 2. "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me. . . . Go write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: that this a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord," Isaiah xxx. 1, 8, 9.

I do not think that much more than this is meant in the exhortation, which occurs in Jer. iii. 4, 5: "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth? Will He reserve His anger for ever? will He keep it unto the end?" Judah is in that chapter com-

pared to a faithless spouse who had played the harlot. So had the Jews worshipped many idols and departed from the living God. But the Lord graciously invited them to return again to their allegiance, and promised to receive them mercifully, and to deal with them in such a manner as an earthly husband would not be expected to deal with his adulterous spouse. Only from this time forward, said he, attend to my teaching and not to that of the idolatrous prophets and priests who have led you astray. It is not so much the relation of father and son that is brought forward here as of a teacher and his disciples, or rather that of a husband who acts to his wife in the relation of teacher as well as that of spouse. The 19th and 20th verses set forth more clearly this connexion: "But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? And I said, Thou shalt call me my Father, and shalt not turn away from me. Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord."

Now, there is in all this no idea expressed of universal Fatherhood on God's part, or of universal sonship on the part of man. The Fatherhood spoken of is metaphorical, but a figure of speech and no more. It cannot be fairly argued from the number of such expressions, that the dealing of God with us is properly paternal, but that, as he giveth to man the knowledge necessary to supply his physical wants, instructing him how to sow and

reap (Isaiah xxviii. 24-29), so he as the only and the true God affords to his people the needful instruction how to walk in his holy ways. Jeshurun indeed often "waxed fat and kicked," refused to be taught by the Most High, and chose rather to be guided by the precepts of men. The Lord dealt with him in mercy, and after frequent rebellions, still offered grace and forgiveness. But this gracious dealing and long-suffering was more distinctly characterised in God's dealings with Israel as a people than with the Israelites as individuals, for he cut off irrecoverably many of the individuals of that nation, and dealt with them not as sons in the way of mercy, but as disobedient subjects in the way of justice, in his character as the Righteous and Moral Ruler of the earth.

There is, therefore, so far forth as these passages are concerned, no basis on which to establish any such fabric of the fatherhood of God as modern divines have sought to rear. The mercy spoken of is a free, sovereign mercy: the fatherhood mentioned is one which does not oblige God to deal with his people in any other way but as strict justice might require.

But there are other passages in which God receives the appellation of Father, not from the gracious instruction he vouchsafed to the elect of other days, as from the special position he assumed to Israel as the founder and protector of that nation.

The founder of a nation was often styled in Hebrew phraseology father. Shem thus received as a special title "the father of all the children of Eber

(עבר),” the Hebrews (עברים),\* Gen. x. 21. This idea is also included in Abraham’s name, “the father of many nations,” Gen. xvii. 5. With a similar force of meaning Moab and Ben-ammi are called respectively “the father of the Moabites,” and “the father of the children of the Ammon,” Gen. xix. 37, 38; and Edom or Esau “the father of the Edomites,” Gen. xxxvi. 43. By a like usage Jubal, the inventor of musical instruments, is called “the father of all such as handle the harp and organ,” and Jabal “the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle,” Gen. iv. 20, 21.

Hence, on account of the Lord’s electing love and care for Israel, Moses, in his song, uses the striking expression when expostulating with the people for their idolatries, “Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and has forgotten God that formed thee,” Deut. xxxii. 18. And the Lord, claiming a father’s right of property in them, sent a message to Pharaoh couched in these remarkable words: “Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: and I say unto thee, Let my son go that he may serve me, and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn,” Exod. iv. 22, 23. So also when the Lord promises that he will again gather Israel, he does so in the following words: “I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the

\* We are fully aware of the other derivation given for עברי, which is supported by high authority. But this is not the place to discuss the question, nor is there any necessity for so doing, as we do not here take any side. See, however, our Commentary on Genesis, ch. xiv. 13.

ends of the earth," Isaiah xliii. 6. And of the returning Israelites he says, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born," Jer. xxxi. 9. Our Lord also several times refers to this national position of the Jews as a people: "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs," (Matt. xv. 26). In this capacity as sons of Abraham in the flesh, though they might be far otherwise in the spirit, the Lord styles them "children of the kingdom:" "The children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Language probably belonging to the paternal relation is often figuratively used with reference to any relation, which, as Dr Candlish phrases it, implies benefit on the one side and endearment on the other. It is thus that Paul addresses Timothy as his dear son, thus that John terms Christians "little children." Thus also was the Lord Jesus accustomed to use such kindly forms of speech as "Children, have you any meat?" "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee," "Daughter, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace."

And this is all that can be proved to be designed in the beautiful words which occur in Jer. xxxi. 20: "Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord."

The name "father" is also used as synonymous with "maker," "creator." Thus, in Job xxxviii. 28, the Lord is represented as asking Job the question, "Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?" The prophet Jeremiah describes the folly of idolatrous Judah in "saying to a stock, Thou art my father, and to a stone, thou hast brought me forth," (Jer. ii. 27). In a similar strain repentant Israel addresses Jehovah, in Isaiah lxiv. 8: "But now, O Lord, thou art our father, we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we are all the work of thy hand," and in Isaiah lxiii. 16: "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer, thy name is from everlasting." Compare, too, Mal. ii. 10.

Again, the name "father" is used metaphorically for one who brings up and nourishes others. Thus Job says of himself (ch. xxix. 16) "I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not I searched out," and in much the same signification, though proportionately higher, is it said of God: "a father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows is God in his holy habitation," (Ps. lxxviii. 5).

Now, in all these passages, and they are fair samples of all that can be adduced, though frequent use is made of the paternal relation in a metaphorical and figurative way, there is no idea given us of any proper fatherhood of which individuals are the objects, and by virtue of which they might look to receive favours, or hope and expect to escape deserved punishment.

It has been thought by some that there is, at

least, one clear instance of the revelation of the doctrine of the sonship of believers in the Old Testament, namely, the use of the expression "sons of God" in that difficult narrative in Gen. vi.

Now, we agree with the opinion of those who maintain that no reference is there made to angels at all, or to any intercourse or intermingling of such beings with men. Our Lord's words concerning such, that they "neither marry nor are given in marriage," is quite conclusive, in our opinion, against the existence of any difference of sex among them. By the "sons of God" are simply meant those who worshipped God in the manner which he had himself enjoined, while by "the daughters of men" are signified those fascinating females of the line of Cain, who followed his evil example in serving God (if they worshipped him at all) in the way they considered most fitting, and not after the mode God himself had prescribed.

In confirmation of this view, we would remind our readers that we have already proved that the expression sons and daughters is used to signify male and female worshippers and disciples. How appropriate the expression when referred to the families of Cain and Seth, the latter of whom long upheld the obedience due to the Most High; the former exiled, as they were, for a long time, from the family altar in front of Eden, followed only what seemed good in their own eyes.\*

Even those who agree with the view of the passage we have just given are apt to consider that

\* See Appendix, No. II.



the phrase "sons of God" in the first and second chapters of Job has another meaning, and that those characterized there by that name were the holy un-fallen angels. Dr Candlish seems to have felt himself constrained to adopt this view.\* But we think that it is more in accordance with the analogy of Scripture, and certainly creates much fewer difficulties to understand "the sons of God" in those passages also to signify the professors of true religion in that day. There are not wanting hints given us in Scripture that even at that early time there were special places where Divine worship was conducted, and set times, probably the holy Sabbath, for the meeting together of the people of the Lord.

The book of Job draws back the curtain which conceals the invisible from the visible world, and points to the significant fact, that in the midst of the congregation of worshippers the Great Advocate of the people of God stands confronting "the Accuser of the brethren." The latter daringly threw down the gauntlet, and the other unhesitatingly accepted the challenge; and the contest and its victorious result forms the subject of the opening chapters of that interesting book.†

Thus in both of these passages, that in Genesis and also in Job, it is the professed disciples and worshippers of God who are called His sons, and the sonship is after all only a metaphorical expression for discipleship, and is not at all a sonship like that the privileges of which the apostle

\* See Candlish, p. 123.

† See our *Spiritual Temple of the Spiritual God*, chap. viii.

eloquently speaks of in the eighth of Romans. The modern doctrine of God's universal fatherhood finds in them no support at all.

It has been very generally considered that Job xxxviii. 7 is at least one decided instance of angelic beings being called "the sons of God," Dr. Candlish holds that "there can scarcely be a doubt that it is the elect angels who are there meant." He considers it as being "the only unequivocal intimation of the sonship of the angels which the Old Testament Church ever got."\* In the passage in question the Lord is represented as asking of Job, where wast thou "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" The text is supposed by those who hold with Dr. Candlish to allude to angels celebrating the creation of this earth. In this view the phrase "morning stars" must be supposed to be the same as "the sons of God." But it is equally admissible by the laws of Hebrew poetical parallelism to explain the latter phrases by the former, and to consider "the sons of God" to mean the "morning stars." The stars are represented poetically as rejoicing in chorus together at the introduction of a new planet among them. Similar poetical figures are found in other parts of Scripture, as Isaiah xxxv. 1, 2; lv. 12, &c. It is no more inappropriate to style the stars as the creatures of God figuratively by that name, than it is in the same chapter to refer to God as "the father of the dew."

The promise which the Lord makes in Hosea (i. 10), "In the place where it was said unto

\* Candlish, Lecture iii. p. 124.

them, Ye are not my people, there shall it be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God," seems to be a prophetic announcement of the blessed sonship which the Lord Jesus should gift His people with under the New Testament dispensation. Hence we may omit referring further to it here.\*

We have now completed our survey of the passages in the Old Testament which allude to God under the character of a father, and have seen that none of them teach or intimate any such relation as might make men expect a remission of the judgment threatened against impenitent sinners, or might lead them to imagine that all God's dealings with them are only disciplinary, or tending gradually to remove their sin by chastisement. The New Testament revelation, no doubt, is that chiefly relied on to make out the truth of this view, but we shall soon see how little real encouragement the New Testament affords to such a doctrine. When Paul speaks of the world in general and its relation to God, he does not talk of a universal fatherhood, but of the deep corruption of the world and its inhabitants, and of the wrath of God to be revealed from heaven in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. i. and ii.

One sentence of St. Paul has been cited as an example of the contrary teaching. It is that re-

\* We cannot agree with Dr. Candlish that no new or peculiar relation is meant by the phrase, "Ye are the sons of the living God," in contrast with "Ye are not my people." The passage suggests a contrast, the New Testament explains in what it consists.

markable expression which Paul quoted from Aratus: "For we are also His offspring," Acts xvii. 28. No doubt by so quoting it as he does Paul "adopts and engrosses it as his own." But in what sense? Does he mean thereby to lay down that all men by common right stand in the position towards God of sons? We agree with Dr. Candlish in replying in the negative. But we do not coincide with him in considering that the use that Paul makes of it in his argument, is "simply to expose the absurdity of rational beings ascribing their origin to what is irrational; or, which comes to the same thing, worshipping in an irrational manner him to whom they ascribe their origin, so as virtually to make him out to be irrational. That is all. That is the apostle's only object; the sole and single point of his reasoning."\* Dean Alford's view (partly derived from Meyer) seems to us to suit the context better, to wit, that the apostle meant to point out that out of God we should have no life, not even movement, no existence whatever, and therefore, as man himself absolutely depends on God, it is absurd to suppose the Godhead to be like the work of men's hands. Whichever of the two views be preferred one thing we regard as certain, that no theory of universal fatherhood can be fairly built on such a text.

The parable of the prodigal son has been brought forward to support this modern doctrine. It has been argued that in that parable our Lord Jesus comprises all persons under two classes, either sinners away

\* Candlish, Lecture iii. p. 116.

from God feeding on husks of vanity, or saints living near to God, but too prone to give way to feelings of jealousy. But that both alike are objects of the Father's love, and both are alike his children. It might be wholly unnecessary to refer to such a perversion of the parable, but that it has received a wider circulation by the prominence given to it by the late gifted Rev. F. W. Robertson.\* Parables, it has often been remarked, must not be pressed too far, and it is scarcely fair to derive an argument for the universal fatherhood from the simple circumstance that God is pictured as a father in the parable. Doctrinal conclusions must not be drawn from "the incidental details of illustrative narratives or stories."

Of all the varied explanations of this most beautiful of parables, certainly that of Mr Robertson is one of the strangest. He supposes that the "elder brother represents a real Christian perplexed with God's mysterious doings;" "one of those happy persons who have been filled with the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb, and on the whole (with imperfections of course) remained God's servant all his life. For this is his own account of himself, which the father does not contradict."

Were such the meaning of the parable, it would

\* Robertson's Sermons, vol. iii. Serm. xx., on "the Prodigal and his brother." It is not surprising that Mr. Robertson, with his well-known leanings, should have adopted such an exposition; but that Prof. Crawford, in his work on the Fatherhood of God, should have indorsed such an interpretation is rather remarkable. It certainly is the most far-fetched explanation of a parable which, as to its leading points, is sufficiently explained by the very context in which it stands.

have been most unsuitable for the audience to which our Lord delivered it. For that audience was composed of Pharisees and sinners, and our Lord's aptness to teach was always shown by the remarkable way in which He ever adapted His words and illustrations to the persons before Him. Outward sensuality and inward pride were the principal characteristics respectively of the publicans and Pharisees, and both in the parable received their fitting rebuke. But inasmuch as the evils of the former sin are more open and glaring, those who were guilty of it were more easily led to see their deep need of salvation than those who in their pride imagined that they had no need for repentance. The one were encouraged to return to a God, who would receive them in the arms of His mercy; the other were gently reasoned with, their self-righteousness exposed, their hardness of heart delineated, if by any means they too might be led to repentance. Both the Pharisees and the publicans and sinners being alike of the stock of Abraham, had God for their Father in the sense of their teacher and instructor, and they were alike His children, *i.e.*, His professed disciples. The lesson the Lord Jesus would teach the publicans was God's willingness to receive them back again to His house; and what He desired to point out to the Pharisees was, that though not excluded by God from favour by any act of His, yet that if they persisted in their pride and self-righteousness, they would exclude themselves from it. Bad as was the character of the younger son, that of the elder son, however, appears on a closer inspection to be by far the worse of the two.

No fair or legitimate argument then can be drawn from this parable in favour of the universal fatherhood of God. The incidents of the narrative must not be strained to support such a dogmatic conclusion, any more than the natural silence of the parable as to the atoning death of the Lord Jesus is to be taken as an argument against that precious truth. While we are quite ready to allow of avowed accommodations of the teachings of the parable, for doctrinal purposes we must insist on its rigid interpretation.

## CHAPTER 8.

THE REVELATIONS IN SCRIPTURE CONCERNING  
GOD'S CHARACTER AND ATTRIBUTES OPPOSED  
TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE UNIVERSAL FATHER-  
HOOD—DANGER OF SUCH A DOGMA.

AFTER a large induction of passages of Holy Writ, we have now arrived at the conclusion that, apart from the sonship which the New Testament reveals as granted to believers in Jesus under the New Covenant, there is no mention made in the Bible of a universal fatherhood of God. We have seen, indeed, that as in Hebrew phraseology the name "father" was given to a teacher, and that of "sons" to his pupils, God was called by that name in the Old Testament in relation to the character in which He stood as the instructor of His people; and that those who worshipped Him in His own appointed way were similarly termed his "sons." Inasmuch, too, as "the founder" or "protector" of a nation was styled, in the same phraseology, its "father," the title was applied to God as the founder and protector of the Israelitish people. And whereas also the name "father" was often used as synonymous with "creator," the title was sometimes, in that signification also, applied to the Most High.



But we endeavoured to point out that, in all these cases, the name was used as a mere figure of speech, so that no exemption from merited punishment, or no blessings of any sort could be claimed by sinners among mankind by virtue of such a figurative relation.

We have now to consider what Holy Scripture reveals to us concerning the character of the Most High, and to point out how opposed the revelation there made is to the fanciful notions which some modern theologians have substituted in its room. We shall also point out some of the dangers which are involved in the admission of a universal fatherhood. To Scripture alone we make our appeal, on the sure word of inspiration we are content to rely. To argue it on any other foundation than "what saith the Scripture?" we utterly decline. The thoughts of man about the nature and character of God, when not in accordance with its sacred teachings, can be but empty and vain.

Holy Scripture informs us that God is invisible, eternal, immortal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, that His understanding is unsearchable, His ways past finding out, that He is immutable, the Only-wise, the All-great and ever-glorious. There is none beside Him, no other God; there is none before him, none like him: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

He is described, as to his moral character, as perfect, holy, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he," (Deut. xxxii.

4). "Good and upright is Jehovah," (Ps. xxv. 8), "righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works," (Ps. cxlv. 17); "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty," or rather, "who will by no means always leave unpunished,"\* (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7). "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious:† the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked; the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. . . . The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that put their trust in him," (Nahum i. 2, 3, 7). "Our God is a consuming fire," (Heb. xi. 29).

The holiness of God is pledged to execute his promises wherein he has caused his people to trust. "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David." Ps. lxxxix. 35. It is no less pledged to execute his threatenings: "The Lord God," writes the prophet Amos to the degenerate rich men of Israel, "hath sworn by his holiness, that he will take you away." Amos iv. 2. His

\* וְנִקְּהָ לֹא יִנְקְהָ. Kalisch has some good remarks on this in his comm. on Exod. xx. 5.

† The idea expressed here is simply that God brooks no rival, and that, being the true and living God, He will execute His threatenings, in contrast to the gods of heathen, who could neither benefit their worshippers or punish their foes.

holiness requires that he should hate sin as well as love righteousness. It requires him to manifest his detestation of sin. Sin must therefore be punished on the one hand and righteousness rewarded on the other. "Thou thoughtest," says God to the hardened sinner, "that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them (thy sins) in order before thine eyes." Ps. l. 21. Charnock well remarks: "As his holiness is natural and necessary, so is the punishment of unholiness necessary to him. It is necessary that he should abominate sin, and therefore necessary he should discountenance it. The severities of God against sin are not vain scarecrows, they have their foundation in the righteousness of his nature; it is because he is a righteous and holy God, that he will not forgive our transgressions and sins, Josh. xxiv. 19, that is, that he will punish them. The throne of his holiness is a 'fiery flame,' Dan. vii. 9, there is both a pure light and a scorching heat. Whatsoever is contrary to the nature of God, will fall under the justice of God; he would else violate his own nature, deny his own perfection, seem to be out of love with his own glory and life. He doth not hate it out of choice, but from the immutable propension of his nature. . . . As the detestation of sin results from the universal rectitude of his nature so the punishment of sin follows upon that, as he is the righteous governor of the world. It is as much against his nature not to punish it, as it is against his nature not to loathe it; he would cease to be holy, if he ceased to hate

it; and he would cease to hate it, if he ceased to punish it.”\*

Consistently with this, Scripture tells of God's righteous anger displayed against sin and sinners: “The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King: at his wrath the earth shall tremble and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation,” Jer. x. 10. The New Testament as well as the Old reveals this truth. Paul the apostle speaks of those who “after their hardness and impenitent heart treasure up unto themselves wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,” Rom. ii. 5. He warns us of the impiety of questioning the righteousness of God in this, Rom. ix. 18-23. He assured the Athenians “that God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness,” Acts xvii. 31; that in that awful day, so forcibly termed the great day of the wrath of the Lamb (Rev. vi. 16, 17; xi. 18), “the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,” 2 Thes. i. 7-9.

When, therefore, the salvation which Jesus has purchased for us is spoken of, it is frequently under such terms as these: “who delivereth us from the wrath to come,” 1 Thes. i. 10; “we shall be

\* Charnock on the Attributes of God. Works, vol. 2, p. 253 (Nicol's Edition)

saved from wrath through him," Rom. v. 9; he hath "made peace through the blood of his cross," Col. i. 20; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," 2 Cor. v. 19.

Such passages as these might be considerably multiplied, without even taking in the very numerous class of those which speak of the national judgments which the Lord inflicts because of his anger against the peoples. The Psalmist has, with sufficient plainness, expressed God's purpose in thus displaying his righteous and holy indignation: "So that one may say, verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth the earth," Ps. lviii. 11.

The faithfulness of God is enlarged upon by the Psalmist with great force and beauty in the 89th Psalm. That faithfulness is displayed on the one hand in the performance of his promises, and on the other in the execution of his threatenings. Compare Micah vii. 20, Ps. cxi. 5, and Heb. x. 23, with Jer. xxiii. 10.

The truth of God is as much concerned with the punishment of the wicked as with the rewarding of the righteous: "All the promises of God in him (Christ) are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us," 2 Cor. i. 20; and similarly when the vengeance of God is displayed, a voice is heard from the altar exclaiming, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments," Rev. xvi. 17.

Immutability in His will and purpose is also ascribed to God. Whatsoever He purposeth He

bringeth to pass (Isaiah xlvi. 11). The word that goeth forth out of His mouth shall not return unto Him void, but it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and prosper in the way whereto He sends it (Isaiah lv. 11). He is the Lord, He changes not (Mal. iii. 6). There can be no reason for any change in His will. Men change their wills from some want of foresight, from some natural instability of character, or from inability to perform what they have purposed. But none of these considerations can have anything to do with God. Therefore, as He has revealed His purpose in Scripture to punish sin and to reward righteousness, His character for immutability requires that He should fulfil the one purpose as well as the other.\*

Such is the character of the Lord God as graciously revealed by Him to us in Holy Writ. His justice is not lost sight of, though His lovingkindness and mercy are prominently set forth. His perfect holiness, His hatred of sin, and His inability to endure iniquity, are revealed to us in the clearest phraseology; while His matchless love, in sending His only-begotten Son to die for us, that He "might be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus," is dwelt upon in plain and simple language in the New Testament, and set forth under the veil of types and sacrifices in the Old.

The gospel is revealed as a remedy for man's

\* The fact of God's reprivating Nineveh upon its repentance is no argument for the changeableness of the Divine will. Such cases are distinctly anticipated in Jer. xviii. 7-10.

sin. Those who have sold themselves for naught are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. In His death justice and mercy are seen combined; through Him God's love and holiness and faithfulness all concur in assuring the salvation of the penitent believer. The guilt of sin is not lessened or made light of, but the burden of sin is removed from the shoulders of those who come with simple faith to the cross of Christ. The new school of divines despise, however, this old Bible theology. They would put it from them as old-fashioned and antiquated. The idea that is ever uppermost in their works is, that God's dealings with all men are educational, designed to form their character by drawing forth what is good and correcting what is bad. Sin itself is in their view something mainly negative, or if it has any positive element in it, it is in its character of selfishness. God is by them regarded as the Father of all; all men alike are His children, whom He chastises for their correction, to improve their character; and though some may by their wilfulness bring upon themselves heavier chastisements, yet the opinion is scarcely concealed but that sooner or later, whether after short probation or lengthened suffering, all the wandering children will be brought back to a Father's arms and a Father's home. Mr Wilson has thus pretty plainly expressed it:—"The Roman Church has imagined a *limbus infantium*; we must rather entertain a hope that there shall be found, after the great adjudication, receptacles suitable for those who shall be infants, not as to years of terrestrial life, but as to spiritual development—nurseries, as it were, and

seed-grounds, where the undeveloped may grow up under new conditions—the stunted may become strong and the perverted be restored. And when the Christian Church, in all its branches, shall have fulfilled its sublunary office, and its Founder shall have surrendered His kingdom to the Great Father, all, both small and great, shall find a refuge in the bosom of the Universal Parent, to repose, or be quickened into higher life, in the ages to come, according to His will.”\*

The phraseology sounds to our ears as a curious mixture of Buddhism and Christianity. But we are at present more concerned to point out the thought that lies at its bottom. Dr Candlish has correctly noted that “the merely analogical view of the fatherhood of God lies at the root of much, if not all, of our modern infidelity. How, indeed, can it fail, unless very carefully guarded, to breed

\* Mr Wilson’s essay on the National Church in the *Essays and Reviews*.—Although we cite this passage as conveying with sufficient clearness the tendency of the modern theory of the universal Fatherhood, yet we by no means think that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council could fairly in a penal prosecution take any other view than they did in their judgment on this clause, which was worded as follows:—“We are not required, or at liberty, to express any opinion upon the mysterious question of the eternity of final punishment, further than to say that we do not find in the Formularies to which this Article refers, any such distinct declaration of our Church upon the subject as to require us to condemn as penal the expression of hope by a clergyman, that even the ultimate pardon of the wicked, who are condemned in the day of judgment, may be consistent with the will of Almighty God.”—*Brodick and Fremantle’s Judgments of the Privy Council*, p. 289. It might be a dangerous precedent if the mere expression of a hope were declared penal, but the theologian is well aware that Mr Wilson really goes much further.



infidelity? It must do so doubly,—in two ways. Human parents, on the one hand, are weak, fallible, selfish, capricious, holding with unsteady hand the balance of equity ;—unreasonably passionate, yet fondly placable. And, on the other hand, they who conceive of God's fatherhood as like the fatherhood of human parents, are but too ready to reconcile themselves to precisely such a view of God as that which the analogy suggests."\*

Archbishop Whately long ago remarked on the influence of analogical terms in leading men into erroneous notions in theology, where the most important terms are necessarily drawn from analogy, and noted that this often happens more from want of caution than from any deliberate intention to deceive.† Thus the name "father," when applied to God in reference to the human race, is by degrees made to contain all those ideas which are usually attached to the character of a father among men, and so it has insensibly come to be regarded as opposed to any notion of penal punishment inflicted by the demands of justice upon rebellious sinners. Thus the mercy of God is considered to triumph over justice, and the common view of the most ignorant among mankind is substantially that which is adopted by these philosophical theologians, namely, that God is too merciful to punish sinners by final exclusion from heaven, and in some way or other at the last all will become sharers of the Divine clemency and love.

The philosophical theologians could not stop

\* Candlish on the Fatherhood of God, p. 149.

† Whately's Logic, Book iii., on Fallacies, § 5.

here, but have been driven onwards. Sin which is permitted by God, and, on this theory, dealt with by him so leniently, cannot be so hateful in itself as it is described to be by evangelical preachers. These latter may talk of "sin" indeed, and take for granted their congregations understand what they mean, but the philosopher doubts whether the evangelist really has any definite idea attached to the term.\* Sin, the philosophical theologian would have us to believe, is a law of our nature (in one sense of the term this is correct), a necessity of the very imperfection of the creature. He will scarcely ever define what it is, but his thoughts ever seem to drift in that direction, and, as we have remarked before, if sin ever be defined by theologians of this school as having anything positive in its nature, it is as selfishness. Sin, in their idea, involves no guilt properly speaking, but is, at worst, only a failure in attaining the highest good.

It is from such a standpoint that we find the orthodox opinion represented as if it considered God as demanding, for merely personal motives, a certain homage from his creatures, and determined, on that obedience not being yielded, to take vengeance on the transgressor.† Evangelical theology is guilty of no such statement. It holds that God, as a righteous governor, must not only, for his own sake, but for the good of the universe and for the happiness of his creatures, require implicit obedience from his rational creation, and that obedience must consist of a strict conformity to his righteous will.

\* Maurice's Theological Essays, Essay II., on Sin.

† *Idem.*

Evangelical theology points out that the Lord Jesus himself has laid down the duty of man to God to be "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and that the apostle has defined sin as "the transgression of the law" (1 John iii. 4); that law of God which is partly written within the heart, and plainly revealed in His Word.\* Sin has been well defined, in the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Divines, as "any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God;" and the same Catechism, further on, in exact and literal accordance with Holy Scripture, states that "every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come." Compare the proof passages: Eph. v. 6, Gal. iii. 10, Lam. iii. 39, Matt. xxv. 41, which might be indefinitely added to.

It is thus, by getting rid of sin, the universal Fatherhood of God is established. Let sin remain as odious and hateful in God's sight, and the impenitent sinner, who refuses to embrace the gracious offer of pardon through Christ, as a matter of necessary consequence, confessedly deserves to undergo the wrath of God. The doctrine of the universal Fatherhood is disproved, if we once establish that God will deal even with some men as the Righteous Judge, and will punish their sin by a final exclusion from heaven.

And is not sin not only condemned in Scripture, but also called the abominable thing which God hates (Jer. xlv. 4)? Is it only set forth to us as

\* Mr Riggs has some good remarks on this in his "Modern Anglican Theology," p. 152.

something necessarily lacking in the creature which must be supplied by gradual discipline? Are not the vilest terms imaginable used to describe it? It is compared to the filth of the dirty swine, the nauseous vomit of a dog (2 Pet. ii. 22), the putrifying stench that proceeds from an open sepulchre (Rom. iii. 23), the hideousness of an awful leprosy. It is no light thing, be assured, in the sight of God; it is no light thing to be philosophised over, until its guilt be forgotten; it is no light thing to trample on God's eternal law, to hate Him whose name is Love; it is no light thing to be rebels against His dignity, and to wish, as it were, to tear Him from His righteous throne. Oh, see that you think not lightly of that abominable thing which the Lord hates. It was no trifle that brought the Lord of Life and Glory to submit to the humiliation of becoming man, to suffer "the contradiction of sinners against himself;" it was no light thing that wrung from Him the bloody sweat in Gethsemane, and caused Him to undergo for us the agony, the shame of Calvary.

The consequences of the doctrine of the universal fatherhood, reared not on the basis of Scripture, but on that of "philosophy and vain deceit," are most dangerous. It is not a mere opinion which, though erroneous, may be held without danger and produce no evil effects.

The proclamation of the great central truths of inspiration often falls, without effect, on the human ear. Though men hear of their sin, though they confess their danger, though they believe, intellectually, that there is only one way of escape, by faith in Jesus and reliance on His merits, righteousness,

and intercession, yet, without the power of the Spirit, they are unwilling to come unto Him. For true faith, they know, must be accompanied by its fruits—the fruits of good works,—and though they may desire the salvation itself, they may put off their acceptance of it. They wish to enjoy the world, as they call it, and prefer to leave religion for a future day. “It is well known,” remarks Bishop O’Brien, “that there is a striking analogy between our visual and our mental perceptions—that distance in time produces in the latter all the illusions which are the familiar effects of distance in space in the former—confounding or inverting the true proportions of things near and remote, and causing us to be affected rather by the proximity of objects than by their importance. This illusion, so far as it lies in the understanding, is, doubtless, corrected, as we know better, and believe more firmly, the testimony of Revelation concerning the future and the unseen. But, as regards the feelings, it is one which, from our very nature, can never be wholly removed.”\*

If this be the case with numbers of those that intellectually embrace the gospel, and if others (who do not actually embrace it intellectually, but still do not, in words, deny it) persist in imagining that there is some other way which they know not,—by which, at last, even after a life of carelessness or of sin they will be saved,—what must be the natural result of a setting forth of such a doctrine of the universal Fatherhood of God and of the nature of

\* Bp. O’Brien’s Sermons on the Nature and Effects of Faith, 2d Edit., p. 163.

sin? Surely it must encourage the sinner to hope on, even while sinning, for an escape from final punishment, to expect that, in spite of himself, he will be converted at the last, and surely it must teach him to palliate his sins as merely imperfections arising from his very nature.

The gospel on this theory becomes no longer the good news which it is in the evangelical scheme. "The gospel," says Mr Maurice, "with which St Paul was intrusted, was good news to men, not of something which was coming to them, but of their actual state, of that state which belongs to them, but which they do not recognize."\* "God the Father is," by some theologians, "no longer regarded, in any proper sense, as the Moral Governor of a world of subject and guilty creatures. He is *merely* the Father of all men in Christ the Son. Mankind are His sons, not by adoption or by grace, but by nature. Their sonship, too, can never be disannulled or done away. They can never be, for a moment, separated from the Son, their being is *of* Him and *in* Him, and, in Mr Maurice's scheme, can neither be, nor be conceived of, apart from Him. . . Being thus necessarily and essentially one with the Son, and in Him united to the Father, no atonement, in the proper sense of that word, can be needed to bring nigh those who never can be far off; and no judicial condemnation can be pronounced on those who must ever be identified with the Son."†

Thus the new school would confound the Church and the world and make the one but the synonym

\* Maurice's "Unity of the New Testament," pp. 536-540.

† Rigg's "Modern Anglican Theology," p. 139.

of the other. Much of what it says is true when applied to the Church as distinct from the world. God is the Father of all that truly embrace the gospel of his dear Son, such are already washed and justified. They need only to know what they are, and what they have been, in order to be stirred up to more self-denial and devotedness to him "who has washed them from their sins in his own blood." They need to know and realize more fully their adoption and sonship. One day, blessed be God, the extension of the Church will coincide with that of the world. Then, and not till then, will there be displayed a universal fatherhood. But it is dangerous to anticipate, and to dream while the Church is still militant that it has merged in the Church triumphant. We must oft contemplate Bethlehem, or the mystery of the Nativity; but not to the exclusion of the contemplation of Calvary, or the mystery of the Passion. Bethlehem points onward to Calvary, the cradle reminds us of the cross. The glory and beauty of the Redeemer's life must not be permitted to overshadow the deeper though sadder victory of the cross, and the glorious triumph of the Resurrection. We must first by faith "lay our sins on Jesus," before we can really, in the power of a new life, "follow Jesus" in His beautiful path of holy unselfishness and self-denial. "Justification by faith only" must be thoroughly appreciated, before true "good works" can be done to the glory of God. We must not reverse the scriptural order, and talk of "doing" before we set to "believing." We must not speak of God as our father, when we do "the works of the devil,"

for then we only prove that we belong to the family of the Evil One. We must not dream of God being our father, because of our connection with Adam; as the Jews dreamt of it through their connection with Abraham. If we are of "the first Adam" we are only "of the earth earthy," it is only through "the second Adam," the Lord Jesus Christ, that by the Spirit we are begotten again and become "heavenly," "sons of God by adoption and grace."



## CHAPTER VI.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE UNIVERSAL FATHERHOOD  
OPPOSED BY THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF  
THE ETERNITY OR FINALITY OF THE PUNISH-  
MENT OF THE UNGODLY.

The doctrine of the universal fatherhood of God, as understood in the modern sense of the term, detracts, we have seen, from the attributes of the Most High, and obliges its supporters to eliminate from their theology the doctrine of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. It naturally, as we have already remarked, leads to a belief in some plan of universal restoration, and we propose now to point out how directly contrary such a notion is to the express statements of Scripture. We are not discussing such a view of God's general fatherhood as that advocated by Prof. Crawford and others, a fatherhood which means little more than that God is the merciful as well as the righteous ruler of the world. We object indeed to such a terminology as likely to mislead, and as unwarranted by the New Testament. But a discussion on such a point would be only about the use of names not about realities.

If we can establish from Scripture the finality

of the punishment of the wicked, and prove that the idea of their future restoration is one expressly excluded by Holy Writ, we may consider the doctrine of the universal fatherhood as overthrown, and our way will be made plain for further inquiry into what is signified by the divine fatherhood set forth in the New Testament and the evangelical sonship there taught as bestowed upon all believers in Christ. We proceed then to adduce Scripture texts on this head.

The wicked are said to perish (Ps. i. 6, 1 Cor. i. 18, 2 Cor. ii. 15, 2 Thess. ii. 10), to perish for ever (Job. iv. 20), to be cut off (Ps. xxxvii. 9, 10), and that utterly (Numb. xv. 31). They are described as destined to be killed with death (Rev. ii. 23), to be destroyed (Ps. cxlv. 20, 1 Cor. vi. 13); for destruction is the end of all the workers of iniquity (Prov. x. 29). The Lord shall bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with a double destruction (Jer. xvii. 18), for the ungodly "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," (2 Thess. i. 9). "The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume, into smoke shall they consume away," (Ps. xxxvii. 20). They are compared to tow, and to tares burned in the fire (Is. i. 28, 31; Matt. xiii. 30, 40), to vessels dashed in pieces (Ps. ii. 9), "to the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away; as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney" (Hos. xiii. 3), "as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the

storm carrieth away (Job xxi. 18), as chaff that is burned up with unquenchable fire (Matt. iii. 12); as trees rooted up (Matt. xv. 13), or "hewn down and cast into the fire" (Matt. iii. 10). The ungodly shall be as "thorns cut up, they shall be burned in the fire" (Isaiah xxxiii. 12). They are said to be cast out into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. xxv. 30, &c.), the blackness of darkness being reserved for them for ever (Jude, verse 13.) They are to be drowned in destruction and perdition (1 Tim. vi. 9), the heavens and the earth themselves being "reserved unto fire against that day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pet. iii. 7).

Now were there no other texts than these, they are amply sufficient to prove that the destruction of the ungodly is final and irremediable. Can any honest interpreter deny that these texts speak of the final destruction of those unhappy beings who persist in rejecting the offers of mercy, and turn a deaf ear to the invitations of grace? Is there any possibility of recovery after a destruction so fearful and so complete? There is no need here to argue as to what may be the signification of the word "eternal;" the expressions used are specific and precise enough in themselves. Can chaff burned up be restored again? Can tares burned in the fire again send up their shoots? An awful perdition and one without remedy is pointed out in these passages, an overthrow which will take place in the great day of the Lord, and which will leave the ungodly "neither root nor branch," (Mal. iv. 1),

since God is "able to destroy both soul and body in hell," (Matt x. 28).

The same idea is brought before us in those numerous passages which speak of "death" as the punishment of the wicked, and "life" as the gift bestowed by free grace on all believers in Christ. See for instance Rom. vi. 16, 21, 23, vii. 5; James i. 15; 1 John iii. 14; compared with John v. 24, 25, 40, x. 28; Rom. ii. 7, v. 21; Gal. vi. 8; 1 John ii. 25, v. 11.

The variety of illustrations made use of to describe the punishment of the ungodly, the number of different expressions employed, all leave us in no doubt whatever of the finality of their terrible doom. No more indeed can be inferred from the passages already cited, than that the wicked shall be eternally excluded from the Divine presence, and deprived everlastingly of the joys of heaven. Whether they shall, beneath the "tribulation and anguish" thus described, prolong a wretched existence throughout eternity, is not expressed in the passages already referred to, and indeed their natural explanation would convey the very reverse impression. But if Scripture is to be considered as authoritative in matters of faith, these passages are sufficient to prove that there can be no ultimate restoration to favour of the sinners whose fate is thus awfully depicted.\*

\* In one of the latest works advocating a universal restoration, these passages are coolly passed over without notice, and the writer draws his chief arguments from the use of such words as "the world" (John i. 29), "all" (Rom. v. 18), words which are well known to be often used in an ambiguous signifi-

For the immediate purpose of our argument it would suffice for us to stop here, for if the passages already quoted are sufficient to overturn the doctrine of universal restoration, they likewise overthrow that of the universal fatherhood of God in any sense which is worth the trouble of discussion.

But inasmuch as the most important passages which speak of the punishment of the ungodly have been omitted in the foregoing remarks, we cannot close the discussion without a reference to them, especially since they are usually considered to go much further than we have yet attempted to prove.

Holy Scripture has been generally considered to teach not only that the wicked will be cast out into the lake of fire, and everlastingly shut out of heaven, but that in that awful condition they shall pass an endless life in infinite misery.

The proof of this we shall now consider in detail. But before doing so we must note that the immortality of the soul is very generally regarded as not only taught in the Bible, but as a necessary dogma of natural religion. If this be so, the matter need not be further discussed, for as we have shown that the punishment of the wicked is final, if the soul be immortal it must naturally follow that "eternal punishment" must in that case imply eternal existence in misery.

Mr Heard, in his recent work, has an able chapter on "the natural immortality of the

cation. We refer to the arguments adduced in "An Answer to the Archbishop of York on the subject of Eternal Torments," by a Bachelor of Divinity. London: Williams & Norgate, 1865.

psyche," or soul.\* After reviewing, one by one, the proofs of immortality adduced by philosophers, namely, the metaphysical, the ontological, and the teleological, he arrives at the conclusion that they are all unsatisfactory. They are instincts of an hereafter for the soul, they are not proofs of its immortality. They are presages rather than proofs, hopes rather than clear arguments. In his own words: "they bring reason, like the women, early to the tomb of Jesus, but they are unable to roll away the stone, much less to bring the dead to life."

But if philosophy cannot prove the immortality of the soul, Scripture nowhere directly asserts it. The doctrine of a future state does not prove that state to be eternal. As the present state will come to an end, so it might naturally be imagined that the future would end too. As the one terminates with the death of the body, so might the other be supposed to terminate with the death of the soul. If bodily consciousness terminate here, might not spiritual consciousness be supposed to come to an end hereafter? There are enough of analogies to give countenance to the idea. Have not some on this side the grave been driven insane by the bitterness of despair, and after some time lapsed into idiotcy? Is it not conceivable that what happens here might happen there? Bishop Butler has indeed conclusively shown that no valid objection can be drawn from analogy against a future state of existence, or even against the immortality of the

\* Heard on "The Tripartite Nature of Man," pp. 207-228. Archer Butler also denies the necessary immortality of the soul, and considers that it is immortalised by Christ—*Sermon*, 1st Series, pp. 115, 116.

soul, but the refutation of an objection is one thing, the demonstration of a doctrine another.

That the wicked will pass a conscious eternity in torment is generally supposed to have been taught by our Lord in that striking sentence with which he closed one of his solemn discourses: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal," (Matt. xxv. 46).

Professor Sidney Smith has well remarked\* that "there is no mystery or ambiguity about the word *αἰώνιος* [eternal]. Like many other words in the lexicon, it has several meanings; but this creates no difficulty; the context is always sufficient to decide; the relation and genesis of its different meanings are well ascertained; and, as a general definition, it may be safely held that it commonly means *a continuous duration as long as the subject is capable of.*"†

This being the common and natural meaning of the word, we do not see that any more can be proved from the passage cited than what Mr Litton affirms is taught there, namely, "The gift of life conferred upon the saved will be eternal; the punishment of death imposed upon the lost will be eternal also. The latter is thus commensurate with the former in duration, and affords a direct and perfect contrast, without the necessity of maintaining the reality of an endless life in infinite misery. . . A punishment

\* "The Doctrine of Eternal Punishment examined chiefly in relation to the Testimony of Scripture," by George Sidney Smith, D.D., Ex-F.T.C.D., Prof. of Biblical Greek in Trinity College, Dublin. Dublin: Herbert, 1865.

† See Exod. xii. 14; Ex. xl. 15, xxix. 9; xxvii. 21, xxviii. 43; Lev. xvi. 29, 34; Deut. xiii. 16, xv. 17; Josh. iv. 7, viii. 28.

which, when once imposed, remains for ever unre-  
moved, is an everlasting punishment without regard  
to a continued consciousness of suffering on the  
part of the punished.”\*

Now, we do not here express any opinion as to  
the correctness of the views here propounded by  
Mr Litton. Whether they are correct or not de-  
pends on other passages ; all we assert is, that they  
are not contrary to the verse, Matt. xxv. 46. The  
doctrine of the immortality of the wicked must be  
based on other passages ; as, though it may be  
agreeable to the text alluded to, it cannot be proved  
thereby, since all the requirements of the text are  
met by a very different explanation.†

\* “Life or Death the destiny of the Soul in the Future  
State,” by Edward Falconer Litton, M.A., Barrister-at-law.  
London: Longman, 1866. See also Archbp. Whately’s  
“View of Scripture Revelations concerning a Future State, by  
a Country Pastor,” in the later editions.

† The subject of eternal torment has been one much discussed  
of late. Besides those works already noticed, we may refer to  
the Essay on “Eternal Punishment and Eternal Death,” by  
Rev. J. W. Barlow, M.A., F.T.C.D., Prof. of Modern History  
in the University of Dublin, (Longman, 1865) ; his “Remarks on  
some Recent Publications concerning Future Punishment,”  
(Dublin: M’Gee, 1865) ; Mr Sherlock’s “Essay on Future  
Punishment ;” “The Eternity of Future Punishment, and the  
place which this Doctrine ought to hold in Christian Teaching,”  
by Rev. George Salmon, D.D., F.T.C.D., F.R.S., (2d Edit.,  
Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1865) ; “The Popular Ideas of  
Immortality, Everlasting Punishment, and the State of Separate  
Souls, brought to the test of Scripture,” by Rev. William Ker,  
M.A., Incumbent of Tipton, (London: Simpkin, Marshall, and  
Co., 1865) ; an article on “The Doctrine of Eternal Punish-  
ment and Immortality,” in “The Journal of Sacred Literature”  
for Jan. 1866 ; “Endless Sufferings not the Doctrine of Holy  
Scripture,” by Rev. Thos. Davis, M.A., (London: Longman,  
1866), besides sundry other smaller contributions.



Isaiah xxxiii. 14 is, by many, adduced as a proof: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites: who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" But that passage occurs in the middle of a prophecy relating to the destruction of Sennacherib's army by the angel of the Lord, and simply means that the hypocrites and sinners, even in Jerusalem, when they shall see the wrath of the Lord exercised against Assyria, and "the everlasting burnings" by which the powerful army of its king are destroyed, shall fear for themselves lest they too should be cut off in their iniquity. For God has his fire and furnace in Jerusalem (ch. xxxi. 9), and well, therefore, may the ungodly fear who dwell in that place where His glory dwells, and from which His wrath was so terribly revealed, lest the Lord should also break forth among them.\*

Now no doubt it is admissible, if once the doctrine of the immortality of the wicked be proved from other passages, to quote the text in this sense by way of an accommodation. But no *proof* must be derived therefrom, as the text has no proper reference to eternal punishment at all, or to any punishment to be inflicted in a future state of existence.

The passage, however, which is generally relied

\* So Delitzsch, and substantially so Rosenmüller, Maurer, Gesenius, and Knobel. It may be well to caution the reader who does not understand Hebrew, that no stress can be put upon the word "dwell," as if it meant "to abide always," which it does not.

upon, not only as conclusively proving the eternity of the punishment of the ungodly (which we have already seen rests not upon a single text, but is taught in numerous passages of God's Word), but also their eternal existence in torment is Mark ix. 43-48, (with the parallel passage in Mat. xviii 8). In it that awful expression concerning "the fire of hell" occurs three times, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

In these few words our Lord makes two distinct allusions, first to the valley of Hinnom, and secondly to Isaiah lxvi. 24. For the expression used is "the fire of Gehenna," and Gehenna was the valley of Hinnom, in one locality of which called Tophet\* human sacrifices used to be offered up to Molech which were at last suppressed by Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 10, Jer. vii. 32 ; xix. 6, &c.) It subsequently became a common place for depositing the refuse of the city, and into it were cast the carcasses of animals and the dead corpses of criminals, and, according to some authorities, fires were kept constantly burning to consume these bodies. Hence

\* Tophet either signifies "a place to be spit upon" i.e., "abhorred," (the word itself being used in the sense of *spittle*), or a place of burning dead bodies. For the body to be deprived of the rites of burial, and either burned or cast out to the prey of worms was thought the greatest possible indignity. In Isaiah xxx. 33, when predicting the utter destruction of the army of Sennacherib the prophet declares that Tophet (there תַּפְתֵּה) was prepared and ready, ready for a human sacrifice, for the king of Assyria, the wood being all as it were in order, and the breath of the Lord as a flame of fire ready to kindle the pyre, in allusion to the terrible fate that soon after overtook the Assyrian army encamping against Jerusalem.

it became a type of the place of punishment for the wicked, and accordingly the word Gehenna is used in the New Testament for hell.

In the Sermon on the Mount, our Lord alluded to the degrees of guilt which were recognised among the Jews which came into the cognizance of their several courts. "The judgment" inflicted death by the sword, "the council" death by stoning, which in certain cases was made more disgraceful by the criminal's body being cast out into Gehenna, (Matt. v. 21.) Similarly, as our Lord points out, all unpardoned sins shall be punished alike with death or destruction; and though there shall be degrees in the punishment inflicted according to the measure of guilt each punishment shall be alike final.\*

It is often argued that no punishment can be said to endure longer than there is consciousness of the same; and therefore that "eternal punishment" necessarily implies "eternal consciousness." But the argument is more specious than profound. It was surely a part of Jehoiakim's punishment that his dead body was to be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem (Jer. xxii. 19). It used to be part of the punishment of certain criminals that their bodies were cut in pieces or hung up in chains. The Jews considered it a material intensification of the horrors of the spiritual sentence inflicted by "the council" when the body of the criminal was condemned to be cast out into the valley of Tophet. The indignity was a punish-

\* See Dean Alford's Commentary on Matt. v. 21, 22.

ment, even though the lifeless remains were no longer capable of feeling it.

Is it impossible, therefore, that our Lord's words should mean that just as the worms prey upon the body in the valley of Hinnom until it ceases to exist, so shall the soul be preyed upon till it be eaten away likewise? Man can kill the body but is not able to kill the soul, God "is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. x. 28). May not the fire be said to be unquenchable since it will not be quenched till its work is done? and may not the worm be called undying whose progress nothing can arrest till it has devoured the soul? "The lake of fire" is also "the pit of corruption" (Is. xxxviii. 17). The wicked "of their flesh reap corruption" (Gal. vi. 8), and "utterly perish in their own corruption" (2 Pet. ii. 12).\*

Again, it must not be forgotten that our Lord in these words refers to Isaiah lxvi. 24, where a punishment is spoken of as inflicted on this earth on the Lord's enemies. Their dead carcasses, for it is the unburied carcasses of men slain in rebellion that are there mentioned, are said to remain unburied, "their worm shall not die,"—that is, the worm shall never leave their putrid corpses till they are totally devoured; "neither shall their fire be quenched," till they are utterly consumed.† The

\* See Litton's *Life or Death*.

† This is doing no violence to the expression, "unquenchable fire," compare Jer. xvii. 27, "If ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath-day, and not to bear a burden, even entering into Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day, then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jeru-

passage in Isaiah is impossible to be taken in any other signification,\* and if the words there *cannot* be understood to mean the eternal consciousness of the Lord's enemies, surely it cannot be said that our Lord's phraseology, which is identical, *must* be understood to imply the existence of the wicked in torment throughout eternity?

We cannot therefore consider even this passage conclusive as to the question of the immortality of the wicked. It is decisive, indeed, as to the finality of their punishment, but not as to their future consciousness. We admit that at first sight it suggests the latter meaning, but a closer examination of the terms, makes that interpretation, to say the least of it, doubtful.

Two passages in the Book of Revelation seem to teach the existence of eternal torment more decidedly, namely, chap. xiv. 9-11, and xx. 10. The former is as follows: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and

salem and it shall not be quenched." So also Ezek. xx. 47, 48, "Say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. And all flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it: it shall not be quenched."

\* Otherwise we shall be obliged to maintain the continuation of new moons and appointed feasts throughout eternity.

in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." The latter is, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." To which may be added the phrase which occurs in chap. xix. 3, of the "great whore," "and her smoke rose up for ever and ever."

But, first, it is to be borne in mind that these passages do not speak of the wicked in general, but only of one distinctly defined class. Therefore, even if these passages must be explained as teaching the eternal consciousness and torment of some of the ungodly, it can by no means be shown from them that this will be the fate of all who have done wickedly.

Secondly, the first-named passage does not speak of the torment itself enduring for ever, but of its smoke ascending for ever and ever. We note this, but do not lay much stress upon it. Of much more consequence is it to note that the phraseology is taken from that of the Old Testament, where it does not admit of such a meaning. Thus of the cities of the plain it is said, "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Gen. xix. 28); and of the land of Edom it is prophesied by Isaiah: "The streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor

day ; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever ; from generation to generation it shall lie waste ; none shall pass through it for ever and ever” (Isaiah xxxiv. 9, 10). The phraseology here is identical with that of the two New Testament passages (Rev. xiv. 11, and xix. 3), and therefore it is admissible to explain them in a similar manner. The phrase “for ever and ever” is only added in Isaiah to point out the utter destruction of Edom, and the whole passage simply means that there will be a continual remembrance of Edom’s punishment and confusion. Why therefore may not the passages in Revelation bear the same meaning ?

Thirdly, “the beast and the false prophet” are by all sober commentators viewed not as individuals but as systems, and this fact must in itself materially modify the explanation of the more difficult passage in Rev. xx. 19, which, however, can never be held to refer to the eternal torment of the ungodly in general.

The conclusion then at which we arrive is, that while the eternity of the punishment of the wicked is most unmistakeably to be found in the Bible, the doctrine of their eternal torment is “not proven.” Several passages may indeed bear that interpretation, but on the whole even these on examination are found to be more favourable to the opinion that the wicked will be utterly destroyed with an overwhelming destruction in the great day of the wrath of the Lamb.\*

\* Mr Sherlock in his essay has a long chapter on “annihilation.” However verbally his argument may be correct in reference to Mr Barlow’s treatise, it is after all a manifest *ignoratio elenchi*.

Nor must we forget to note that the passage in 1 Cor. xv. 26, "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," has no reference whatever to the question which we have been considering, inasmuch as it applies only to the righteous, a fact which, independently of the whole drift of that chapter, might be concluded from vers. 45-47, alone.

It also deserves consideration, that Dan. xii. 2 (if, indeed, it refers to the resurrection at the last day, and not to the awakening of the Jewish nation in the time of the Maccabees, as is maintained by many commentators) speaks only of the wicked's rising "to

Hence Professor Barlow replied with justice, "The word 'annihilation' does not correctly describe what I mean by 'eternal death.' The former is an objectionable expression, inasmuch as it appears to assert the destruction of the spiritual substance; and of the possibility or impossibility of such destruction we can form no conjecture. The only defence that can be made for the use of the term is, that it is often impossible to find a better. But if we agree—waving all metaphysical speculations—to define annihilation, in reference to the soul, as the *absolute termination of conscious existence*, no ambiguity can arise; and this is what I mean when I speak of eternal death."—*Remarks on some Publications*, &c., p. 36. So also Mr Litton remarks, "The withered branches and tares which men gather in bundles and burn, illustrate the destiny and end of the lost. What becomes of material substances, such as chaff and withered branches, when submitted to the resistless energy of unquenchable fire? Surely they do not remain unconsumed. Surely they cease to exist as 'chaff' or 'branches.' The ashes which remain are no more the substance which previously existed, than two distinct things can be the same thing. The tares and branches are for ever destroyed; so that the 'unquenchable fire,' and the 'fire that never shall be quenched,' manifestly imply, in the strongest possible manner, irresistible power to secure the end for which they are applied, and the certainty of that destruction that must follow."—*Life or Death*, p. 168.



everlasting shame and contempt," a phrase which does not necessarily imply existence in eternal torment, while, on the other hand, the righteous are said to awake to "everlasting life." Again, when our Lord himself speaks of the resurrection at the last day, he does so in terms which are merely general, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," (John v. 28, 29). Both passages may be regarded as clear and distinct testimonies against all theories of universal restoration, but both are alike silent on the question of the wicked's eternal existence.

What a contrast to the uncertainty with respect to the immortality of the wicked do the passages which speak of the immortality of the righteous present. The latter doctrine does not rest on deductions drawn from one or two texts, but on clear statements, varied in every possible way, asserting that eternal life, unending happiness, and pleasures for evermore, are to be the lot of the believer in Jesus. The resurrection of the righteous is not merely stated in general terms as is that of the wicked, but their resurrection bodies are described in jubilant language by the apostle as destined to be glorious, powerful, spiritual, incorruptible, immortal\* (1 Cor. xv. 42-57). Weakness, dishonour, shame, contempt, corruption, death, form the wages of the ungodly; power, glory, honour, incorruption, everlasting life, make

\* See Chapter xii.

up the gift bestowed on believers through the Lord Jesus Christ.

It has been argued that it is a dangerous thing even to point out the doubts which may be raised as to the immortality of the wicked, lest many might be encouraged, by the uncertainty of the dogma, to persevere in sin. Independently of the point that such considerations ought to have no weight in preventing an impartial search after truth, we disbelieve entirely the existence of such a danger. If men's eyes were really opened to believe the gospel, the difference between eternal punishment and eternal torment would weigh as nothing in their minds.\* It is because they do not believe the warning, or because they think the punishment, in some way or other, will not fall upon them, that they continue in sin,—a belief which is nurtured by the common idea that the punishment threatening is out of all proportion to the sin committed.

But much more real are the dangers which flow from the ordinary belief in eternal torment. A very general persuasion as to the salvation of the heathen prevails among numbers of the so-called orthodox, an idea which is not encouraged in Scripture, and which somewhat paralyses missionary exertions. The belief in the eternity of torment for all the ungodly gives rise also to the notion that a further time of probation will be afforded to many, if not to all, hereafter; a speculation which is utterly unsupported by the Word of God, † and dangerous in the extreme.

\* Even if consciousness be supposed not to be eternal, no one can say how long it may exist. The fate of the wicked, let us be well assured, will at all events be awful enough.

† See Appendix, No. II., on the Intermediate State.

We by no means wish to make any definite assertion on the subject. We only protest against a dogmatism which exaggerates Scripture. We think the subject is one which lies beyond our present horizon. But we refuse to put a sword in the hands of the enemies of the gospel wherewith they can wound us. With our present light we cannot justify the eternal torment of the unconverted. If it be true, eternity may reveal reasons for it, which we cannot now even imagine. But there is no wisdom in adopting the most difficult theory, if it be not imperatively demanded by Scripture. We can justify, even with our present light, the utter extinction of the ungodly. We can even justify the destruction of the heathen, for God is holden to no man, and his mercy bestowed upon any is free and undeserved. We can imagine, too, how the terrible lesson of sin and its bitter consequences may be required throughout eternity; and that the fearful lesson of the punishment inflicted on man may act as a preservative against a like iniquity among beings which may yet be created to people other worlds. And though we dare not dogmatise on the question, we love to think that "the second death" may not be an eternal life in death, but "the death of death and hell's destruction," when sin shall be extirpated and "there shall be no more curse," when only the ashes of Gehenna shall tell the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem of the long conflict waged between evil and good, between sin and God, and shall bear witness to the completeness of the triumph as well as to the justice of the Everlasting King.\*

\* See the judicious remarks by Heard in his "Tripartite Nature of Man," pp. 229-242.

## CHAPTER III.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD IN RELATION TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST—THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY—OLD TESTAMENT MANIFESTATIONS OF CHRIST—PASSAGES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SUPPOSED TO SPEAK OF THE DIVINE SONSHIP—THE NEW TESTAMENT REVELATION OF THE ETERNAL FILIATION.

IN considering the Fatherhood of God we must take into account not only its relation to men but also its connection with the sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. We shall ultimately endeavour to show that it is only by virtue of the redemption which he has obtained for us, and by the Spirit which he bestows, that we can and do become the sons of God. Our object hitherto has been to prove that all men are not properly considered as children of God, we propose later to point out that they can become such by faith in Jesus and by that alone. As a middle point in our subject, and the pivot, indeed, on which all else revolves, we have now to treat the question of the Fatherhood of God in relation to his son Jesus Christ our Lord.

It may not be amiss to refer briefly to the proofs

for the doctrine of the Trinity as we shall be obliged in our inquiry to assume the truth of that doctrine.

In discussing this question, we ought to remember that while the oneness or unity of the Godhead is a truth that by universal admission pervades Scripture, it is laid down expressly, or dogmatically, in very few passages. *E.g.*, Deut. vi. 4, Exod. xx. 2, 3, Isaiah xlv. 6, 8, &c. It is assumed throughout Scripture as a well known truth, and not reiterated as often as from its vital importance one might naturally have supposed.

Similarly the doctrine of the Trinity is one which, though it pervades the Bible, more especially the New Testament, is not very often categorically laid down. The passages, however, which speak of it are distinct enough. See Matt. xxviii. 19, 2 Cor. xiii. 14, Eph. iv. 4-6, Jude 20, 21, Rev. i. 4, &c. As specimens of passages of Scripture in which this great truth is woven into their very texture; it will suffice to refer to Matt. iii. 16, 17, and 1 Cor. xii. 4-6.

Of some specific proofs of the divinity of the Lord Jesus and of the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit we shall have later to treat. We must only note here that the same attributes are ascribed to all the three Persons alike. Is the Father said to have been from everlasting to everlasting, (Ps. xc. 2), the Son is called "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending," (Rev. i. 8), and the Holy Ghost is termed "the Eternal Spirit," (Heb. ix. 14). Is it written of the Father "I fill heaven and earth," (Jer. xxiii. 24), it is also asserted of the Son that "he fills all things," (Eph.

iv. 10), and the Psalmist (in Ps. cxxxix.) speaks in glowing terms of the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit. Is the omnipotence of the Father affirmed in Gen. xvii. 1, the same power is stated to belong to Christ in Rev. i., and is not obscurely hinted at by St. Paul, in Rom. xv. 19, as appertaining to the Holy Ghost. Omniscience is stated to belong to all the Three, Isaiah xl. 28, John ii. 25, 1 Cor. ii. 11. Each is alike affirmed to have had a share in the work of creation (Gen. i. 1, John i. 3, Ps. civ. 30), and each is described also as having an allotted part in the nobler work of redemption (2 Thess. ii. 13, 14; Titus iii. 4-6; 1 Pet. i. 2).

The objections which have been raised against this doctrine fall, naturally, under two heads; (1) those derived from reason apart from revelation, and (2) those based on passages of Holy Writ itself.

The great objection, constantly urged by its opponents, has been: How is it possible? One undivided substance, and yet three distinct persons? Each person God, and yet but one God? It is opposed to sound reason, and self-contradictory. The only choice, urge they, lies between Unitarianism as opposed to Trinitarianism on the one hand, and Tritheism or a belief in Three Gods on the other.

The usual answer, that this doctrine is, indeed, above reason, though not contrary to it, has been characterized by some (as, for instance, Cousin) as more "specious than profound." But, if the deeper we pry into nature, the darker are the shades of mystery that gather round us, if we cannot explain the mysteries of our own being, or comprehend the

connexion of mind and matter, shall we think it strange that we are unable to comprehend the being and nature of the Eternal Cause of all, round about whose throne are "clouds and darkness," (Ps. xcvi. 2)? We must necessarily ascribe to Him the attributes of eternity, omnipresence and omniscience, and yet, if we endeavour to grasp the full meaning of what we must admit, we are involved in mysteries of no lesser magnitude than those that beset the doctrine of the Trinity. Who can reconcile aright the foreknowledge of God and the responsibility and freedom of man, or even the existence of the finite as apart from the Infinite?

If, however, the existence of a personal God be once granted, it may be boldly asserted that the existence of a plurality of persons in the Godhead is most agreeable to reason.

Is a Deity of only one person conceivable at all? Reflect just for a moment. Philosophy shows us that the consciousness of our own existence is first given to us by the revelation of the existence of something which is not ourselves, but to which we are in relation. This is what philosophers mean when they speak of the "me" and the "not me." I think, therefore, I exist,\* that is, not that my thinking is the cause of my existence, but that it reveals my existence to myself. Is it possible, then, to conceive a necessary and eternal consciousness of "I am" in God without, as a Christian philosopher has expressed it, a necessary and eternal reason for the "I am," saying "Thou art?" Scripture reveals

\* Cogito ergo sum—*Descartes*.

to us that the Eternal "Thou" which is necessary in thought, is "the Eternal Son," and once a plurality of persons be admitted, we can see no difficulty in agreeing to the Scripture revelation that there are Three in One.\*

Again, God is ever revealed to us in Scripture, not in the character of the Absolute but of the Relative; that is, He is always spoken of in relation to something. He exists in and for Himself, having no necessary relation to any other being or thing than Himself. But we believe that in Himself there was ever the union of the Absolute and the Relative.

\* "British and Foreign Evangelical Review," July, 1865, p. 513, note. Compare Dr Dorner's sketch of the views of Hilary of Pictavium: "The idea that Father and Son know and behold themselves in each other, was familiar to him. . . . But if they (along with the Holy Ghost, who is still less made the subject of consideration) constitute the Deity, then it necessarily follows from the premises, that the self-consciousness of the Deity consists in this reciprocal knowledge of the Father and the Son (*cognitio mutua*), which is not merely a knowledge which the one has of, but which each has in the other. . . . This remarkable theory contains already a kind of speculative construction of the doctrine of the Trinity, out of the idea of the divine self-consciousness. The Father must see, must gaze upon, himself. . . . But if the world be not the other self, in which he can contemplate and know himself, he must have a perfect image in and with himself, and this image is designated Son. It belongs necessarily to the essence of God, and is as eternal as God, inasmuch as he can neither begin, nor ever cease, to know himself. We see now, therefore, the significance of the thought which so frequently occurs in the writings of Athanasius,—apart from the Son, the Father would be without reason, without wisdom (knowledge), without the truth (without the knowledge of himself the truth)."—"Doctrine of the Person of Christ," Div. I., vol. ii. p. 302 (Clark's Transl.) See also a good sermon by Sartorius on the subject translated by Dean Alford.



In other words there were ever in the one Godhead three persons related to one another.\*

Let us try for a moment to make this plain. God is love. But he not only is so, but was so from everlasting. His love is not dependent on His having creatures to be loved. It is a necessity of His very being. "He is not," says Dr Candlish, "love potentially only, but actually: not capable of loving, but loving. He loves and is loved. He is love itself. He is not love quiescent, but love active and in exercise. He is so from all eternity. And He is so, and can only be so, in virtue of the eternal distinction of the Divine persons in one Godhead, and the eternal relations which they sustain towards one another. More particularly, it is in respect of the eternal relation of fatherhood and sonship that God is thus, from everlasting, love. It is chiefly in virtue of that relation that God is revealed as consciously, if I may so say, and energetically, love. From everlasting the Son is in the bosom of the Father. And the infinite, ineffable complacency subsisting between the Father and the Son in the Holy Ghost, is the primary exercise of that love which God is; that love which is of the essence of His nature. It is thus that love in God

\* The Absolute is that which is free from all *necessary* relation, that is, which is free from every relation as a *condition of existence*; but it may exist in relation, provided that relation be not a necessary condition of its existence; that is, provided the relation may be removed without affecting its existence." Such is Calderwood's definition in his "Philosophy of the Infinite," p. 36. Mansel has some interesting remarks on this in his second and third "Bampton Lectures," and on its connection with the doctrine of the Trinity in his Lect. vi.

has never been, properly speaking, the love of himself, or self-love. For there have ever been in the one undivided Godhead the holy three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, mutually loving and loved.”\*

The second kind of objections against the doctrine of the Trinity consists of those drawn from isolated passages of Scripture, which seem to teach something contrary to our Lord's proper divinity, or of forcible attempts to explain away those that teach that truth. Of the former class are those deductions made from statements of our Lord himself, “The Son can do nothing of himself,” “Of that day knoweth no man, no not the Son, but the Father,” and others of a similar kind, which set forth the subordination of the Son to the Father in His mediatorial work for us. Or, the well-known saying of our Lord, “My Father is greater than I,” which only requires to be considered in connection with its context, “If ye loved me ye would rejoice because I go unto my Father, for my Father is greater than I,” John xiv. 28, to enable us to see that our Lord was there referring, not to his own natural and proper position, but to that in which He then stood as the “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”

The forced and evasive interpretations of the Socinians of former days are now, indeed, generally discarded as antiquated. Modern Rationalism has performed at least this great service for truth. “Men,” as Prof. Fairbairn justly notes, “who in the present day would stand up for the views given of texts bearing on the pre-existence and the divinity of

\* Candlish, pp. 67, 68.

our Lord's person, or the nature of His work of reconciliation for the world, which are to be found in the writings of Lindsey, Priestley, or Belsham, could only gain for themselves the distinction of being miserably deficient or hopelessly prejudiced Bible scholars.\* Modern Rationalism does not hesitate to give the natural meaning to texts of the kind alluded to, though it refuses to submit itself to the teachings of the Word. We may, therefore make a good use of its criticism, although we refuse to go with it in its virtual rejection of Revelation.

The doctrine of the Trinity, and the closely connected doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the eternal Sonship were but very dimly revealed to the Old Testament Church. There are indeed passages of the Old Testament which seem to speak of mysterious consultations having taken place on high. Such are Gen. i. 26, xi. 12; Isa. vi. 8. We say "seem," for the matter is incapable of proof, as the language used might well be what is called the language of majesty.† But once let the existence of the Trinity be admitted, and it is hard to suppose that such language had not a

\* Hist. and Crit. Review of the controversies respecting the Person of Christ in Great Britain, p. 442, appended to the last vol. of Messrs Clark's English edition of Dörner.

† It is very common to hear Eccles. xii. 1, and similar passages, quoted in proof of the Trinity, simply because the word "creator" occurs there in the plural. But those who do so ought to be aware that Joseph's brethren styled him "the lord (Heb. lords) of the land," that we meet with אֲדֹנָיִם קָשָׁה in Isaiah xix. 4, for "a hard lord," and the same plural is used in such simple cases as Ex. xxi. 29, 34, 36, xxii. 10-14, &c.

reference to it. The Old Testament speaks of God and of the Spirit of God, who brooded over "the vast abyss and made it pregnant." Very important is Isaiah *xlvi.* 16, 17. It is the Servant of Jehovah that there speaks, but he is no mere earthly prophet: "Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel, my called, I am He: I am the first, and also am the last" (ver. 12), 'tis the Great Alpha and Omega, the Holy One of Israel, and the Redeemer-God. "Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there was I, and now the Lord God (the Lord Jehovah) and his Spirit hath sent me." Here is a tolerably explicit revelation of a Trinity. So also in Isaiah *lxiii.*, the lovingkindness of the Father is pourtrayed in verses 7, 8, the salvation by the Son in verse 9, and the instruction of the Spirit in verse 10.

As explained by the New Testament, these passages appear much clearer than they could have been to believers before Christ came. But alongside of them must be mentioned those numerous passages which speak of the Angel of the Lord (מלאך יהוה). It was He with whom Jacob struggled to prevent his departure before He had left a blessing behind Him, and whose Divine character the patriarch well understood, *Gen.* *xxxii.* 24-30. Hosea tells us plainly that that Angel was the Lord of Hosts (*Hosea* *xii.* 3-5). It was this Angel whom Jacob thanked for redeeming him from all evil, and whose name he joined with that of God when blessing his grandchildren (*Gen.* *xlvi.* 15, 16). It was this Angel which appeared to Moses at the bush,

and called Himself "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," (Exod. iii. 2-7). This was the Angel who went before Israel in the pillar of fire and cloud, and whom the people were commanded to obey, (Exod. xxiii. 20-24, comp. 1 Cor. x. 9). This was the Angel who revealed to Moses God's will in Sinai (Acts vii. 38). This was He that appeared to Joshua as the Captain of the Lord's army, and is styled in that narrative by the name Jehovah (Joshua v. 13-15, with vi. 2, &c.)\* Sometimes He appeared attended by ministering angels, as when He came to Abraham to announce the destruction of Sodom, in which narrative He is also called Jehovah (Gen. xviii. 1, 2, 22; xix. 1), † oftener He appeared alone, though angels were ready to come forth to meet Him and receive His commissions, as in Zech. ii. 3. ‡ Sometimes He is represented as the Mediator, as in Zech. i. 12, and with Moses at Sinai (Acts vii. 38), and sometimes as the Great Advocate of His people, as in Zech. iii. 1-5. At other times He is described as "Michael the Great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people," (Dan. xii. 1). He is described as camping round about and delivering the Lord's poor people

\* This is often not observed because of the awkward division made here of the chapters, and on account of the parenthetical verse (ch. vi. 1).

† Gen. xix. 1 ought to be translated "and the two angels came," &c., *i.e.*, two of the three mentioned in ch. xviii. 2.

‡ This is obscured by the omission of the pronoun "he" in vers. 4, "and he said unto him," *i.e.*, the angel who was met said unto the inferior angel who went to meet him. So rightly Maurer and Hitzig. Blayney has strangely misunderstood this passage.

(Ps. xxxiv. 7), and chasing away their foes (Ps. xxxv. 5).

Again, in the Book of Proverbs, chap. 8 and 9, we have a remarkable description of wisdom. Wisdom is represented speaking as a personality distinct from God. Much of it is only suitable to be applied to Christ. With New Testament light we do not hesitate to apply it in that way, but it is not clear whether the writer himself was conscious of speaking of anything but wisdom personified. He may have, however, had some perception that something more mysterious was conveyed by the words.

But although the Church of the Old Covenant had thus some dim insight into the doctrine of the Trinity, and some clearer, but yet obscure, light about the Angel of Jehovah's presence who was the Lord's "fellow," the doctrine of the Sonship of the Second Person was one which was almost entirely reserved for the gospel dispensation to bring to light.

We may pass over, completely, such passages as 2 Sam. vii. 14, 1 Chron. xvii. 13, and Ps. lxxxix. 27, ff. For admitting, as we do, that there is a secondary reference to Christ in them, there is no doubt that their primary reference is to Solomon, and it is very questionable how far believers before Christ could have drawn from them any deductions relative to the Sonship of the Redeemer. The Sonship which is mentioned in Isaiah vii. 14, Isaiah ix. 6, and Dan. vii. 13, 14, is a human Sonship, and we postpone, therefore, the consideration of those passages. It is the Divine Sonship of Christ which we desire now to examine into.

Ps. ii. 7, is constantly quoted as a passage that speaks of the Divine Sonship of Christ. "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." According to this interpretation the Eternal Father is viewed as saying to Christ, Thou art my son, this day, *i.e.* from eternity, I have begotten thee. But the passage cannot possibly bear such a meaning. The entire context opposes such an interpretation. The text simply means, "this day I have declared thee as my son by setting thee on thy royal throne," and St. Paul tells us distinctly that it received its full accomplishment as regards Christ when he was raised from the dead, and was thus, though hated and persecuted by the rulers of this world, declared to be the Son of God with power.\* See Acts xiii. 33, and Rom. i. 4.

Nor can we regard the twelfth verse of that same psalm, "Kiss the Son lest he be angry," as a conclusive proof that the Church of the Old Testament knew of the Divine Sonship of the Redeemer. For that rendering is in the first place doubtful,† and, even if it were not, its application to the Divine Sonship of Christ as distinguished from his human sonship is by no means clear.

The next passage usually cited as a proof is Prov. xxx. 4. "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name? if thou canst tell?" The object of these

\* See Appendix No. 3. † See Appendix No. 4.

questions is plain enough. It was to show to men their ignorance in the things of God. But we think, with Michaelis, that there is in it a mysterious allusion to the persons of the Sacred Trinity. It sounds frigid to consider, with Dathe, that by the son is meant only a disciple or follower of God. Bertheau's explanation is better, namely, that the question implies an assertion that "no one knows him (God) and his family, for not only is He himself veiled in impenetrable darkness, but also those who stand next to Him, for example His Son."\* The passage, perhaps, shows us that some of the inspired men of ancient days had glimpses into the mystery of the Trinity, but we doubt whether the Church of the Old Testament could have drawn any certain satisfactory or deduction respecting a divine sonship from even such a passage as this. With New Testament light we can see a deeper meaning in it than believers in ancient days, but if it stood alone, it would not satisfactorily prove the existence of a Son of God.

The next text of the Old Testament which is supposed to allude to the Divine Sonship is that in Micah v. 2, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting." Those who, like Maurer, Hitzig, R. Williams, &c., deny the reference of the passage to Christ, notwithstanding the statements of the New Testament to that effect, explain the

\* Bertheau in the *Kurzgefasstes exeget. Handbuch z. alt. Test.*



last clause to mean that the ruler referred to should be of a very ancient family! Such an explanation deserves mention and no more. On the other hand, many orthodox divines think that there is here "a signal description of the divine generation before all time, or that going forth from everlasting of Christ the eternal Son of God, God of the substance of the Father begotten before all worlds, and afterwards in *time* made man of the substance of his mother and born in the world."\* But it is somewhat out of character to suppose "the eternal generation" to be alluded to in the passage, when the sonship itself is not mentioned. It is simpler to take the word "goings forth" to imply "origin," and to regard the text as one that teaches the pre-existence of Christ before his birth at Bethlehem, or, in other words, his existence from everlasting.† Or else that by "goings forth" are signified the manifestations of Christ's power which are said to have been "from of old, from everlasting," or, as it is worded in Prov.

\* Pococke's Comm. on Micah, *in loco*.

† We are quite aware that some suppose the human sonship of Christ to be referred to in the words "out of thee shall come forth unto me, &c.," and that from thence they argue that this divine sonship must be alluded to in the clause which follows: "whose goings forth have been of old," &c. But it is Christ's birth at Bethlehem not his sonship which is spoken of by the prophet. We admit that Christ's divinity rightly understood implies his eternal filiation, but since some who hold the former deny the latter, it is a *petitio principii* to adduce texts that speak of his divinity in proof of his eternal sonship. All that can be fairly proved from the passage in Micah is Christ's pre-existence before his birth at Bethlehem. The passage may also intimate not only that Christ was himself from eternity, but that his acts of power were similarly from everlasting.

viii. 23, "from everlasting, from the beginning or ever the earth was."

The text is very properly quoted in proof of the eternity of Christ, or of his pre-existence before he was born of the Virgin Mary, but it is not a proof that the Divine Sonship of the Messiah was revealed to the ancient church. They might have discovered from such passages that the Messiah was God, but they could scarcely have known from them the filiation of the second person of the Trinity.

The same may be said of Zech. xiii. 7, where Christ is called Jehovah's "fellow" or companion,\* and so, at last, we arrive at the conclusion that the divine Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ was not revealed in the Old Testament, or, at most, very dimly shadowed forth there.

\* This passage is one which can be variously interpreted according to the standpoint of the commentator. If he be a believer in Christ's divinity, and acknowledge the authority of the New Testament in explanation of the Old (comp. Matt. xxvi. 31, Mark xiv. 27), he cannot fail to explain גבר עמיתי "the man of my fellowship," or "the man who is my fellow" of the equality of the Son and the Father. If, on the other hand, he denies all supernatural inspiration, or refuses to acknowledge that the prophets consciously predicted Christ's advent, then, in order to give some meaning to the passage, he must adopt some such view as that of Hitzig, (recently defended by Davidson in his "Introduction,") that God, being Himself the true King of Israel, calls the earthly ruler of the land his fellow, as associated with him in office! In spite of all the ingenuity by which this explanation has been defended, we cannot but consider it opposed to the whole spirit of the passage. But verbal criticism cannot decide the question. The theologian, not the critic, is the true judge of such passages, as textual criticism cannot refute either explanation.

In turning to the New Testament for proofs of the Divine Sonship, we must first note that there are several senses in which the term "son" is applied to Christ. That name is given to Him on account of His miraculous birth, that is in relation to His Divine-human sonship, so Luke i. 35. He claimed, also, a right to the title as the great Messiah. Thus, when the Jews therefore accused Him of blasphemy for calling God His Father, "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God," (John x. 34-36). The passage referred to occurs in Ps. lxxxii. 6, which speaks of the unrighteous judges, who were officially constituted gods,\* and so, independently of other higher reasons, as the sanctified One, the Holy One sent from God, our Lord was entitled to the appellation. So also, by virtue of His resurrection, Christ is called the Son of God. See Acts xiii. 13, Rom. i. 4, and compare His own words concerning the righteous at the resurrection, that they "are the children of God, being the

\* Lange, in his *Bibelwerk* on John's gospel, has thus correctly explained the passage. Ewald, Tholuck, Hengstenberg, Olshausen, and Delitzsch coincide in regarding אלהים, *gods*, to signify *judges*, though some of these scholars think the word is used ironically, while others regard them as termed so as they are the representatives of the Divine power, and executors of the Divine will. It is sufficient to refer to Exod. xxi. 6, and xx. 28, in the former of which passages the word translated *judges* is אלהים.

children of the resurrection," (Luke xx. 36). Last of all, Christ is termed the Son of God on account of His Divine nature or sonship, which we are now about to inquire into.

Christ is described in the gospels as the Son of God by virtue of His miraculous birth, by which He was separated from all the rest of mankind. For He was conceived by the Holy Ghost (Matt. i. 20). The Holy Ghost came upon the Virgin, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, therefore that holy thing which was born of her was called the Son of God (Luke i. 35). He was the Son of the Highest (Luke i. 32), Immanuel, God with us (Matt. i. 33), a Saviour which is Christ the Lord (Luke ii. 11). He was a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel (Luke ii. 32). He was the dayspring from on high, which hath visited man, to give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of  $\dagger$ death (Luke i. 79). He describes Himself in one of His parables as God's "beloved Son," (Luke xx. 13), and the testimony from heaven, given at His baptism and repeated at His transfiguration, gave witness to the same truth that He was the beloved Son in whom God was well pleased (Matt. iii. 17, &c., Matt. xvii. 6).

Not only is the Lord Jesus described thus in His nature as the Son of God, His moral characteristics are equally indicative of His divine origin. He is set forth as the Holy One of God; man could discover no spot in Him; He was the Sinless one moving among sinful humanity; the Lawgiver sent from God to reveal His perfect will, and not

only to reveal it, but to perfectly exhibit it in practice as the great Jewish Lawgiver could not do. He is described as a perfect man, harmless, undefiled, the Son of Man in all the full depth of that expression.

We must not forget, too, that the Lord Jesus is constantly mentioned throughout the gospels as speaking of God as His Father, "My Father," as He ever styles Him. He never speaks of Him as "our Father," or identifies Himself in this relation with believers. He was the only Son of God. The Lord's Prayer is the only apparent exception to this statement, and it is no real exception, for in all its petitions the Sinless One could not join.

While coinciding fully with the other evangelists in their testimony to the Lord Jesus, St John records a peculiar phrase which fell from our Lord's own lips on one remarkable occasion, not mentioned by the other evangelists, and repeats that phrase himself in two other places of his writings. The peculiar phrase referred to occurs in our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, contained in John iii. 16: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life." This word "only-begotten" was treasured up by the beloved disciple, and it occurs again in ch. i. 18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." In his general epistle (ch. iv. 9), St John repeats the phrase: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."

St John is the only inspired writer who gives us this designation of Christ. The phrase can only refer to a sonship possessed by Christ before the world was. St Paul similarly speaks: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" \*

The divinity of Christ rests on numerous passages, some of which have been already cited. His Divine Sonship, or in other words the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son, can, we think, only be satisfactorily based on these.

The expression, "first-born," used with regard to the Lord Jesus in several passages, may have indeed a similar signification. It is the meaning which has been attached to it in Col. i. 15. But still that passage cannot be said to clearly require such a meaning, and if Christ be called "the first-born" in such a sense, the contrast must be there mentally drawn between Him and his people, who, though in a lower sense, are "the sons of God." But that phrase seems rather to denote, in that passage, the dignity and precedence of the Saviour. Comp. Ps. lxxxviii. 27; Exod. iv. 22. It is a title given to Christ in relation to his people in Rom. viii. 29, and by virtue of His being the first to rise from the dead, in Col. i. 18 and Rev. i. 5. For the title is one also given to all the saints of God, in Heb. xii. 23, because of their being heirs of the heavenly inheritance, and being priests to God, the first-born having been originally chosen to that

\* 'Ο ἴδιος υἱός, Rom. viii. 32; ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ, Col. i. 13. Comp. Gal. iv. 4, &c.

office (comp. Exod. xiii. 1, 11-15, with Numb. iii. 12, 41, 45), and because the saints are not only priests but kings, in whose families the first-born ever had the right of succession. Israel in olden time had been styled similarly by the same name, Exod. iv. 22. Possibly the designation is used of Christ in Heb. i. 6 as a title combining all these several significations.

Origen, it must be acknowledged, was the first who taught in express terms the doctrine of the eternal generation. He represented the Trinity as an eternal process in God. As light never at any moment existed without giving light, so the Father was never without the Son. The Father cannot exist without the Son, nor the Son without the Father. "Origen was not content to regard the generation of the Son as an eternal act, which, being accomplished, was accomplished once for all. Such a view not merely involved the introduction of mutability into God, contrary to Origen's conviction, but thereby even the Son was not brought into close connection with the divine essence." On such a theory the Son "would owe His existence to a single isolated, and not to an eternal, movement in God, [which is] essential to the very conception of the divine essence." In other words, Origen taught "that the generation of the Son is an eternally completed and yet an eternally continued act."\*

Thus this distinguished Church Father gave expression to the thought which existed before in

\* See Dorner in *Hist. of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, Div. I., vol. ii., pp. 114, 115, Clark's Transl.

the hearts of believers, not indeed "as a formulated doctrine, but as an intuition of faith." Hence, notwithstanding the opposition raised against other of his speculations, this doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son has, from his day onward, been almost universally considered as a necessary supplement to the doctrine of the Trinity.

It has been, however, occasionally questioned. Men of generally evangelical views, as Dr A. Clarke, and scholars like Prof. Moses Stuart of Andover, U.S., have maintained that the name Son is only referable to our Lord in his human nature, and is not fitly used of his divine nature. Their argument was, "generation or production, like creation, necessarily implies beginning," that father necessarily conveys the idea of priority in time, so that eternal sonship is a contradiction in terms. The analogy from the human relation has no doubt often been pressed too far. But "generation" is not a word of the same kind as "creation;" it is a term of analogy, which the latter is not, and the meaning of such terms must not be strained. The question, as Mr Treffry has ably put it, is, "Can God be an eternal fountain of existence, or can He not?" If the sun be supposed to have been from the moment of its creation a fountain of light, it never existed for one moment without giving forth light. Can nothing of a similar kind be supposed to be in God? Is there any contradiction in the supposition? "To say that generation necessarily implies a beginning, is obviously a *petitio principii*, since it assumes that there can be no generation but that of finite beings, which is the point at



issue." But if generation exists in God, it must be radically different from that of an animal nature. The essential ideas connected with eternal Divine sonship are generative production, identity of nature, and tender love. "When generation has a beginning, it is either because the generator is not eternal, or because he must exist previously to generation. But if he has himself no beginning, and if there is no evidence that a generative emanation may not be essential to his nature, it is clear that generation does not necessarily imply beginning. God is eternal, and Divine generation, for aught that can be alleged to the contrary, may be essential to the Deity. It follows, then, that there is no impossibility in a generation without a beginning."\*

"The generation of the Son is an eternally completed and yet an eternally continued act." There is no contradiction in the statement, as some writers, without due consideration, have asserted. Completeness of production by no means necessarily involves in every case cessation from producing. The natural world can furnish numerous examples of this. But the familiar illustration of the constant flow of light from the sun is one of the best analogies to adduce. The light is being ever produced and yet ever perfect.†

\* See Treffry on the *Eternal Sonship*, pp. 40, 41. Mr Treffry's note on "the citations against the Eternal Sonship," and that on "'Only-begotten,' purely a Divine Title," are the most valuable parts of his work, and contain infinitely more matter, and much better put, than is to be found in Bp. Pearson's remarks on the same subject in his *Exposition of the Creed*.

† See Treffry, pp. 239-241.

The difficulties that have arisen in many minds on this question, and on the doctrine of the Trinity itself, have often been exaggerated, if not caused, by a want of understanding the signification of the terms used. When self-existence is spoken of with reference to each of the Persons in the Trinity, and when it is asserted as appertaining to the entire Deity, the term is used in a different signification. To suppose that there are three wholly independent and self-existing subsistences, would be to deny the Divine unity, and to maintain the existence of three gods. The Father is not without the Son, nor the Son without the Spirit. Self-existence, as applied to the various Persons, is identical with "necessary existence," but as applied to the entire Deity, it signifies "existence in absolute and separate independency."\*

Here we close our chapter. The points we have discussed are difficult to comprehend, and

\* See Treffry, pp. 41-2. Principal Fairbairn, in *Hist. and Crit. Review*, appended to Clark's Translation of Dorner's great work, notes on a somewhat similar point, that Dorner "justly discovers a defect in the representation sometimes made, as to the Father being the head and source of deity absolutely considered, or to his being identified with the Monas; since this inevitably led to the conclusion that the Son and Spirit must have been evolved as parts from the primal unity. The more correct statement had been, as it came indeed to be, when the consequences of the other representation began to discover themselves, that the Father is not the source or root of the entire deity, or of the deity absolutely considered, but of the deity viewed with respect to its immanent distinctions; the Son and Spirit having the same essence as the Father, only deriving from him their distinct hypostases. Not, therefore, as apart from them, but as inclusive of them, was the Father to be characterised as the fountain-head or Monas."

hard to express in simple language. But they are points of great practical importance. A teacher of religion must not only speak of the precepts of the gospel, but must also teach the doctrines on which those precepts depend. The points which, in our investigation of the Divine Fatherhood, we have sought to establish in this chapter are, that the doctrine of the Trinity is the doctrine of Holy Writ, and is not opposed to reason ; that this doctrine was partially revealed to believers under the Jewish dispensation ; that "the angel of the Lord," so often spoken of in the Old Testament, was the Lord Jesus Christ, and, therefore, that Angel is often called by the name Jehovah ; that no clear revelation of the Divine Sonship was given to the Jewish Church, but that such a revelation has been afforded to the Christian Church ; and that the doctrine of the eternal generation, though not expressly stated in the New Testament, is agreeable to that revelation.

It is indeed a precious truth to know that our Redeemer is one with the Father, the Eternal Son of the Eternal God. If we are assured of the love of the Son we are assured of the Father's also, for he and the Father are one (John x. 30). And can we doubt the love of Christ? Go, if you do, and, in thought, behold him treading this vale of tears in lowly guise as "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Why did He appear in such a form? "To save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). Go, stand beside him in Gethsemane, and mark his agony and bloody sweat. For whom did he thus suffer? "For the ungodly," (Rom. v. 6). Go stand on

Calvary, hearken to the cries from the cross ; “ behold the man,” and as he exclaims, “ Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by ? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me ? ” (Lam. i. 12) reflect, that “ while we were yet sinners Christ died for us ” (Rom. v. 8). Mark His resurrection ; “ He rose again for our justification ” (Rom. iv. 25). Think of His ascension, “ He is even at the right hand of God, and also maketh intercession for us ” (Rom. viii. 34). Listen to his words, “ Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out ” (John vi. 37). Have you come ? Will you come ? He is able to save you to the uttermost, (Heb. vii. 25), for He is God and he is man,—He that hath trodden for you the wine-press of the wrath of God,—He that is glorious in His apparel,—travelling in the greatness of his strength,—He that thus speaks in righteousness—is mighty to save (Is. lxiii. 1-6).

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD IN RELATION TO THE HUMAN NATURE OF THE LORD JESUS—REVIEW OF PASSAGES IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS—THE MYSTERIES OF THE INCARNATION—CHRIST A PERFECT MAN—CONSCIENCE—HIS TEMPTATION.

THE Lord Jesus, as we have seen, possesses the right to the title of Son of God by virtue of his eternal generation or divine filiation. He has also a right to the same name by virtue of his humanity. As it was his divinity which came into prominence in our last, so it is his humanity or rather his Godmanhood that we have now to treat of.

The human sonship of Christ is constantly spoken of in the Old Testament. As the prophet who would be raised up from among Israel (Deut. xviii. 18) David's Son, who was also to be David's Lord, the Rod out of the stem of Jesse, the Branch which should grow forth out of his roots (Isa. xi. 1), the anointed one who should sit upon the throne of his father David, Jehovah's servant, the Branch (Zech. iii. 8), the human nature of the Messiah was often made known to the Church of the old covenant.

Several passages, however, need more special mention. Such is that famous one in Isa. vii. 13, 14. It cannot be understood without a reference to the context in which it occurs. The kings of Syria and Israel had united together in a confederacy against Judah, then ruled over by the wicked king Ahaz. As the country was being laid waste by the advance of the allies, great fear was aroused at Jerusalem. But Ahaz, after the first alarm had subsided, seems to have imagined himself secure against the danger on account of the counter league he had entered into with the powerful king of Assyria. At this juncture the Lord commissioned Isaiah to go forth to meet Ahaz, who was at the head of his army, to inform him that the kings who had leagued against him should soon be humbled, and to offer to demonstrate the truth of the message by any sign asked for "in the depth or in the height above." Ahaz hypocritically declined to ask, alleging, it would seem, the Mosaic law (Deut. vi. 6) as his excuse. In fact, he treated the prophet with cool indifference, and deliberately chose to rely rather on the Assyrian monarch for help than on the Lord. The prophet solemnly warned him against this abuse of the Lord's long-suffering, and predicted for the comfort of the faithful the advent of the Messiah, the hope of them that longed for redemption in Israel, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."\*

\* There has been a great deal of unnecessary discussion concerning the proper meaning of *עלמה* in this verse, and Christian scholars have debated it with as much anxiety, as if the whole of Christianity was dependant on the signification assigned to it.

But he was commissioned further to declare that, whereas Judah and her king had been unfaithful and rebellious, though Syria and Israel should be humbled, the land of Judah, too, should be laid waste, the royal house of David impoverished, so

That anxiety we do not share. Though we agree with the orthodox expositors that the word is used in the sense of an unmarried girl of marriageable age, or "a virgin,"  $\text{עַלְמָה}$  being used in the same signification of men, and maintain that even Prov. xxx. 19 is not sufficient to prove that the word is used in the sense of "a married woman" (while  $\text{בְּתוּלָה}$ , the ordinary word for "virgin," is certainly used in such a meaning in Joel i. 8), still we think that the word is not of itself definite enough necessarily to convey that meaning, and the prophecy is one which we think would not be understood by all in this signification until its fulfilment in Christ. Agreeing as we do in the main with Delitzsch in his interpretation of the passage, we view the sign as understood by those to whom it was addressed to consist not so much in the miraculous birth (which was possibly not understood by them) as in the child himself, which according to ch. ix. 5, was to be  $\text{נִפְלֵא}$ , "wonderful." To us, however, who have seen the prophecy fulfilled in Jesus, the reference to the miraculous birth is unmistakably clear. We cannot admit at all that there is any reference to some unknown wife of Isaiah (as Dr R. Williams supposes), or to the queen of Ahaz (as others imagine). The prophet does not, however, seem to have been given to see how far distant the coming of the Messiah then was, but probably imagined it nearer than the event proved. The objection which has been raised, that the use of the article in the original ( $\text{הָעַלְמָה}$ ) precludes a reference to future times, has been properly answered by Delitzsch, that it was "the virgin which the spirit of prophecy pointed out to the prophet, and who was already chosen and elected of God to this honour. The Hebrew article seems sometimes to have a force similar to the Greek  $\tau\iota\varsigma$ , pointing out a certain person or thing. See Gen. viii. 7, 8; xxviii. 11; Numb. xi. 27; 1 Sam. xvii. 34; 1 Kings xx. 36. See our commentary on Gen. viii. 7.

that the dainties of the wilderness—"butter and honey"—should be the only dainties which could be spread on the board of the royal child—the infant Messiah. And the prophet further predicted that the devastation of the land of Judah should be immediately caused by the means of the very ally, which, though a heathen and idolatrous power, Judah, forgetful of her God and King, had called to her assistance in the hour of need.

Here, then, is a prediction of the miraculous human birth of the Christ. Closely connected therewith is the description of the child when born, born already in prophetic anticipation, in Isa. ix. 6. Troubles might gather thick and storms break over the Holy Land, thick darkness might be spread over its people, but at last a glorious light should spring up, and victory over the Lord's enemies should accompany light shed abroad in the hearts of the Lord's people: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

Noting, merely in passing, that the eleventh chapter of Isaiah presents us with a picture of the reigning Messiah, we pass on to consider Jer. xxxi. 22, which is supposed by some to refer to the birth of Christ. We pass by designedly many Messianic passages without notice as they do not fall under the limits of our subject. The passage in Jeremiah runs thus in our version: "How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman



shall compass a man." This used to be commonly explained as referring to the miraculous conception of the Virgin Mary. But the Hebrew original does not admit of such an interpretation, and it is a sense foreign to the context of the passage. For that speaks of the return from the captivity, and of the peace and plenty prevailing in the land. The passage simply means "a woman shall defend a man;" that is, the peace shall be so complete that the ordinary course of nature shall seem to be reversed. It cannot, therefore, be correctly regarded as Messianic.\*

In Daniel vii. 13 we read of "one like the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven," but the expression there is literally "one like a son of man,"† or one in human form, and though the New Testament revelations would lead us to put a higher sense upon the passage, this is all which by itself it would naturally convey.

Hosea xi. 1, which refers in its primary signification to Israel, and under that to Christ, as is shewn by the New Testament application (Matt. ii. 15), need only be referred to, and Micah v. 3 unquestionably speaks of the human birth of the

\* The critical discussion of this passage would occupy too much space here. We need only mention that the Messianic interpretation has long since been abandoned. See on this, among the older commentators, the remarks of Michaelis.

† Chald. כְּבָר אֱנוֹשׁ. So in Dan. iii. 25 Nebuchadnezzar uses the expression "the form of the fourth is like the Son of God," which should rather be translated "is like a son of the gods," (כְּבָר אֱלֹהִים) i.e., an angel.

Messiah, whose pre-existence we have seen already is so plainly spoken of in the second verse.\*

The New Testament abounds with passages respecting Christ's human Sonship, or His being God incarnate in the flesh. The words of the angel to the Virgin are in every point most important: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35, see also Matt. i. 20). At His baptism a voice came from heaven, following close upon a visible descent of the Holy Ghost: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." At Christ's transfiguration the same voice bore witness to Him as having a right to demand a higher reverence than Moses the lawgiver or Elijah the prophet: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." Satan came forward to Him on the occasion of His temptation with the words on his lips, "If Thou be the Son of God." In the parable of the vineyard the Lord Jesus alludes to His Sonship, though that passage may perhaps be classed under those that speak of His Divine origin. Peter confessed Him to be "Christ, the Son of the living God." When adjured by the high priest whether He laid claim to that dignity, our Lord answered plainly and distinctly in the affirmative, and He spoke of Himself frequently under such phraseology as: "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the

\* See pp. 110-111.

Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him " (Matt. xi. 27).

Similar texts could be quoted in abundance from all the writers of the New Testament. To refer to them, however briefly, would occupy much more space than we could now afford, and it is, happily, unnecessary. We shall have to notice several of them in the course of our discussion.

One name by which our Lord Jesus was wont often to designate Himself we must not pass over. It is the title "The Son of Man." It has been often thought that this most appropriate designation was taken from the passage in Daniel (vii. 13), which has been already referred to, and which speaks of the glorious coming of the Lord in the last day. When adjured by the high priest to tell whether He was "the Christ, the Son of the Blessed," our Lord replied : "I am, and hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven " (Mark xiv. 62). But that title means something more than that Christ was "in figure and fashion like a man." It seems to point out that the Lord Jesus alone realized the perfect conception of humanity, and that if we desire to know what man may, and what believers will, through grace, one day become, we must direct our gaze at the picture of the Son of Man as delineated for us in the Scriptures of truth. He is not only the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, but considered in that character He is the beginning, the archetype, as it were, of the creation of God.

St. John in his Gospel says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." He was the Creator of all things, and the life and the light of men. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt [tabernacled] among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." It was as if the glory of the transfiguration morning was ever vividly before the beloved disciple's mind; he could never forget that glory and the brightness of that light, and elsewhere he often refers to it. But in this text he speaks together of the glory and the humiliation, the humiliation itself appearing in his view as but a phase of glory.

The humiliation of the Son of God, contrasted with his previous glory, and with his after exaltation, is nowhere so remarkably set forth as by St Paul in Phil. ii. 5-10. As our English translation is here not very correct, we will follow Dean Alford's translation:

"For let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, regarded not as self-enrichment his equality with God, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. And when he was found in habit as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross. Wherefore God highly exalted him, and gave to him a name, viz., that which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven

and those on earth, and those under the earth ; and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

A wonderful self-renunciation is here set before us. The Word renounced for a time "the form of God," and took upon himself "the form of a servant." In what the form of God consisted we are not left in the dark by Scripture. It consisted not in any bodily shape,\* but in the Son's appearance as "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person," (Heb. i. 3 ; 2 Cor. iv. 4,) in his being "the image of the invisible God," (Col. i. 15,) in his being glorified with the Father's self with the glory which he had with him before the world was (John xvii. 5.)

The two forms could not co-exist ; each was, as it were, mutually exclusive of the other. The Word had to empty himself of the one form for a while, until he had rendered humanity capable of receiving its impress, and until, in the perfected God-man, the complete glory of the Lord should be able to display itself.

The Son did not lay aside his divine nature. That were, indeed, an impossibility. But the word "emptied himself" implies that the incarnation was

\* The passage in John v. 37, in which our Lord seems to speak of the shape of the Almighty, is thus correctly explained by Dean Alford : Ye have not heard God's voice as your fathers did on Sinai ; nor have you seen His appearance in vision as the prophets did ; nor have you the inward witness of the Spirit, which those have (and had in a measure before the gift of the Spirit), in whom this word abides ; for ye have not His Word abiding in you, as you do not believe in Him whom He hath sent.

not fully complete until the exaltation. The divine and the human nature were to combine together, and to "form a unity as self-knowing and self-willing."\* From the very beginning Christ's humanity was to possess the power of attaining to this union. There was not to be two consciousnesses in Christ—a divine and a human—but a divine-human consciousness, one and the same united for ever. Man, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, was to be made divine.

But this requires that the emptying of himself, or "exanition," as it is termed by theologians, should be a real fact, not merely a seeming one. We must not imagine that the incarnation of the Word was complete from the commencement. If this were so, the childhood of Christ would have been a mere appearance, his increase in wisdom not real (as the increase in stature was,) but a mere manifestation of what he ever had in infinite fulness. † Christ, on this theory, could not be a moral example to us, if even he could be a substitute for us, which admits of doubt. His temptation would have been a mere semblance, without possessing that deep reality which the apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews shows it had, and which ought to be a strong consolation to every tempted believer.

The truth of the incarnation seems rather to be,

\* See Dorner's Remarks on the Personal Union, in Div. ii. vol. 3 of the "Doctrine of the Person of Christ" (Clark's Translation), pp. 248, &c.

† Apollinaris substantially held this error. See Dorner, Div. i. vol. 2, p. 395.

that while the being and the actuality of the Son of God remained ever unchanged, yet He limited Himself for His existence as the Son of Man while His humanity was undergoing growth. Every stage in the existence of the man Christ Jesus was divine-human; but the eternal personality of the Word developed itself by degrees, according as the human nature was able to receive it. The Son of Man was ever conscious of His heavenly fatherhood, and had ever the latent power to rise to a full consciousness of His being also the eternal Son of God, and to a full exercise of all the powers of His divinity. His remaining in self-limitation was not only part of His self-abasement, but was also a proof of His power. Through His union with humanity, that "holy thing" (*ἅγιον*, Luke i. 35) was produced, which was properly called "the Son of God;" but the incarnation itself was a continually growing thing, and the divine-human consciousness continually increasing, till the human consciousness was able to appropriate all the divine.\* The incarnation itself is not to be viewed as complete, until the exaltation was accomplished by the resurrection of the Son of Man and Son of God, where in a deeper meaning than as merely declaratory (as we are now enabled to see) the prophetic words of the Psalmist—applied by St. Paul to this very event—formed their fulfilment: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

From this higher stand-point which we have now reached, we can see how several passages of

\* See Dorner, Div. ii. vol. 3, pp. 257, 258, &c.

Scripture, which have caused much difficulty to pious minds, can be taken in their natural and plain signification, and at the same time to perceive that that signification is by no means at variance with the real and essential divinity of our Lord. We mean such passages, for instance, as that which records the statement in reference to His second coming made by the Lord Jesus during the days of His humiliation and self-limitation: "Of that day and that hour knoweth no one, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark xiii. 32), and that agonizing cry which burst from the Saviour on the cross: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!" We need not, in order to explain the one, have recourse to the unsatisfactory gloss savouring too much of casuistry, that Christ did not know it as man while He knew it as God; nor suppose with Hilary, that He was not ignorant of it for Himself, but for us. Nor have we, in explaining the latter, to shrink from drawing the only natural inference, namely, that for our sakes, the Son did really at that time experience in His consciousness the agonizing feeling that, having been "made sin for us," He was in that awful moment forsaken of His Father.

Let us here pause for a moment, to point the fulness of the love manifested in all the various stages of the incarnation till the ever-deepening shadows of humiliation close in total darkness on the cross-crowned summit of Calvary. O the depth! that the eternal Son should so abase Himself for our sakes, for sinful men. O the height! that our poor and miserable humanity should be so



glorified in the exaltation of the Person of Christ. O the love! that He should bear our sins and carry our sorrows, and in the dread anticipation of that most fearful hour, when hell should do its worst, and heaven should withhold its assistance, that the patient, lowly, loving Saviour should move on so resignedly, amid the bitter taunts of men, while women alone lamented His fate, to the sorrowful but blessed ground of Golgotha. O the grace! that His arms, once stretched on the Cross, should be extended even now from heaven to draw all men unto Him, that He may fold them in the bosom of His mercy, and that He may cast out none, not even the vilest who may come unto Him. O the patience and long-suffering of our great High Priest! who, notwithstanding all the believers' outward sins and grievous heart-filthiness, will not let them go until He bless them.

“O Love, who lovest me for aye,  
Who for my soul dost ever plead;  
O Love, who didst my ransom pay,  
Whose power sufficeth in my stead,  
O Love, I give myself to thee,  
Thine ever, only thine to be.”

We must not omit to remark, when speaking of the Sonship of Christ, that although, by virtue of His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit, He had the right to the name of Son of God, apart from His eternal Sonship, yet that He was specially designated as such when, being about to enter on His official ministry, He received a fresh baptism of the Spirit. Then came the voice from the excellent

glory: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

This connexion of the Sonship of Christ with the pouring out of the Holy Ghost, we allude to here, as we shall afterwards see that it bears an important relation to the sonship bestowed on believers.

We have noticed before that the first man, Adam, was not "spiritual," though he would, had he continued in his integrity, have become so. The "soul," not the "spirit," was the ruling element in his frame. His spirit ought to have ruled, and would have done so, had it ripened into maturity. But as the spiritual powers are the last to unfold themselves, and the weakest in the beginning, they did not attain their proper perfection in Adam, for sin intervened and Adam fell. The first man was not only "of the earth, earthy," (*ἐκ γῆς, χοϊκός*), but was also, as far as the point of his development went, only "a living soul" (*ψυχὴ ζῶσα*), "a natural" (psychical *ψυχικός*) man, under the power and dominion of his soul. But the second man, the Second Adam, "the Lord from heaven" was not only "heavenly," but also "spiritual" (*πνευματικός*, pneumatical). He was made far beyond what Adam ever could have attained to; he possessed the power of transmitting this quality to others, He was a life-giving, a "quickeningspirit" (*πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν*). Now, the spirit would naturally evidence its existence in God-consciousness and moral consciousness, by a blessed and happy consciousness of God, of a sense of duty to him and delight in him, and, as regards God's creatures, by discharging all the relative duties

towards them, as an exhibition towards man of love felt towards God.

But the divinely-given spirit was deadened in Adam by the Fall. The divine life fled from it when Adam sinned. Hence, as children of Adam, we possess only deadened spirits, which now prove their existence only by the action of conscience, that is, by an "accusing and excusing" conscience, but no longer naturally by a happy approving conscience, or by the intuitive knowledge of God, which we would otherwise have possessed. Now, the Lord took our nature in its perfect state, not as it was marred by sin, otherwise he could not have been our Redeemer. But, since sin entered into the world, we have inherited shattered spirits as well as degenerate souls and bodies of sin and death. We have already pointed out that man is really composed of three parts, and that he transmits to his posterity his own triple nature. But Christ took our nature "without sin." By the power of the Holy Spirit, the substance of his body and soul was formed from the substance of the Virgin Mary. But she could not have transmitted to him anything but a defective spirit, a spirit deadened in its higher capacities, having lost its life which was from heaven. Hence his "spirit" was not taken from hers. It must not be forgotten that Adam's spirit was originally not formed from the dust, but breathed into Him by God, it was not a creation but an emanation from the Most High.\* Hence it was right that as the first Adam had lost the life which came from heaven, the fire sent

\* See pp. 2, 3.

down from above, the Second Adam should receive it afresh from the pure source from whence it originally came. The torch that was extinguished by the first Adam was lighted again by the Second Adam with fire from heaven. In simple words, the Lord Jesus derived his bodily and intellectual powers from the human source, but his spiritual powers from the divine. His birth, however, was not like that of other men, without the divine action the material which became Christ's body and soul would not have become so. That it might become man it needed the power of the Holy Spirit and the divine act of the Son.

Thus did Christ become like us in all things, sin only except. If we lose sight of the human agency, then we must regard Christ as a stranger in our race, and not as really human. God could have certainly created him a new man out of new matter, but then he would not have been "bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh." We would then have had no part or share in the Son. To render Christ a full sharer of our humanity, it was necessary that the Virgin should have given more towards the formation of the Second Adam than the earth yielded for the formation of the First.

As, therefore, Christ received a perfect spirit by the operation of the Holy Ghost, we read nowhere in the Bible of the conscience of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are not disposed to found arguments on the silence of Scripture. But in this case there seems a weighty reason for the silence of Scripture. The human spirit in Christ was a perfect spirit,—  
"not that feeble semi-animate conscience which stirs,

and only stirs, in our present fallen nature." "In his case, who always lived in unbroken communion with God," truly remarks Heard, "the word conscience would be quite inadequate to express that full intercourse of his spirit with that of his Father in heaven. Such rapt exercises of prayer as his, such nights of rapt enjoyment of God, and of ecstasy of spiritual worship, are to the stirrings of God—consciousness in us—what sunlight is to the smoking wick of an expiring candle. If conscience were an integral part of sinless human nature, we should read of it in Christ. . But supposing it to be the remains of a nobler faculty, which has been injured past human recovery, then we can see why, while we read of the spirit of Christ, of his being troubled in spirit, and knowing in his spirit, we do not read of the conscience of Christ. Conscience and the law of God are correlative terms; and as the Holy Christ lived above the law, so he lived above the level of conscience. The lower in his case was taken up into the higher. For legal obedience, he had a delight in the law of God; for the voice of conscience, he was led up of the spirit, God's spirit indwelling in his in a union as deep and mystical as that of the Persons of the blessed Trinity."\*

Inasmuch as death is the wages of sin, Christ, as sinless, was possessed, not of an immortal body, but of a body which was not naturally mortal. The difference is one too often forgotten. Immortality conveys the idea that death is an impossibility, the being non-mortal implies simply that death is against the order of nature, though it may be possible.

\* Heard on the "Tripartite Nature of Man," p. 147.

Adam, when created, was non-mortal: sin made him mortal. Christ's history proves the possibility of death in his case: if his death had been impossible he could not have been our Redeemer. But inasmuch as Christ was without sin, and his body undefiled by any iniquity, there was no natural necessity for his suffering any of the infirmities and weaknesses of our nature, and, therefore, every instance of his suffering was a voluntary act of self-abasement, and an individual act of love. His very death was an act, a willing act of love and an act of power. He himself alludes to it in those words: "No one taketh it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power (*ἐξουσία*) to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John x. 18). All the evangelists, also, imply by the very words in which they record his death, that Christ's death was his own voluntary surrender up of his spirit to his Father.\*

Inasmuch as our Redeemer became man for us, it was fitting that he should be tempted also like as we are. But if temptation in the case of sin-

\* "These words" (Luke xxiii. 46, remarks Alford in his note on that passage) "have in them an important and deep meaning. They accompany that which in our Lord's case was strictly speaking the *act* of death. It was *his own act*—no 'feeling the approach of death,' as some, not apprehending the matter, have commented—but *a determinate delivering up of his spirit to the Father*—*παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα*, John: see John x. 18—*οὐδεὶς αἶρει αὐτὴν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τιθεὶμι αὐτὴν ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ*. None of the Evangelists say 'he died, although that expression is ever after used of his death, stated as one great fact: but it is *ἀφῆκεν τὸ πν.*, Matt.; *ἐξέπνευσεν*, Mark, Luke; *παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα*, John. The *πνεῦμα* here is the *Personality*—the human soul informed by the Spirit *in union*, not separated, so that

less beings occasions a difficulty in some minds, temptation in the case of the Lord Jesus is in some respects even more difficult to comprehend. For, on the one hand, temptation must not be regarded, even in his case, as something merely external, which could make no impression on his mind, this would be to reduce his temptation to a mere appearance, and no more. Nor must we, on the other hand, forget that Christ was absolutely without sin. The sinlessness of Jesus, however, by no means excludes the possibility of sinning, though it does imply that he had no taint whatever of original or actual sin; and that, with his body in subjection to his soul, and his soul ruled by his spirit, he rejected with abhorrence the very thought of sin, no matter what the garb might be in which it should be presented to his mind. Only the Father, (remarks Van Oosterzee†), cannot be tempted with evil (James i. 13), and the Son, having once entered within the limits of finite humanity, came into personal contact with sin, through "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3) which he assumed. He could distinguish, as well as other men, the pleasant and the unpleasant, and prefer, like them, fulness to want, honour to shame, life to death. Sin could, however, only arise when the wish for anything, or the determination to attain it, was entertained, contrary to that which was felt to be the will of God. Natural inclinations are not sinful in themselves, but become

his soul went to Hades, and his spirit to the Father—(Olshausen)."

† See his Comm. on St Luke in Lange's Biblewerk—(Clark's Translation.)

sinful when yielded to, outwardly or inwardly, contrary to the laws which God has ordained.

In our Lord's case, however, the temptation did not arise from within, but was introduced entirely from without. In the great temptation in the wilderness, our Lord was urged first to work a miracle to satisfy his bodily wants, instead of waiting for the set time appointed Him by the Father. Secondly, the tempter sought to induce Him to work upon the Jewish people's carnal feelings by an outward display of power, in order that His mission to them might be rendered easier of accomplishment. And, lastly, Satan urged Him to possess Himself of earthly power, making use of him as a co-worker, instead of having to meet him as an antagonist. The propositions were attractive, but the Lord saw their incompatibility with the work the Father had given him to do. He saw the sin that lurked under the specious proposals, and with the sword of the Spirit he repelled the foe. "The temptation passes before his eyes in its fairest colours; he has a lively appreciation of all the attractions it presents; he reflects that he is free to yield; but that instant he repels it, as something strange and inadmissible. It has access to his imagination, but finds no point of contact in his will;" it acts upon his flesh (*σάρξ*), it acts upon his soul (*ψυχή*); but before they can be stained, his spirit (*πνεῦμα*) has gained the victory, and the tempter retires foiled and baffled from the scene.



## CHAPTER IX.

THE SONSHIP OF CHRIST—THE LEARNING OF OBE-  
DIENCE—CHRIST'S WORK AS SON—A TEACHER  
OF THE MEANING OF THE LAW—HIS ATONE-  
MENT—MODERN CARICATURES OF EVANGELI-  
CAL DOCTRINE—THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF  
CHRIST'S DEATH—HIS RESURRECTION BODY.

IN our last chapter we have spoken of Christ's human sonship, and endeavoured to point out that his humanity was as real as his divinity, and therefore that he could truly be said to grow "in wisdom" and "in favour with God and man," as well as to increase "in stature." That, consequently, his temptation was not only externally an actual fact, but also real in its inward character. This precious truth that Christ "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," is set forth by the apostle (Heb. iv. 15) as a support to believers, to encourage them to approach boldly the throne of grace.

The point now for our consideration is, the effect of our Lord's divine-human sonship upon himself, and the work he has accomplished for us as Son of Man and Son of God. There is a

striking passage, with respect to our Lord in his human nature, in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. v. 7, 8), "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared (or more intelligibly, as in our margin, "for his piety," *i.e.*, on account of his pious resignation.) Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

The Lord Jesus, as the Second Adam, was to learn the lesson of obedience which the first Adam failed to learn. The Second Adam had not to learn the lesson of holiness; he was holy and pure. But standing as our federal head, he was to learn practically the other lesson of implicit, unconditional obedience to the will of his Father. Obedience is easy when it runs in the channel of one's own wishes and desires; but becomes something which needs to be learned when its requirements demand what is contrary to one's natural inclinations. As the Eternal Son, co-equal with the Father, the same in essence and nature, Christ needed not and could not learn such a lesson. For the Father's decrees were also his; the Father's will and his own were ever identical.

Nor would the incarnation itself, if unattended with suffering, have been sufficient to teach the lesson. "Imagine," remarks Dr. Candlish, "the eternal Son taking upon him the form of a servant; uniting in his own person the two distinct human

natures—the divine and the human; and the two distinct relationships, that of a Son co-equal to the Father, and that of a servant under authority to the Father. Conceive thus of the Lord from heaven, placed as Adam was in a sinless and sorrowless garden, under no other obligation than that of conformity to the law which is his own as well as the Father's. How would he then, and in these circumstances, have learned obedience at all? He would have been holy, no doubt. Holiness, immaculate and inviolable, stainless and serene, would have characterized his whole moral being. But it could scarcely have been holiness having in it anything of the element of obedience.

“But introduce now the circumstance of suffering, and of such suffering. Bring this holy one into contact with the results of sin realized on earth, and place him under the responsibilities of sin registered in heaven. Let his life be a life of suffering—of suffering, too, judicial and penal—having in it the bitter ingredients of imputed guiltiness and inflicted wrath. Then truly that God-man is in a position to learn obedience. And the more intense his sense of filial relationship is, and the more inviolable his holiness, so much the more complete must be the lesson; so much the more thoroughly must we regard him as ‘though he were a son, yet learning obedience by the things which he suffered.’”\*

Thus was the Lord Jesus taught the lesson of obedience. He learned it by practice and acquirement. On no occasion did he, although the Son of

\* Candlish on the Fatherhood of God, pp. 353, 354.

God, claim any privilege of exemption thereby from the sorrows or sufferings of humanity. On no occasion did he presume upon his sonship to extricate himself from toil or suffering, but ever patiently endured all that was appointed him by the Father. At the same time there was in his whole life no instance of his suffering simply for suffering's sake, or of his imposing sufferings on himself to add to his merits, as some of the saints in Romish legends are related to have done. His sufferings, whether of body or mind, were all appointed him; not, however, to subdue sin in him, for he had no sin; not to teach him holiness, for he was the Holy One; but to teach him "obedience." What a pattern of holy obedience did he exhibit to us, not only by his calm endurance throughout life of "the contradiction of sinners against himself," but also by his crowning acts of obedience at Gethsemane and Calvary!

Though he was ever the eternal Son of God, yet did he exhibit himself during his life on earth in the character of a subject. As while on earth, in respect of his humanity, he was in his nonage, so "he differed nothing from a servant though he was Lord of all." He was "under bondage" to the ritual observances of the Jewish law, until the time appointed of the Father." Then the heir was perfected (Luke xiii. 32), and "being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. v. 9, 10).

The Lord Jesus is not to be regarded as promulgating a relaxed code of morality, or even while

on earth as himself breaking the Mosaic law. When he spoke of the Mosaic law, he often took occasion to expose the mistakes of those who, while they fondly imagined that they were planting "a fence" round that law, were inculcating but "the precepts of men," and doing an injury to the law itself. When he asserted that acts of mercy and of love, and acts required by necessity, might be performed on the Sabbath days, he did not, though Lord of the Sabbath Day, give an indulgence which was not permitted by the law itself. Nay, rather as Son of man and Lord of the Sabbath, he simply declared what was the true interpretation of the law given by God to Moses. His Sabbath miracles were solemn protests against the hypocritical Pharisees for their "teaching for doctrines the commandments of man." But it must not for a moment be supposed that he who was made "under the law" for our sakes was really guilty of any transgression of that law, which was not abrogated until it was fulfilled—not until the great sacrifice had been offered up on Calvary, until the veil of the old sanctuary was rent in twain, and the way into the holiest was made manifest by the blood of Jesus (Heb. ix. 8, 11, 12, 24-28; x. 19-22).

Nor did our Lord do away with the moral law. His constant aim when teaching the people was to show its true requirements. He pointed out that it was not fulfilled by a mere adhesion to its outward letter, but that it extended even to the hearts and the reins. "We find Him solemnly republishing the whole law in that most beautiful but most awful form, in which the duty which comprehends

all duties is pressed with such emphatic reiteration upon us,—that duty which the heart of every human being acknowledges to be of imperative obligation, while it testifies against him that he never has fulfilled it: ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.’ Would it not appear, then, that with much more show of reason the Lord might be represented as having added to the strictness of the law, than as having detracted from it? And as to annulling it,” as some suppose He has done, “does not His own impressive declaration seem framed to meet directly the vain imagination? ‘Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle of the law shall in no wise pass away till all be fulfilled’ (Matt. v. 17).”<sup>\*</sup> That is, as the original word implies, till all be filled out or expanded, till a deeper and holier sense be given to its various parts, a fuller meaning to its injunctions. Theophylact (as quoted by Alford) with much force compares the ancient law to a sketch which the painter “does not destroy but fills up, . . . for the law forbids only (*i.e.*, in the letter) the ends of sins, Christ has also forbidden the beginnings,” by expounding the spirit and deep meaning of the law. For the passage to which we have referred, does not apply to the prophecies of the Old Testament, nor even chiefly to the typical portions of the law, but to the Divine precepts and commandments

\* Bishop O’Brien on the “Nature and Effects of Faith,” p. 70.

taught by Moses and the Prophets which are perpetually binding on all true believers.

Christ did not come to relax the law of God, but, on the contrary, to confirm it. He came and put Himself in the position of a subject that He might raise those who were subjects to the position of sons. He came to fulfil to its letter, and accomplish in its spirit, the whole moral law with its deepest and most spiritual obligations, to fulfil it for us, not only as our example but as our Representative. He put Himself under the bondage of the Jewish law that He might redeem those that were under that law, and now from His throne in heaven, having redeemed us by His blood, He offers free pardon and justification to those who will come to Him.

And here we may be permitted to make a short digression from our subject. We must not confound, as some are often disposed to do, pardon and justification. Pardon does not convey any other idea than that of remission of the punishment due for offences, and sets forth only one attribute in God, that of mercy. The gospel tells not only of pardon and acquittal offered to sinners, but it speaks also of the justification of believers. The latter term implies that not only is the mercy of God engaged in our salvation, but the justice of God is concerned with it too. For justification is a judicial act, by which we are not only pardoned and acquitted, but declared righteous before God. To speak of justification simply as pardon, often leads to the mistake being made that the free mercy of God is not only the true "source" of pardon, but also the "grounds" on which forgiveness itself is granted.

But God's compassion exhibited to sinners "could not, consistently with His other perfections, proceed as human mercy does; His law was to be satisfied, before mercy could be shown to those who had violated it; and mercy has been reconciled to justice by the unimpeachable obedience and bitter sufferings of the Son of God."\*

Thus, though the Scripture does not tell us of the law being done away with or relaxed by Christ, but, on the contrary, of its having been confirmed by him both by precept and example, it informs us that that justification which sinful man is unable to obtain by his own works, merits, or deservings, is afforded to him freely because of the holy life and meritorious death of the Lamb of God.

It is thus that the Apostle Paul assures us, that though we "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," we are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 23, 24); and that God has, by this mode of redemption, manifested both his justice and his grace (Rom. iii. 25-27), the death of Christ being a proof of God's love in giving up his only-begotten Son, and a demonstration of his justice in requiring expiation through a sin offering. Therefore, though "the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23). For by reason of "the exceeding riches" of God's "grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus, "by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves;

\* Bishop O'Brien, "Nature and Effects of Faith," p. 80.



it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 7-9.)

But though we are thus freely justified, and "accepted in the beloved," (Eph. i. 6), faith being the instrument whereby we are thus united to Christ, we must not forget that good works are the necessary accompaniment of faith, and as invariably proceed therefrom, as an evidence and proof of heaven-born faith, as good fruit is an evidence of a good tree, or as motion is a necessary accompaniment of life. Our mere saying that we have faith, or our profession of trust in Jesus, does not make us true believers, or prove that we are such. "The talk of the lips tendeth only to penury" in spiritual as well as in temporal matters; and such faith as the Apostle James forcibly exposes (ch. ii. 14-26), so far from justifying us, proves us "deceivers of our own selves."

To return, Christ's holy life on earth, when, though the Son of God, he became a subject for our sakes, is distinctly stated to be a part of the cause of our justification. He left us thereby, indeed, an example that we should follow his steps (1 Peter ii. 21), an example which we should keep ever prominently in view. But his obedience had also a deeper signification, for as by the First Adam's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of the Second Adam, many shall be made righteous (Rom. v. 19.) And, therefore, we should strive, like St. Paul, to be "found in him, not having our own righteousness," "but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. iii. 9.)

As to the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, orthodox theologians are divided in opinion, though the difference is more in words than in reality, more in the expression than in the thing signified. But it is of much more vital importance to understand the real significance of Christ's death. With respect to that point, we can term no theologian orthodox or evangelical who does not hold that Christ's death is not only exemplary, but also propitiatory, not only a proof of his sympathy for us, but endured by him as our substitute.

In order to shorten our remarks, we omit the consideration of the passages of the Old Testament which might be brought forward in support of this view. But the truth is taught emphatically in many passages of the New Testament. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. iii. 13). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter ii. 24). He hath "made peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20). John the Baptist, inspired by the Holy Spirit, pointed out the Saviour to his disciples in those beautiful words: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29). "Christ," writes St. Paul, "hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God

for a sweet smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2). "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," re-echoes St. John (1 John i. 7). "He that spared not his only Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" So comforts St. Paul the hearts of believers (Rom. viii. 32). "Jesus Christ, the righteous," affirms St. John, "is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John ii. 2). And again, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (ch. iv. 10). The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that Christ "tasted death for every man" (Heb. i. 9); that "now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. ix. 26); and again, that our High Priest being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, needeth not daily, as those high priests (under the law), to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (Heb. vii. 26, 27). St. John, in the Revelation, desires grace and peace from "him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. i. 5). The saints (in ch. v. 9) are said to "sing a new song, saying, Thou (the Lamb slain) art worthy. . . for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood," and similarly the multitude of the redeemed (ch. vii. 14) are said to have come "out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Truly we may exclaim in consideration of such a list of passages, and it is by no means an exhaustive one, that language could not be used, more plainly pointing out, not only the vicariousness or substitutionary character of our Lord's sufferings, but also its propitiatory character. Well may we also, as we reflect on the blessed comfort it conveys, "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement," Rom. v. 11.

Can we, after such a review of the Bible doctrine, regard in any other light than as a caricature of it, the following statement by Prof. Kingsley. Most people "look on God as a stern tyrant, who, when man sinned and fell, could not satisfy His own Justice—His own vengeance, in plain words, without killing some one, and who would have certainly killed all mankind, if Jesus Christ had not interfered, and said, 'If 'Thou must slay some one, slay me, though I am innocent!'" Well might the Cambridge Professor, after thus confounding together justice and vengeance (which last word he evidently uses here in the sense of revenge), exclaim, "does not this all sound horrible and irreverent?"\*

Very similar is the horrid caricature of evangelical doctrine drawn by another distinguished Cambridge Professor, F. D. Maurice, which represents Christ, according to it, saying to man:—"Your Father has created multitudes whom He means to perish for ever and ever. By my agony and bloody sweat, by my cross and passion, I have

\* Kingsley's "Village Sermons," p. 17.

induced him, in the case of an inconceivably small minority, to forego that design." \*

In plain words, the school of theologians of which these eminent professors may be considered as prominent leaders (though in various points differing from one another) do not believe in any atonement save the moral influence of Christ's life and death. Some of them hold that the sacrifices of the Law were merely emblematical of the submission of man's will to God, others that sacrifices were only of human institution, and that so far from casting any light on the death of Jesus, they rather point out what it was not, than what it is.† The comforting doctrine, that Christ died for our sins, in our stead, as our substitute, is refined away. The crowning act of the Father's love in giving up his Son to die for us, in our stead, is wickedly perverted, as if the preaching of such a doctrine implied the existence of a spirit of ungenerous revenge in the breast of the Most High.‡

It may, no doubt, be thought that we have wandered from our subject, but on a closer examination it will be seen that we have not. For in connection with our Lord's divine-human Sonship, we must speak of the work he performed in that character.

\* Maurice's "Theological Essays," p. 470.

† See Prof. Jowett's Comm. on the Epistles to the Thess., Galatians, and Romans.

‡ We are acquainted with no abler and simpler exposure of the fallacies of the Broad Church School on the doctrine of the Atonement than is to be found in the third and fourth lecture of Prof. Crawford on the "Fatherhood of God," though we do not agree with some of his minor points.

The Son of God manifested himself on earth in the character of a subject, and as such procured eternal redemption for us. He entered into our human nature under all the defects which had been entailed upon us by the Fall, "sin only except." He passed through a life of sorrow and of suffering, consorting with fallen man, and yet preserving an unbroken communion with his Father. He became the second Adam, the great head of restored humanity: he lived, suffered, and died as such. He identified himself thoroughly with us, so that whatever he did might be put down to us, and whatever we had done might be ascribed to him as our representative. He took upon himself our sin and death, that we might be, by the outpouring of the Spirit, partakers of his holiness and life. Christ, as an individual, took our responsibilities upon him: he acted for us, he died for us, and therefore his work and sufferings have been accepted as ours.\*

Much harm has sometimes been done to the cause of truth by an injudicious way of speaking of Christ's sufferings as if they were exactly weighed out to him, and as if every drop of blood shed by our Lord had some special value assigned to it. Such exaggerations at once suggest difficulties which have no real existence, such as whether Christ did really suffer exactly in every point the pangs of the lost. This difficulty is not removed by the common device resorted to of maintaining that "the infinite dignity of the person who suffered in the stead of sinners

\* See an able article on German Discussions on the Atonement in the "British and Foreign Evangelical Review" for January 1865.

gave an infinite value to his sufferings, so that, though limited in time, they could atone for the infinite guilt of sin." Such an answer is eminently unsatisfactory; but there is no occasion whatever to resort to it. The quantitative mode of speaking of Christ's sufferings has no support in Holy Writ. Jesus is not said to have suffered all the pangs of the lost; he is said to have suffered for us, and all that he suffered, it is plainly inferred, was endured by him as a penal infliction in our stead. The substitution of persons, not of things, is that which is so plainly recorded in the Bible. Human nature on account of sin, was under God's wrath. Christ by becoming man took upon himself the curse for our sakes. He took upon himself the form of a servant, he identified himself with sinful humanity, he came under the power of Satan, and endured, though innocent, the death of a criminal, the shameful death on the cross. His resurrection proved that the sacrifice was accepted, that the ransom was fully paid, that redemption was achieved for us. Scripture warrants us to say all this, but it does not warrant us to go further.

It cannot be expected that we should discuss fully here the doctrine of the atonement, or reply to the arguments adduced against the evangelical view of it. At the same time we could not omit all reference to it as it was the greatest work which the Lord Jesus performed for us in his humanity. We may, however, here remark, as Magee has long ago noted, that without some proof of God's hatred against sin, we never could know the greatness of his love in pardoning sinners; and God's infinite love

is as much seen in his appointing such a mode of expiation as his abhorrence of sin is shewn in his requiring it.\* The evangelical and scriptural doctrine of the atonement is not founded on the implacability of God, as Socinians of old and philosophical theologians of modern days persist in asserting, in defiance of the plainest statements, but on the Father's eternal love; and the displeasure of God against sin is not to be classed as resentment or revenge, but as the judicial disapprobation of the Judge of all, necessitated by his immutable holiness.

By the resurrection the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus was not only proved to have been accepted, but he himself was declared to be the Son of God with power. At the resurrection of Christ from the dead the purpose of the incarnation was fully completed, and the divine-human sonship of Christ manifested. In that event, as St. Paul declared (Acts xiii. 33), the words of the divine Father found their full accomplishment, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Having offered up himself as a sacrifice on the cross once for all, our great High Priest went into the sanctuary in heaven to plead the benefits of his precious blood-shedding, and to obtain "gifts for the rebellious," even the gift of the Holy Ghost, that he might pour it forth on those that should come unto him. This precious gift of the outpouring of the Spirit must be spoken of somewhat more at large hereafter, but here we may just glance at the revelations of Scripture with respect to the resurrection body of our Lord. That subject is not only one of interest but will be found

\* Magee on "The Atonement," Discourse I.



to be of importance when we come to discuss the resurrection of believers.

“Flesh and blood,” the apostle declares solemnly, “cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption” (1 Cor. xv. 50). But the same body of our Lord Jesus, which was laid in the tomb, was raised again from the dead. A change, however, had passed upon it at the resurrection. Though the Lord Jesus had rendered up on the cross his spirit to the Father, and thus voluntarily expired, the physical cause of his sudden death seems to have been that the awful agony which rent his soul caused the rupture of his heart. He died literally of a broken heart, a heart broken with mental anguish endured for our sakes. Hence, when the soldier pierced his side, there flowed forth a copious stream of blood and water.\* His blood was “poured upon the earth like water.” And so after his resurrection, when his disciples were affrighted at his appearance, he addressed them in those striking words: “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself, handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have” (Luke xxiv. 39). He uses the phrase “flesh and blood” no longer, but “flesh and bones.” This is probably the cause why he was not on several occasions immediately recognized by his disciples, though an attentive survey proved even to them that it was he himself. Hence, when he showed the print of the nails to Thomas, and bid him thrust his hands into

\* See the Rev. Dr. Hanna’s interesting work “The Last Day of our Lord’s Passion,” and the medical evidence on this point given in his Appendix.

his side, he did not speak of the scars on his body, but exhibited "the veritable wounds themselves." His resurrection-body was bloodless, his blood had been on Golgotha poured out for our sin, "Flesh and blood could not inherit the kingdom of God," but "flesh and bones" could.\*

We shall see later what light this casts upon our resurrection, but let us here observe the light it reflects back upon our Lord's words in the sixth of St. John's gospel. Our Lord there speaks of an eating of his flesh and a drinking of his blood, which all believers, without exception, partake of, and must partake of, in order to have eternal life. That those words do not refer to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is plain, not only from the whole tenor of our Lord's discourse in which they occur but also from the fact that to suppose such a reference would be to assert too much, namely, that every one who may partake of the Lord's Supper will thereby be infallibly saved; and that every one who may not partake of it will be as infallibly lost. The "drinking of the blood" is there spoken of as quite distinct from "the eating of the flesh." But the flesh is living flesh; living bread. It is the death of Christ which is referred to, at which his blood was separated from his flesh. The drinking of Christ's blood signifies the participation in the death unto sin by virtue of Christ's precious blood-shedding, the personal and individual realization that our sins

\* Dr. Candlish in his "Life in a Risen Saviour" has popularly and well discussed this point. It is not, however, a view peculiar to him. Many scholars have held the same view, among whom we may specify Dean Alford in his Greek Testament.

are forgiven us for his name's sake, that we are dead unto sin, baptized into his death. The eating of his flesh—the living bread which came down from heaven—is the personal and individual realization of the life we obtain from his life, the rising again to a new and hidden life by virtue of his resurrection. And when our Lord, on his disciples having taken offence at his words, proceeded to say, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing,” he meant that it was not his flesh in itself, the approaching death of which sounded so harsh to their ears, which was really life-giving; it was “the Spirit,” which he would bestow upon his people after his resurrection, that would quicken them indeed.\* The words that the Saviour spoke unto them were verily “spirit and life,” they were the incorruptible seeds whereby, by the power of the Holy Spirit, they should be born again (1 Pet. i. 23). By virtue of that birth from heaven believers are enabled to understand the mystery of Christ's precious death and passion, are enabled to know that their sin is thereby pardoned, and to comprehend the wondrous power of Christ's resurrection-life whereby the Lord Jesus unites his people with himself, and makes them members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

\* See Dean Alford's remarks in loco.

## CHAPTER X.

THE SONSHIP OF BELIEVERS—THE SCRIPTURAL  
DOCTRINE OF CONVERSION—WHAT IT IS—  
CONVERSION AND REGENERATION—THE NEW  
BIRTH.

HOLY SCRIPTURE declares, in language which cannot be glossed over or explained away, that man is by nature full of sin and iniquity. "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one," (Ps. xiv. 1-3, so Rom. iii. 9-18). "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John v. 19). "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we do all fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isa. lxiv. 6).

God was the life and light of man, when first man was placed a perfect creature in the garden of Eden. But the entrance of sin alienated man from the life of God (Eph. iv. 18). Therefore,

as he is now by nature, he dwells in the land of the shadow of death, over which death spreads its dark wings (Isa. ix. 2, Matt. iv. 16, Luke i. 79). Spiritual life can be obtained now only from the Lord Jesus Christ, for "he that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life," (1 John v. 12).

Hence the Lord Jesus spoke of the unconverted as of those who were dead, although they had in them the capacity of receiving life (John v. 25-6, Luke ix. 60, Matt. viii. 22). St. Paul tells us that "through the offence of one (Adam) many (the many, *οἱ πολλοί*) are dead" (Rom. v. 15); he speaks of those who, by free grace, have become "alive from the dead" (Rom. vi. 13); and, similarly, St. John mentions those who "have passed from death unto life" (1 Epist. iii. 14). St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, reminds them, in striking words, of the grace of God exhibited toward them; "you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he (God) quickened together with him (the Lord Jesus), having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col. ii. 13): and in like terms he addresses the Ephesians, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins," "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," (Eph. ii. 1-5). St. John warns the Church of Sardis, which was rich in profession, but poor in the exhibition of the power of religion, that it had a name that it lived, yet was dead (Rev. iii. 1), and Paul writes to Timothy to warn him that the widows who lived in

pleasure (or in luxury or wantonness) were dead while they lived (1 Tim. v. 6), *i.e.*, dead members though professedly living disciples; and, therefore, not worthy to be supported by the alms of the church. And again, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, paraphrasing the words of Isaiah (ch. lx. 1), he gives a solemn call to the unconverted: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life," (Eph. v. 14).

Man is dead, such is the testimony of Holy Writ. He is likewise spiritually said to sleep (1 Thess. v. 6, 7; Eph. v. 14.) "Dead and dormant,"\* such is the account the Bible gives of fallen man. "Dead and dormant," is this true of the soul? If what man lost by the fall is restored to him by Christ; if that part of our nature which was dead be quickened by grace, and that which was dormant be awaked out of sleep, can it be the soul itself that is so quickened and awaked? Are the intellects of believers more acute than those of unbelievers? Is mental power a necessary accompaniment of the second birth? No one will venture to reply in the affirmative when the fact cannot be gainsaid that, though the Church has perhaps her full share of genius, the world has naturally the larger portion.

No, it is not the soul that lies "dead and dormant" within the children of men; although we do not deny that the powers of the soul itself have received fearful injury by the Fall. It is man's spirit which has experienced the greatest

\* This is Mr Heard's expression in his interesting volume.

damage. If the soul has been defiled and weakened, the body corrupted, the spirit has been deadened by the Fall. Its glory has departed; the life from God is gone. It is as if a magnetic needle had lost its power of surely pointing towards the north, though it might sometimes tremblingly indicate that traces yet lingered of its original powers. The spirit in the natural man is dead, *i.e.*, it is unable to act, or even to testify with power; the voice of the Son of God alone can give it life. It is dormant in the sense that it will never arise till Christ himself awaken it, but yet it has at times in its sleeping state uneasy dreams of judgment to come, which make men start and tremble.

Conscience seems to be the remnant of the spirit in us which has survived the Fall. It witnesses but feebly for God. It gives us the consciousness of some higher power, but cannot bring us into sweet and immediate communion with God, as the unshattered spirit would have done. Had man remained unfallen, his spirit would have afforded him an intuitive sense of God's person and presence. Conscience or the shattered spirit can only feebly and uncertainly testify of God's law. Had man remained unfallen, the spirit within him would have caused man to burn with love towards all his fellow-men, and have made men understand fully their duty towards one another. But conscience in fallen man does not even discharge this lesser duty satisfactorily; it gives at best but a feeble witness respecting man's duty towards his neighbour.

Inasmuch, however, as the powers of the soul

and the affections of nature assist conscience in this its lower sphere of duty, it often happens that genial love, great natural sweetness of disposition and amiability of temper, characterise many of the children of men on the altar of whose spirits the fire from heaven has not fallen. Even, however, in these cases we shall find, upon close examination, that the standard of good and evil which is naturally followed, is much lower than that revealed in the law of God. Since the soul, by its innate powers, can discern the beauties of Scripture morality, it often happens too, with respect to moral duties, that the conscience of many who remain unregenerate, is much enlightened and strengthened by the preaching of the Word. Thus even while their spirits are destitute of real life, and they have no sweet sense of blessed communion with God, their moral and upright conduct towards their fellow-men, and the kindly nature of their social intercourse, cause them often to be favourably contrasted with many true Christians. For some Christians, although they have received the life from heaven, and have had their spirits quickened by the operation of the Holy Ghost, yet partly owing to less attractive natural qualities, and partly from a want of that mortification of sin which believers should strive to attain, do not let their light shine brightly before men, and so bring not the glory they ought to their Father in heaven.

Just as natural amiability may co-exist with a deadened spirit and with an unconverted heart, so may there also be in such persons considerable sensibility for sin. Conscience, though the spirit



be "dead and dormant," bears witness against us of sins committed or duties neglected to be done—and under a powerful preaching of the law of God even a Felix may tremble, and a Herod do many things gladly. The spirit still forms one part in the nature of the unregenerate, though its wings are broken and it is unable for flights heavenward. Though dead to the power of spiritual things, and so dead that it does not even desire the knowledge of the Most High—that is, has no real longings after God; yet amid its fearful slumber, there are moments when the spirit seems sometimes about to awake, and to burst the spell in which it is bound. Moments there are in the case of many, some of longer and some of shorter duration, moments of uneasy startings amidst sleep while some feeling of the realities of the future life, some sounds from the ocean of eternity seem to reach the ear. But as the natural man is under the government of his soul, not of his spirit, these terrors are often shaken off, Felix-like, by the command which the soul enjoins upon its troublesome monitor: "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee" (Acts xxiv. 25).

Sensibility for sin committed, or even sharp convictions for iniquity done, must not be confounded with conversion. These may, and always do, in some degree, precede conversion; but alas! conversions are not so frequent as convictions. All of the lost, no doubt, will have bitterly to lament the many times they smothered rising convictions within, and quenched that monitor which divine com-

passion had still suffered to bear some witness for truth in their hearts.

In the case of natural men, conscience and the soul often strike up an unholy agreement. Conscience witnesses that the law of God has been broken, reason pleads as an excuse the weakness of man. The law indeed is holy, and man ought to keep that law; but since man is weak and frail, reason urges that a partial obedience must be accepted for an entire. An unenlightened conscience too often accepts this plea of the soul, and palliates its sin. Blinded by self-righteousness, and stupefied by the drugs which the soul gives to the spirit to drink, conscience in the unconverted sometimes acts unfaithfully to her mission, and even is so far lost to a sense of her duty as not only to excuse, but even to stamp with approval the half-hearted service which the unregenerate man offers to God.

Scripture, which reveals the natural condition of man, sets forth as clearly the necessity of conversion. Our Lord Jesus stated expressly to his disciples: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii. 3). Peter warned the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts iii. 19). St. Paul's solemn commission, delivered to him by the risen Saviour, was couched in these words: "I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified through faith in me" (Acts xxvi. 18).

Observe the gradations here; first enlightenment, next conversion, with its blessed results, "forgiveness of sins" and "an inheritance among the sanctified," and lastly, the means whereby these results can be obtained "through faith in Christ Jesus."

St. James also speaks (chap. v. 19, 20), of the blessing of being the instrument of converting a sinner from the error of his ways, and thus saving a soul from death and covering the multitude of his sins by leading him to that Saviour whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin. Paul and Barnabas caused much joy to the Church when they related the news of "the conversion of the Gentiles" (Acts xv. 3). And the Divine influence is spoken of as often judicially restrained from hardened and impenitent sinners "lest they should be converted" (Isa. vi. 10, Matt. xiii. 15, Mark iv. 12, John xii. 40, Acts xxviii. 17).

Conversion is not the turning round of the same man to another course and into a different channel, but the formation of a new man, the giving of a new nature, the imparting of a new birth, the quickening of the dead and dormant spirit. The turning of the mind towards God might have been a sufficient description of conversion under the Old Testament dispensation, it is only half the truth under the New Testament,—true, indeed, in a great measure, but not sufficiently expressive of the great change which passes on all those who come unto Jesus.

This change is called "a quickening." Those that are dead in sins hear the voice of the Son of God and live (John v. 25). The deadened, or

“dead and dormant” spirit is quickened by a new life, the fire from heaven lights up the cold altar in man’s heart. When the sinner lies cast out in the open field, polluted in his own blood, to the loathing of his person, the Lord Jesus as He passes by exclaims, “Live” (Ezek. xvi. 6), and as He is “the Resurrection and the Life, he that believes in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (John xi. 25). The life of the spirit is restored in conversion, and though it be at first only a germ, yet it gives at times the certain consciousness of God’s presence, “that he is,” and the assured conviction that “he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. xi. 6). The life which had died out in Adam is rekindled in the spirit by the operation of the Holy Ghost. We are “quickened together with Christ” (Eph. ii. 5), being dead in sins, and the uncircumcision of our flesh, we are by God’s grace quickened together with Christ, God having freely forgiven us all trespasses (Col. ii. 13). Without that quickening of our spirits, we could not receive the things of God; with living spirits we are enabled to glorify God.

Conversion is said to be a change of nature produced by a new creation. “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Eph. ii. 10). “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature” (Gal. vi. 15). We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom. xii. 2), for “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are new” (2 Cor. v. 17). Those who are converted

“put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man (see Rom. vi. 6), which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and are renewed in the spirit of their mind, and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. iv. 22-24), or, in other words, “which is renewed after the image of him that created him” (Col. iii. 9, 10). Hence the greatness of the power exhibited by God in the conversion of sinners is compared to that power which the Father exhibited towards Christ in raising Him from the dead and setting Him at His own right hand in heavenly places (Eph. i. 19-21).

Conversion in one sense may be regarded as preceding regeneration, in another sense as identical with it. The sinner having by converting grace received a change of heart receives as the crowning grace the gift of regeneration. Conversion and regeneration can thus be distinguished from one another but not divided. The two are inseparably connected. As contrasted with regeneration, conversion is the condition or qualification of regeneration; but the grace that grants the one will work the other too.\*

Conversion implies thus a new birth. “The Father of lights” “of his own will begat us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures” (James i. 18). John in his Gospel, speaking of those who believed in Christ, says that they “were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John i. 13). It was this solemn truth that our Lord pressed upon the conscience of Nicodemus

\* See Mozley on “Baptismal Regeneration,” pp. 18, 45, 57, 58.

when he came to him by night, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3). And when the Pharisee, either conceiving that our Lord referred to a second natural birth, or pretending that he so understood his words, brought forward as an objection the impossibility of such an event, our Lord more fully expressed himself: "Verily, verily, I said unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit."

Many theologians have no doubt understood the water here mentioned to refer to the water of baptism. But, independently of all considerations respecting the nature and effect of that holy rite, we must express our conviction that our Lord's saying had no reference whatever to it.\* If the passage had such a meaning, we see no escape from the conclusion that every individual without baptism must be certainly lost, for the language used is far too precise to admit of any imaginary reserve of "uncovenanted mercies." It might be, perhaps, too much to assert that, were such its meaning, the salvation of all the baptized would be equally proven, though the passage would undoubtedly look that way. Our Lord's reply to Nicodemus (when he wonderingly asked, "How can these things be?") "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" distinctly implies that Nicodemus ought to have un-

\* See on the baptismal controversy our chap. xiv.

derstood his meaning from "the Law and the Prophets." In the Old Testament, long before baptism was instituted, and in language which cannot possibly be referred to that rite, water and the Spirit were often spoken of together, the one as the emblem of the other. Thus, Isaiah xlv. 2, 3: "Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." And even more strikingly in Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27; "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

The truth which our Lord brought before Nicodemus's mind was the great truth taught in the Prophets, the truth that is ever unwelcome to the natural man, namely, the need of inward religion, of a circumcision of heart, of a spiritual washing, of a total renovation of the entire man. That truth, however, our Lord expanded; he shewed it had a deeper meaning than Old Testament prophet or seer had dreamed of. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh,"—that is, from man corrupt and fallen, only sinful man could proceed. But by his word, and by his Spirit, the Father would beget spiritual children from among the children of men. "That which is

born of the Spirit is spirit." God is the Father of the spirits of the redeemed (Heb. xii. 9.)

We are confirmed in our view of our Lord's words by the echoes of them which meet us as we turn from the gospel of the beloved evangelist to the epistle which proceeded also from his inspired pen. It is very interesting to note how the words of the Lord Jesus recorded by the evangelist are often re-echoed, and sometimes explained, by the apostle. How the epistles of St John reflect back their light upon his gospel, and how his gospel helps to explain what is dark in his epistles.

Now, in the first Epistle of St. John we read of "the sons of God" and "the children of God," who are born of God." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth (abideth) in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (ch. iii. 9), his seed, *i.e.*, the Spirit, whereby the deadened spirit of man is quickened into life. The believer who is "born of God" cannot sin—that is, though sin may work in him, it is no longer seated on the throne of his heart. The quickened spirit grows and abides there, and hinders the development of the old sinful nature.\* He cannot live in sin, no, not though grace may abound. And again (ch. v. 1), "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him," that is, his fellow-brother in Christ. God's children love one another for Jesus' sake. And, in the fourth

\* See Alford *in loco*.



verse, "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." And, yet again (v. 18), "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself (or rather "it," the divine birth, "keepeth him,") and that the wicked one toucheth him not."

Could we have a better exposition of the sense of our Lord's words to Nicodemus than that which is afforded in this Epistle of St. John? Can we have a clearer description of those who are "born of water and of the Spirit," or, as the meaning is, "of water, even of the Spirit," than is here presented to us by "the disciple whom Jesus loved?"

With such New Testament and Old Testament phraseology to guide us, we cannot possibly coincide with those who build up a theory of the inseparable connection of regeneration with baptism on one text, namely, that in Titus iii. 5, "After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing (or rather the laver) of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." We do not deny that such a meaning might be assigned to the verse if it stood alone; but by "the laver of regeneration" can be as easily and naturally meant the laver that symbolises or teaches us of regeneration, as the laver that actually bestows it. The meaning of regeneration must be collected from other passages of Scripture, and though the precise word itself occurs but in one other place in Scripture (Matt. xix. 28), where it

refers to the regeneration of the world, yet it is unquestionably synonymous with the expressions, "born of the Spirit," "born of God," "begotten of God," and we have already seen the high sense in which those phrases are employed.

The new birth is often accompanied with severe birth throes. The poor evasions with which conscience in the unregenerate man suffered itself to be silenced are cast away as vain delusions when the Spirit quickens the inner man. The sinner sees himself lost and ruined, and feels that he lies under the curse of God, and is justly exposed to his wrath, as one who is veritably and indeed guilty. His mouth is stopped, he pleads "guilty" before God. He does not dare to speak of his imperfect obedience; he does not venture to question the righteous requirements of God's law. But while thus fitted to receive Christ's salvation, and able to appreciate the comfort of a free justification by faith in Jesus, the overwhelming sense of sin within him often seems on the one hand to drive him from his Saviour, while, on the other, the longing for salvation makes him cast himself at the foot of the cross. Like the poor Legion of old, Satan within sometimes replies to the Saviour in the sinner's stead, "Art thou come to torment me before the time?" while the anguish of the convinced sinner's spirit manifests plainly that *he* longs for relief. The poor soul accustomed to yield to the flesh, finds it hard to submit to the spirit, and a painful contest is carried on, the soul and the flesh being corrupt, and the spirit, though quickened,

not being as yet the master-faculty in his nature, but rather like an infant seated on a throne.

The soul of fallen man is full of sin, and is a spring of corruption. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. xvii. 9.) It is even in the regenerate a fountain of evil. The same fountain cannot send forth sweet waters and bitter. But the fountain of the spirit, supplied with the water of life by the Holy Ghost indwelling in us, sends forth the sweet waters of earnest desires after holiness, which are destined to spring up unto everlasting life. The living water will at length prevail over the stagnant, and the sweet waters of the sanctuary at last heal the bitter waters, and sweeten the fountain itself from whence they proceed.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE SONSHIP OF BELIEVERS—THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THE DISTINGUISHING MARK OF THE NEW TESTAMENT—THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT—SPIRITUAL LIFE—THE NEW BIRTH A LITERAL REGENERATION OF THE SPIRIT IN MAN—ADOPTION AND REGENERATION—THE SONSHIP OF BELIEVERS A REALITY—“BRETHREN” OF CHRIST—PRACTICAL REMARKS.

THE distinguishing feature which characterises the New Testament dispensation from the Old is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church at large, and His indwelling in the hearts of the children of men. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. viii.) quotes from the Prophet Jeremiah a remarkable passage in which the old and new covenants are strikingly contrasted, the chief point of difference dwelt upon being that the teaching of the old covenant was outward, and the instrumentality of man was that chiefly employed to produce conviction and conversion, while the new covenant contained the promise of Divine teaching as contrasted with that of man, and of a total change of heart, as contrasted with a mere change of disposition.

In our Lord's comforting address to His disciples at the Passover feast and along the way to Gethsemane, He told them that the blessed Comforter, whom He would pray the Father to send to them, would not come until He had ascended to His Father, but that He would then come to abide for ever with His people. On an earlier occasion in our Lord's life, "in the last day, the great day of the feast" of tabernacles, "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." The evangelist explains our Lord's meaning: "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 37-39).

Thus clearly is the doctrine set forth, that the giving of the Holy Ghost is the peculiar blessing given to the New Testament Church. St. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians (chap. iii.) argues on this very assumption, as did Peter in the house of Cornelius. The only question is whether it is the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost which are signified, namely, the power of speaking with other tongues and of performing miracles, or the ordinary gift of the Spirit in regeneration and sanctification. It cannot, however, be the former, except so far as they occasionally, or sometimes invariably, accompanied the latter, as those gifts have long ago ceased in the Church, and are not the property of every believer. But the gift of the Comforter was to con-

tinue for ever, it must therefore be His regenerat-  
ing and sanctifying work which was referred to.

In fact believers under the Old Testament stood not only in one but in many respects in a very different position from those under the New. The gospel itself, the means of salvation, was presented to the former under dark types and figures ; while the way into the holiest is now made manifest to all believers by the blood of Jesus. The operation of the Holy Spirit was only occasional in the case of the one, it is permanent in the case of the other. No doubt the spirits of Old Testament saints were quickened, hence they were enabled to know something of the things of God, but the spirits of believers in Christ are not only quickened, but made temples of the Holy Ghost. The sonship of believers under the Old Testament was not revealed, they did not know God as their Father in the full signification which the New Testament makes manifest. They were like servants in the house of God, and had few promises of final preservation. They could not be perfected without the gift of the Spirit, without the New Testament Church (Heb. xi. 39, 40). But since they are included by the apostle in his expression, "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23), we may infer that that gift, which was not granted to them in life, was bestowed upon them in the intermediate state in which they were made the sons of God even as we are, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The multitudes who were converted by the preaching of the Baptist, and who in token of their entrance on a new course of life received baptism at his hands, seem to have consisted for the most

part of those whose intellects were convinced, and whose feelings were aroused by his word, but whose spirits were not quickened by the operation of the Holy Ghost. Their conscience being aroused under a sense of sin, they were led a little way toward Christ, and the way was prepared in their hearts for a reception of the promises of the gospel. No doubt in some cases their spirits were also lighted with fire from heaven, but though the germ of life was thus replanted within their hearts, and this could only be done by the Holy Ghost's agency, yet the full baptism of the Spirit was not given, whereby alone the awakened spirit could increase in vigour and power. It was this baptism that John taught them to look for, this baptism which with his fervent spirit he styled a "baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire," but which in milder language the Lord Jesus termed a "baptism with water and the Holy Spirit."

The disciples who were converted under our Lord's own teaching, and even the apostles whom he selected, seem to have been at first of a similar type of believers. They were intellectual believers, with the germ of life planted in some of their hearts, but they did not become spiritual till after the outpouring at Pentecost. It would be interesting to trace the change in the apostles' own feelings and opinions which was caused by that event, but this would lead us too far from our subject. What the natural man could attain to in spiritual things without the baptism of the Holy Ghost, even under the highest possible advantages, is remarkably exemplified by the life of the apostles previous to Pentecost;

the superiority of the spiritual character by their course of conduct subsequent to that period.

John the Baptist had predicted that the Christ would baptize his people with fire, and the first manifestation of the Spirit was, as it were, like flames of lambent flame which lighted on the heads not only of the apostles but of all the disciples assembled together at the Pentecostal feast. It is by no means certain that the descent of the Holy Ghost upon our Lord at his baptism was not something of the same kind. That there was a visible descent of the Spirit is plain from the narrative. It is equally clear that he descended in a bodily form from heaven, swiftly, gently, like a dove, and shed perhaps a halo of light and glory around the head of the Saviour. But, more cannot be asserted, for it is not said that the Spirit descended "in the bodily form of a dove," but "in bodily form, like a dove" (Luke iii. 22).

Just as the Spirit was poured forth on *all* the disciples at Pentecost, and not upon the apostles as distinguished from the others—a view clearly opposed to the narrative in Acts ii.—so the outpouring of the Spirit to the end of time is a common blessing bestowed on all the children of God. It is a gift given not only to pastors and teachers, but to all believers, to every one of the flock of Christ, to every member of the true Church of the Lord Jesus whose names are written in heaven (Heb. xii. 23). So that it is written, "whosoever hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his" (Rom. viii. 9), and "whosoever hath that anointing is taught of God" (1 John ii. 27).

In apostolic times wonderful powers often ac-



accompanied the giving of the Spirit, such as the ability to speak in other tongues, peculiar talent for preaching or teaching, gifts of healing and performing other miracles. These gifts, however, were not always confined to those who were true believers. Even as Balaam in Old Testament story, covetous and wicked as he was, received temporary prophetic powers, so Simon Magus in the New Testament seems to have received outward gifts of the Spirit while his "heart was not right in the sight of God," and he was even "in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity" (Acts viii.) The exhortations of St. Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xiv.) against their childish display of the gift of tongues without regard to edification, proves that such gifts were talents bestowed by the Spirit upon individuals, the use of which was in general left to the discretion of the individual himself, to be employed as any other talent in proper times and on proper occasions. These exhortations prove also that the extraordinary powers were sometimes bestowed in cases where no converting or sanctifying grace had been bestowed upon the individual. In the case of such individuals the mind received special illumination, the conscience was sharpened, though the spirit was not quickened or regenerated. In most cases, however, it is more than probable that converting grace accompanied the extraordinary powers bestowed.

The ordinary work of the blessed Spirit upon the minds of men consists, first, in enlightening the mind, convincing the heart of sin, and quickening the spirit, that it may be enabled to understand and "take fast hold of the blessed hope of everlasting

life" through Jesus Christ. There is in man by nature an impotency unto all spiritual things. "The natural (soulish, ψυχικός) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. ii. 14.) In our corrupt nature the soul inclines towards the flesh, and "the carnal mind (φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός) is enmity towards God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: "so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 7, 8.) There must be a place formed within for the reception of the Holy Spirit, and for this purpose the spirit, which by nature is "dead and dormant," is quickened into life. Conscience might indeed urge the man who felt his naturally paralysed condition, to cry: "Quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word." But the life itself must come from without, the spirit must be begotten again by the brooding over it of the Holy Dove, even as at the first creation "the Spirit of God brooded over the face of the waters." Then, and not till then, life is felt within, and the candle of the Lord is lighted in the heart, and is never suffered to be blown out again.

The first sensation of this life is often painful. The shining of the Spirit reveals the vileness of the inner man, as it was never dreamt of before. Just as the sensation of being brought back to life after having been submerged under the mighty billows of the sea, is most painful, and the pangs of returning consciousness are bitter to feel, so is the quickening of the "dead and dormant" spirit often distressing to experience. But the pain is that of vitality being restored, and while the sorrow and

the agony endure but for a night, joy in its full gushing comes in the morning.

Conscience, once thoroughly aroused and quickened by the Spirit of God, will assert its native right to rule, and though the struggle at first may be fierce and hard, yet, by the might and power given from on high, the issue of the conflict is certain. Where God's Spirit has begun this work, there he will carry it on till "the heart of stone" has been transformed into "a heart of flesh," and the sin-defiled soul has been washed in the blood of Jesus. Conscience cleansed and purified, taught by divine power to see that Jesus has atoned for transgression, and that the believer is dipped in his precious blood, and thus saved from wrath, can truly speak of "peace, peace," Jehovah Tsidkenu, the Lord is our righteousness.

We have already seen that conversion is described as a new creation, whereby a new life is given, a new birth takes place, and a new nature is formed. The question is, are these expressions to be taken literally or metaphorically? Are we to suppose that they merely indicate that those who are the subjects of such a change start on a new career, turn back from pursuing the broad and easy way which leadeth to everlasting destruction, and enter on the narrow and difficult way that leads to everlasting life? That helped and guided by the Spirit, they are enabled to persevere in the way of holiness, until at length at the end of their course on earth they receive the crown of life as their reward?

All this is no doubt quite true, but it does not express adequately the great work performed in

those that believe. If this be all, then sonship at best is only a title of honour, conferring, no doubt, dignity and privileges, but expressive of no real union between God and man. Such a view has always left evangelical theologians open to the charge of asserting that divine power is required to work in the case of believers in Christ, that which in the case of false religions is often the natural effect of superstition. That is poor devotees have called as earnestly from their hearts on their imaginary gods to assist them in peril, as sinners convinced of their danger have sought for salvation for Christ's sake.

The language of Scripture is, however, too diversified, and too plainly points in one direction, to be explained away as simply metaphorical. It is not to be wondered at when man was supposed to consist only of soul and body that the doctrine of God's fatherhood and of the believer's sonship should be looked upon as only figurative of a change in the position of man, and an alteration in his mental disposition towards God. But once let the truth be grasped in all its full reality, that man does really consist of three parts—body, soul, and spirit—and that sin has deadened the spirit, so that it is now but "dead and dormant" in the unconverted, existing, indeed, as a capacity for receiving spiritual impressions, but only evidencing its existence by the feeble accusations or excuses of conscience,—which is unable in its fallen condition to testify to God's presence, and but weakly of his law—once let this truth be rightly understood, and then we can see how literally Scripture is true when it speaks of the conversion of a sinner as a life from

the dead, as an arousing out of sleep, as the implanting of a new germ, the springing up of a new seed, from which new fruit must come, as the birth of a new man within, as, in reality, a new creation.

Scripture tells of the actual implanting of a new germ within the converted: this is distinct from the anointing of the Spirit, though it exists only by its power, 1 John ii. 27, iii. 9. "The anointing" abides in the people of God, and the divine "seed" remains within them. They are born again of water and of the Spirit. The seed planted and watered by the Spirit grows up within them, the fire kindled there by the Spirit is kept up by the oil of his grace. Their first or natural birth was of blood, of the will of the flesh, of man, and they are by virtue thereof sons of men. Their second birth, their spiritual, is "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God." They are by virtue thereof "sons of God."

In a very deep and mysterious sense the words of St James are true. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth" (James i. 18). That word conveys the divine and incorruptible seed into the inmost recesses of the inner man, for it pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit (Heb. iv. 12), and by its instrumentality we are born again (1 Pet. i. 23), and by means of its precious promises we are made partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4).

The agency of the Holy Spirit in the production of Christ's human nature was that which constituted the Lord Jesus as man the Son of God. We do not refer to his divine nature, by virtue of

which he was God from everlasting, the Eternal Son of the Father. But with reference to his other nature, the words of the angel to Mary are precise: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35).

But though thus "conceived by the Holy Ghost," the incarnation was, as we have seen, a continually growing thing. There was a fuller outpouring of the Holy Spirit at our Lord's baptism. God gave not his Spirit by measure unto him, but his humanity was not at once able to support the fulness of the Godhead, which therefore limited itself until the manhood should be enabled to bear it, and therefore it was not till the resurrection that the words were fully applicable: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

The case is similar with regard to the Lord's own people. Inasmuch as they are begotten of God by the Spirit, and born of the Spirit, they are rightly, and in a proper sense, called the sons of God—God being the father of their spirits, for their renovated spirits are heaven-born. But they receive the Spirit by measure, which Christ received without measure, and forasmuch as they have depraved souls and corrupted bodies, the bringing of these into subjection is a slow and painful work. From time to time, as they seek for it in prayer, they receive fresh baptisms of the Spirit, but not till the resurrection morning, when "the redemption of the body" shall have been accomplished, will they be, in all the fulness of the expression, "the sons of

God, being the children of their resurrection," Luke xx. 36.

Thus the work of conversion is very different from that which men usually esteem it to be. It is a wondrous change, it is a marvellous creation, it is, we might almost say, a miraculous birth. No wonder that the children of this world cannot understand the happy experience of the people of God, no wonder that they treat their joy as enthusiasm, and esteem their sorrow as melancholy. The children of the world cannot know the things of the Spirit of God no more than a blind man can understand the distinction of colours, for the unconverted want the new sense, the spiritual.

Adoption and regeneration are but the same thing viewed from different sides. Regeneration is the reception of a new birth, adoption the admission into a new family. In a sense adoption precedes regeneration. Belonging by nature to the kingdom of Satan, being like him with hearts full of enmity to God, and, therefore, termed figuratively his children; we are taken from that miserable family, regenerated, and by the second birth and its accompanying grace, received into the kingdom and family of God. The word "adoption" conveys the idea that we had [no right or title to this favour. The word "regeneration" implies that by nature we were not capable of it. We receive both the right and the capability by free grace. Faith is the appropriating means. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," Gal. iii. 26. The work and merits of the Lord Jesus form the grounds on which this grace is bestowed.

Christ has redeemed us by having been made a curse for us, that "we might receive the adoption of sons; and because we are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 5, 6. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," Rom. viii. 14-16.

It is a remarkable fact that the Lord Jesus never called his disciples by the significant name of "brethren" until after his resurrection. He did no doubt on one remarkable occasion testify that "whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. xii. 50), but his object at that time, as the context proves, was to shew that he who came for all men was not, because of any mere earthly relationships, to be considered more nearly united to those who were his kindred in the flesh than to others, but that he was equally united to all who were connected with him by faith.

Very different in signification were those Easter messages which the Lord sent to his disciples, first, by Mary Magdalene, and then also by the other women: "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God, and your God," (John xx. 17), "Be not afraid; go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me," (Matt. xxviii. 10). They seem to mark the distinction that existed between Christ and His disciples before and after His passion. The



Son of God was to endure the curse before He could make us sharers in the blessing. He was made under the law, and atoned for our sins against the law, and thus was enabled to impart to us the adoption of sons (Gal. iv. 4-6). The twenty-second Psalm reveals first to us the suffering, and then the triumphant Saviour. First, the grief that pierced through His soul while standing in our stead, and then the outburst of praise: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee," (ver. 22). He led captivity captive; overcame, by His stooping to death, him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered them who, through fear of death, and the sting of death which is sin, were subject to bondage (Heb. ii. 14). "For both he that sanctifieth," the Sanctifier, "and those that are sanctified are all of one," *i.e.*, have one Father, "for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren," (Heb. ii. 12). They are his brethren, for they are by grace of the same stock, they have the same heavenly Father, they are begotten or regenerated by the same Spirit, which they receive in measure, while He receives it without measure.

It was because of the gift which He had purchased for them, namely, the gift of the Spirit which He was then ready to bestow upon them that the Lord Jesus thus termed His people His "brethren."\* O sweet and precious words; sweet

\* Though we agree with Dr Candlish in many points, we cannot coincide with him in the novel conclusion he draws from these words, that the sonship of believers was identified by Christ with his own; and that, therefore, believers stand in substantially the same filial relation to God as that which appertains to Christ

to have proceeded from the lips of the Risen Saviour; precious because they testify that the blood of Jesus speaks of peace and pardon, and love and glory; sweet because they assure us that He who hath shed His blood for us is ready to embrace us with the arms of His mercy, and to seat us with Him on His Throne.

A word of caution is necessary here. Adam lost the living active spirit by the Fall, and was therefore only able to transmit to his posterity a deadened spirit, its vigour paralysed, its life gone. The second Adam has restored to us what was lost in Eden, being himself "a quickening spirit." But the work of restoration, though commenced here, will not be perfected till the day of Christ. The power of transmission, once lost, has never been restored. No believer can be the head of a spiritual seed, as Adam might have been had he continued sinless. As the natural life flows to all human individuals from the first Adam, the spiritual life must be derived directly from the second Adam. No one is born spiritual "by blood, or by the will of the flesh, but of God." Our tapers must all be lighted

as the Son of God. Startling as this view may appear in words, it is not so very repulsive when its meaning is understood. In some of his criticisms on this theory, Professor Crawford seems to have the best of it, and, in this text, we agree with him that our Lord's words imply rather a *distinction* between His Sonship and that of His disciples, than an *identification* of them with one another. The words, however, in our opinion, convey both ideas. That is, so far forth as Christ's humanity is considered, the sonship of believers may be considered as identical except *in degree* (the formation of His human body being, of course, altogether peculiar); so far forth as His divinity is concerned His Sonship is altogether different. In that character or relation He is "the Only-begotten Son."

direct from the Fountain of Light in heaven. The well of living water in each of our hearts must be originated directly by the Holy Spirit's energy. The germ of the spirit implanted is also too weak to abide in life alone. Sin, which has its lurking place even in the heart of the regenerate, would extinguish the spark ignited from heaven were it not that, along with "the seed" that abides in the heart, "the anointing" of the Spirit abides there too. And that blessed indwelling, commenced on earth, shall be continued through eternity, ever preserving us from falling, and constituting us for ever, living temples of the living God.

If, then, we are "brethren" of Jesus, and sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, we must love those who are connected with us, by sharing in the same redemption, and being made partakers of the same spirit (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13). "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (1 John iv. 7). We should be "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, shining like lights in the world, and holding forth" to others "the word of life" (Phil. ii. 15, 16). Conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus (Rom. viii. 29), walking in love, as Christ also loved us (Eph. v. 2), we must not only love one another, but love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them who hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us (Matt. v. 44-48). We must, as far as in us lies, be peacemakers (Matt. v. 9). We ought to have a child-like con-

fidence in God that He careth for us (Matt. vi. 25, 26), and to go with boldness to the throne of grace, knowing that if we, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto our children, how much more shall our Father which is in heaven give good things, the Holy Spirit, to them that ask Him (Matt. vii. 11, Luke xi. 13).

Poor trembling sinner, be not discouraged at the greatness of the work which must be performed in you before you can be called the child of God. God hath given you an understanding that you may know your state; God hath given you His holy Word that it may reveal to you your ruin, and point out to you the way of salvation. You cannot of yourselves do anything, but you can ask for the Spirit, you can beseech the Father to draw you to Jesus, you can beseech that faith may be implanted in you, that your sins may be pardoned for Jesus Christ's sake, and that you, though now an outcast, may be admitted into a Father's home, and received to a Father's arms. Christ came to seek you, to seek those that are lost, "to gather together in one" home, and one fold "the children of God now scattered abroad" (John xi. 52). If you are lost, Christ came to seek you; if you are a sinner: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). Make no vain excuses, make no useless delays, poor sinner, arise and come, and the Father with outstretched arms will meet you and welcome you to His heart and home.

## CHAPTER XII.

THE SONSHIP OF BELIEVERS—ITS CONNECTION WITH THE RESURRECTION—DIFFICULTIES OF THE RESURRECTION—THE RESURRECTION BODY LIKE THOSE OF ANGELS—AND THAT OF OUR LORD—THEIR PECULIARITIES REVIEWED.

THUS have we seen that the great work of conversion is described in Sacred Scripture in many ways, all tending to show that by it a new birth is granted, and a new creation wrought within. Those who are converted by Divine grace become the sons of God. The sonship with which they are gifted by free grace is not a mere metaphorical or moral sonship, but a real or physical one. For by the new birth from above the dormant spirit is awakened, and the dead spirit quickened. The deadened spirit is energised into action by a new inbreathing and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This anointing of the Spirit abides in the children of God, and by its power the divine seed, the seed of immortality, remains ever growing and increasing within the believers in Jesus.

Before treating of the high and precious privileges which pertain to the sons of the living God, we must consider the connection of sonship with the

resurrection. What believers are by God's grace given in this world is only the germ, or seed, of immortality. The spirit is not powerful enough to gain the perfect mastery over the soul in this life, nor is it able to mould the body completely to its will until the resurrection morning.

That there is a deep connection of the believers' sonship with the resurrection might, apart from express testimonies of the Bible, be inferred from the sonship of our blessed Lord. For He is not only the Saviour of His people, but in all things connected with His humanity their great Exemplar. And we have seen that although He was the Son of God by virtue of His conception by the Holy Ghost, yet that in their highest sense the prophetic words of the Psalmist: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee," did not receive their full accomplishment until His resurrection from the dead, when He was declared to be the Son of God with power.

But we are not left to mere inference in this matter. Our Lord's own words are very precise: "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead. . . are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke xx. 35, 36.) And St. Paul, in Rom. viii. 23, speaks of those who had received the outpouring of the Spirit, by which their spirits were vivified, still groaning within themselves, "waiting for the adoption," or "awaiting the fulness of the adoption," "the redemption of the body," *i.e.*, the resurrection by which the body itself will be delivered from sin and corruption.

Similarly, in 2 Cor. v. 1, he expresses himself thus: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle," or "our earthly tabernacle-dwelling," were dissolved, we have in the heavens a building from God (pure from God's hand), a house not made with hands, eternal." Death, though to him a blessing, for to him "to die was gain," (Phil. i. 21) was not the ultimate object of his desire. His longing was to "attain unto the resurrection from the dead" (Phil. iii. 11), and thus he desires not so much to be "unclothed as to be clothed upon" with his spiritual body, which he should receive from heaven, or from God himself.\* And again, in 1 Cor. xv. 49, in reference to the resurrection, St. Paul further informs us that "as we have borne the image of the earthy," the earthy Adam, *i.e.*, in our mortal bodies, "we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," *i.e.*, in our new glorified bodies we shall be like Christ.

The resurrection will be necessary to complete our happiness. The teaching in the intermediate state will no doubt impart gladness to the heart,† and the sweet resting in the arms of Jesus prepare us for the glorious work of serving him throughout eternity. But not till the resurrection morning, when we shall be like our Saviour in body as well as in soul and spirit, will our happiness be complete, nor till then, in the fullest sense, shall our cup of joy run over.

Now we shall not discuss the necessity of Christ's resurrection for the completion of the work which

\* See Alford *in loco*.

† See Appendix, No. II.

he had undertaken to perform—a truth which the apostle so clearly points out in 1 Corinthians xv. We have at present rather to do with his resurrection, as the type, prefiguration, and pledge of the resurrection of his people.

It has been asserted that to attempt to explain the nature of our resurrection body by a reference to the peculiarities which marked the resurrection body of our Lord, is only to explain what is obscure by that which is still more so. In a certain sense this is no doubt true. For the same identical particles which formed our Lord's unglorified body were raised from the dead, transformed and spiritualised, and composed his resurrection body. In so far as this was the case, our Lord's resurrection body may be considered to have more analogies with the bodies of those saints who shall be alive at our Lord's second coming. Changed, transformed, and quickened with another life, the living saints, as well as those who shall be raised, shall shine forth in the kingdom of the Father.

There is a plain and obvious reason why our Lord's resurrection body was raised entire. He had "done no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth," and therefore no part of his body was to see corruption, save and except that blood which was poured out for sinners. We have shown before that Christ's resurrection was bloodless, and that he spoke of himself as having only "flesh and bones." At present our flesh and bones are permeated with blood-vessels, and derive their support from them. But we cannot argue that what is essential now will be equally essential hereafter. Matter



can be so transformed as to possess very different properties, according to its various combinations; and God, who could transform dust of the earth into human flesh and blood and bones, can as easily transform "flesh and bones" into the "spiritual body," which is spoken of by St. Paul.

The whole arguments of scepticism against the resurrection are based upon the assumption that what is true with regard to man's present body must equally hold good in reference to the resurrection body. But we have no analogy whatever to guide us as to the nature of the resurrection body, except what we may gather from the gospel narratives about the glorified body of Christ. Because our present bodies cannot live and move without blood, it cannot fairly be argued that our resurrection bodies cannot exist without the same material. Just as well might we argue that because we now require food to support our bodies, we shall continue to need it in a future state. The arguments which might be adduced against a bloodless resurrection body would, if they prove anything, equally prove that it could not exist without food. We are content to abide by the statements of Scripture, that "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," alongside of the other declaration of our Lord after his resurrection, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have."

Some make a distinction between "the flesh" and "the body," and while they admit the resurrection of the latter, would deny the resurrection of the former. They consider it easier to view the spiritual body as springing out of the spirit-soul of

the intermediate state—as the butterfly out of the chrysalis—rather than as arising from the flesh which we lay in the grave. St Paul, we think, teaches otherwise. For while he most distinctly steers clear of the mediæval error, which still lingers on in some quarters, that all the limbs and members of each body, however scattered they may be, shall then come together again like the bones in Ezekiel's vision: he with equal clearness asserts that from these present bodies of sin and death, which the saints are now encompassed with, shall be formed the glorious and incorruptible bodies wherewith they shall enter heaven.

Thus, when he replies to the objections then raised against the resurrection (which were drawn from the notion of the resurrection of all the several atoms), he does so in words which distinctly infer a resurrection out of the body which is laid in the grave. For he compares it to seed: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest thou sowest not that body that shall be but bare grain. . . . It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption" (1 Cor. xv. 36, 37, 42). In the wheat plant many of the same particles of matter which were in the seed-grain do reappear; and so, if the analogy is correct, must the spiritual body be formed out of some of the particles of the fleshly body, and thus be the same body in one sense, though with very different properties. That some, at least, of the particles should be identical, we think, is required to preserve its continuity. A mere transformation of the disembodied spirit-soul into a new and more glorious form could scarcely with any justice be called a

resurrection. We therefore cannot agree with Dr Hitchcock's statement, that "it is not necessary that the resurrection body should contain a single particle of the body laid in the grave; if it only contain particles of the same kind, united in the same proportion, and the compound be made to assume the same form and structure as the natural body."\* We equally object to the second part of the statement that the resurrection body should contain "particles of the same kind united in the same proportion," as this would imply that the body would possess the same properties as before, which is contrary to St Paul's teaching. The resurrection body, formed out of some of the particles of the former body, will have very different properties, though it will assume the same form, glorified and beautified.

For we do not rest the resurrection of the body on "the fancied indestructibility of any particle of matter," nor do we suppose that there is "in every human body a material germ, analogous to the material germ in a grain of wheat, so small as to elude the search of the most skilful anatomist," which is "absolutely indestructible."† All we plead for is that, according to Scripture, the resurrection or spiritual body is formed, by the creative power of God, out of some of the particles of our present body.

There are, at present, in man's bodily frame,

\* Hitchcock, "The Resurrection of Spring," p. 26, quoted from Heard, p. 231.

† Faber in his "Many Mansions," § ii. chap. iii.

both nutritive and sentient organs. The distinction between animals and plants is that while there is a nutritive system in the latter somewhat analogous to the former, there is no trace of any nervous system whatever. "The advance from the plant to the animal is seen in this, that in the one the organs of nutrition make up the whole of its life, in the other they make up only a part."\* The distinction between animal and spiritual life is just this, that the nutritive life (under which are included the powers of assimilation and reproduction) forms a necessary part of the former, while the sensitive only appertains to the latter.

Now, we conceive such will be one of the charges which will characterise the resurrection bodies of the righteous. At present, our nervous system "has its roots in the flesh, and not only serves the flesh, but is nourished by it."† The correctness of our thoughts is often dependent on the state of our frame. The brain must be properly supplied with blood, if the train of thought is to be clear. But, in some way or other, this will not be the case hereafter. Then we shall be rid of those feelings and desires which now often distract the mind. It is probable that we shall have no need of the nutritive system, for we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, we shall neither marry nor be given in marriage. But our senses shall be intensified. We shall see the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, we shall hear the

\* Heard's "Tripartite Nature of Man," p. 293.

† Heard, p. 324.

songs of the angels, we shall sing the new song of the redeemed. Our hands will handle the harps of melody, and our lips send forth the praises of our God and King for evermore. Our understandings will be enlarged, our emotions of love and gratitude deepened.

The Lord Jesus has Himself taught us that when we shall have become to the full extent "the children of God being the children of the resurrection," we shall be "equal unto the angels (*ισάγγελοι*)," Luke xx. 36, or "as the angels (*ὡς ἄγγελοι*) in heaven," Mark xii. 25. It is worth while, therefore, to note the properties which Holy Scripture reveals to us as appertaining to the material bodies of angels. For Scripture reveals to us that God alone is pure spirit, and that all created spirits are clothed with more or less dense material bodies. The notion that angels merely assumed bodies for the special occasions on which they appeared, which bodies were dropped after the necessity for their being assumed was over, deserves to be put on a par with the Sadducean gloss that the angels, which are narrated in Scripture to have appeared from time to time, were only a sort of speaking machines produced specially for these several occasions.

The bodies of angels were sometimes invested with ineffable splendour. Such an appearance was that of the mighty angel who descended from heaven on the morning of our Lord's Resurrection. "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow," (Matt. xxviii. 3). Something similar, though not so splendid, was the appearance of the two angels "in shining garments" (Luke xxiv.

4) to the women on that Easter morning, and of the two who addressed the gazing disciples on the occasion of our Lord's ascension (Acts i. 10).

Angels could, however, divest themselves of this glory when the missions they were sent on required it. The angels who came to Sodom appeared as simply ordinary men, as did the angel at first who appeared to Manoah and his wife (Judges xiii. 6, 8, 16), though even in his countenance there was something which was unearthly (verse 6).

Their bodies, though at times tangible and possessed of solidity, possessed the power of becoming invisible as well as visible, or even of being at the same time visible to some and invisible to others. This was the case with the angel of the Lord who withstood Balaam on the way, with the hosts of angels that encircled Elisha, with the angel that attended Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace, who seems to be only seen by Nebuchadnezzar and not by his courtiers.

Possessed of this power of "alternating rarefaction and solidity,"\* the angel that rescued Peter from prison passed himself without obstruction through the prison doors, which he opened for the apostle when he led him out of the prison (Acts xii).

Angels seem also to have the power of rapid locomotion, moving quickly from place to place, and our Lord Jesus tells us that "as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall the coming of the Son of Man

\* Faber's "Many Mansions of the House of the Father."

be" (Matt. xxiv. 27), when He "shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels" (Matt. xvi. 27).

Angels, though not needing food to support their bodies, were capable of partaking of meat; as the angels did in Lot's house (Gen. xix. 3).

If the saints are therefore to be in their resurrection state "similar to the angels," and "equal to the angels," we might infer that these several properties will appertain to the spiritual bodies which they shall be then gifted with.

But we have still more direct proof. St. Paul, speaking of our resurrection body, says emphatically that "as we have borne the image of the earthy (the first Adam, who was 'of the earth, earthy,') we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. xv. 49), and in still more unmistakable language, in Phil. iii. 21, he informs us that the Lord Jesus "shall change (or transform) our vile body (or, perhaps, rather with Dean Alford, 'the body of our humiliation,' *i.e.*, this body in which our humiliation has been shown), that it may be fashioned (or 'conformed to,' *σὺμμορφον*) like unto His glorious body, (or 'the body of His glory') according to the working whereby He is able to subdue (or to subject) all things to Himself." And again St. John writes: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1st Epistle iii. 2).

Now the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus had an ineffable glory of its own. We may go to

the history of the transfiguration to see it pre-figured, or we may turn to the first chapter of the book of the Revelation to see it more fully described.

Just so as the saints are to be like Him shall "they that be wise shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3).

Our Lord could divest Himself of this glory, and in all His ordinary appearances during the forty days of His sojourn on earth after His resurrection, He showed Himself as an ordinary man.

If we, therefore, are to be like Jesus in our bodies, we shall also be capable of divesting our spiritual bodies of their proper glory should any occasion require our so doing.

Our Lord's resurrection body though at His pleasure tangible, and like in its main features, when divested of its glory, to that in which He appeared before, yet possessed the power of becoming invisible, and of reducing itself at will to such a degree of tenuity that He could appear in the midst of His disciples when the doors were shut without opening them (Luke xxiv. 31-36, John xx. 19).

Our resurrection bodies, if they are to be fashioned like unto his glorious body, and to possess its properties, shall have the like powers of "varied consolidation and attenuation."\*

Our Lord's resurrection body possessed, also,

\* This is Faber's expression.



powers of rapidity, and of moving quickly from place to place, and though it needed not food to support its frame, yet on one occasion he partook of food to prove the verity of his corporeal resurrection (Luke xxiv. 42, 43.) It, too, had a special peculiarity which we need not suppose to be true in our case (for there was a special reason for it in his, which does not exist in ours), namely, it bore the traces of its former condition, the marks of the nails which had been driven through his sacred hands and feet, and the gash which the soldier had inflicted in his side. In the midst of the throne there shall ever stand "the Lamb as it had been slain," and the marks of eternal love shall endure throughout the ages, to call forth fresh outbursts of praise from the redeemed, and to arouse continual songs of glory in the house of the Father.

Behold, then, some of the glories of the believer's sonship, some of the "glory that waiteth for us in Emmanuel's land." Redeemed by Christ, washed in his blood, sanctified by his Spirit, quickened by his grace, born again as to our spirits, and made sons of God, we shall yet be masters over our souls and bodies, we shall be like Christ, and we shall be with him.

Trump of the Archangel, Trump of God, awakening voice of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life, what glories shall attend thy call! The trumpet of Jubilee, which gladdened the heart of the poor captive, was but a faint emblem of thy greater glories. The "great trumpet that was blown" (Isaiah xxvii. 13) to call back Israel from

exile but dimly foreshadowed the blessedness that waits on thee. Sinner, when the trumpet shall sound, the Judge will be at the door, and what will become of *you*, "when the judgment shall be set and the books opened?"

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE SONSHIP OF BELIEVERS—NO SECURITY IN THE POSITION OF SUBJECTS—SONSHIP A FINAL STATE—FINAL PRESERVATION PROMISED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT APART FROM ALL THEORIES OF PREDESTINATION—PASSAGES WHICH SEEM TO TEACH OTHERWISE REVIEWED—THE PRIVILEGES OF SONSHIP.

ANGELS, though created perfect, fell away from God. Man, though formed upright, was easily overcome by the Tempter. What was the occasion of the apostasy of angels we know not, and conjecture is therefore idle; that pride was one at least of its causes may be surmised from one brief hint given us in Scripture (1 Tim. iii. 6.) Angels and man had both free will, and in both instances the precious gift was abused. They were alike in the position of subjects, and their apostasy from God is sufficient to prove that a standing such as this is in its very nature a precarious one. He who is a subject now may at some future period fall away from his allegiance and join himself to another master. What security then have we that during the eternal ages there may not again be a “falling

away" from amid the ranks of God's subjects, and that those now reconciled to him will not again be numbered with his foes? There is no security in the position of subjects, as experience has proved, but the security required appertains to the sonship with which believers (and, we may conjecture also, angels) are gifted by the sovereign grace, eternal love, and infinite wisdom of God. It may have been necessary for the universe to be taught practically the great lesson, that creatures however perfect, gifted with free will, cannot be infallibly secured from sin without the indwelling of the blessed Spirit of God, by which the creature can be gently led, without any violence done to its freedom, to yield up voluntarily its will to that of its Creator.

In other words, to secure the absolute security of the saints of the Most High (including under that designation the holy angels), they are to be placed in the position of "children of the Highest," serving God no longer merely as loving subjects, but as dutiful sons. Made partakers of the divine nature, thus escaping for ever the corruption which might be engendered by desire, bound closely by the firm bonds of love and filial reverence, the Father's name shall be ever in their foreheads, and they shall delight to do his will throughout a blessed eternity. Stripped of all dependence on themselves, and feeling, however glorified and perfect, that it is by divine power alone they are preserved sinless, pride, which was the poison which destroyed angels and men, shall be for ever excluded from entering into the hearts of the holy. Could one thought of

insecurity once enter their holy bosoms, a dark cloud would hang over the paradise of God; but God having become their Father and they his children, the confidence of their eternal preservation, and their everlasting perseverance in holiness, by the power of the Holy Ghost, shall deepen love within their happy spirits, and cause it to burst forth in joyful songs of praise to him that sits upon the throne.

Man, in consequence of the fall, is no longer by nature a son of God, nay, rather being "conceived and born in sin," he is naturally the servant of sin. Though under the lash of conscience, or under religious training, he may in outward appearance assume a different character, and even "do many things gladly;" still he is but a bondsman and a servant in the church of God. But the servant continueth not in the house for ever, he has no inheritance there, and no rights or claim to abide constantly therein. Especially if the service he renders be for the most part unwillingly performed, it will be gladly dispensed with to make place for that which is in itself a delight and a joy. "The son abideth ever" (John viii. 35). He that is made free by Christ, and has been admitted by the grace of the Eternal Son to some share in His privileges, is no longer a mere bondsman in the house of God, but a child of the promise, an heir by grace of the heavenly inheritance.

When the beloved disciple explains in his epistle the meaning of being "born again of water and of the Spirit," he is careful to note that the grace bestowed is an abiding thing, and that they who are made sons of God by the second birth are kept

from finally falling away. In harmony with the words of the Lord Jesus just quoted, "the son abideth ever," the disciple who leaned on Jesus' bosom informs us that he "that is born of God doth not commit sin," live in sin, fall away finally by sin, for God's "seed remaineth in him," and "he cannot sin," live in sin, and perish, "because he is born of God" (1 John iii. 9). The anointing of the Spirit abides in him (1 John ii. 27), and the fire kindled from heaven is, by the oil of grace that is being ever poured on it, kept alive in spite of all the efforts of Satan and the power of indwelling sin.

It is of vital importance to understand that the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (*ἀμεταμέλητα*), Rom. xi. 29. We are not made sons of God to-day, and excluded from being so to-morrow; we are not one moment heirs of the kingdom of heaven, and then again heirs of everlasting wrath. Conversion is not a work of such uncertain a nature that it can never be truly said to be performed; nor is a heaven-given salvation dependent for its accomplishment on the feeble will of man. It is true that only "those that endure unto the end shall be saved," but it is also true that a promise of such endurance is given to the people of God. It is true that we are called to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," but it is also to be remembered that "it is God that worketh in us to will, and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 12, 13). Those who by faith come to Jesus are translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. They are not only pardoned and justified, but they

receive the promise of being at last presented to the Father, as "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," but "holy and without blemish," Eph. v. 27.

We do not here purpose to discuss the promises of final preservation given to the saints under the Old Covenant, or the basis upon which they rest; nor to discuss those passages that seem to teach that such promises were conditional in their nature. While we maintain that the same consoling doctrine is to be found in Old Testament pages, we admit that it was by no means so clearly made known, as it is now in gospel times. It did not rest upon the sure basis revealed to the Church of the New Covenant, namely, the doctrine of the sonship of the saints. This comforting ground is brought to light by the gospel. We shall, therefore, only refer to such Old Testament passages as contain predictions of New Testament times.

Moses, speaking of Israel after they should have been brought back from the dispersion, prophecies that: "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God" (Deut. xxx. 6), even as St. Paul speaks, in the 11th of Romans, of the blessed day when Israel according to the flesh shall be united with Israel according to the spirit. In the darkest days there was a "remnant according to the election of grace" to whom God's promises (such as those contained in 1 Sam. xii. 22, Ps. lxxxix. 30-37) were fulfilled, for "they were not all Israel, which were of Israel" (Rom. ix. 6). But it is to the days of the Messiah, when "the

Redeemer should come to Zion," that the promise fully belongs: "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever," Isaiah lix. 21.

Under the new covenant, as predicted in Jer. xxxi. 31-34, and applied to the Christian Church by the apostle, in Heb. viii. 7-12, there are two things promised to believers, namely, that the guilt of sin should be taken away, and the power of sin should be broken. The work of Christ was thus to be twofold, to *forgive* us our sins and to *cleanse* us from all iniquity, and so in both senses of the word "to destroy the works of the devil" (1 John iii. 8). It is therefore said that he "redeems us from our vain conversation" (2 Peter i. 18, 19), that by his death "our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. vi. 6). And it is in view of this twofold work of Christ that St. Paul gives us the assurance (1 Cor. i. 8, 9), that God "shall also confirm" his people "unto the end, that they may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ," adducing as a reason "God is faithful, by whom we are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." Similarly, St. Jude (ver. 24) commends believers "unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." And St. Paul, writing to the Thessa-



lonians, prays "that the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," adding the significant words, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. v. 23).

Now to say that all these are conditional promises, made on the assumption that believers will continue faithful, is to make the language simply a tautology. Such passages plainly prove not that in the covenant of grace we can be saved without holiness, but that Christ has not only saved us but that he will also give his Holy Spirit to enable us to live holily, and to bring forth the fruits of righteousness.

These passages point out to us that the position of those who become truly the Lord's people is one of security. Many may call themselves by that name when they have neither lot nor part in the matter. There have been, and ever will be, self-deceivers. But this does not alter the position of those who have been really drawn by the Spirit unto Christ; although it does afford grounds for earnest and careful self-examination. The work of grace is mentioned as sure from first to last, although it is carried on with the co-operation of the believer. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," and still further, "whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. viii. 29, 30.)

Now we cannot here enter upon any discussion

about predestination. Our argument is quite independent of any theories on that subject. Some suppose that God has elected certain for salvation out of the guilty mass of mankind, who are all alike deserving of eternal condemnation, and that these are the predestinated, these the called, and these the justified. Others consider that God, foreknowing, inasmuch as he knows the end from the beginning, those who would of their own free will accept the gospel freely offered to all, is for that cause said to have foreknown, predestinated, called, justified, &c., those who should embrace the gospel offers. While others think the truth to lie at some point midway between these two views, and believe that while some are specially predestinated, in the ordinary sense of the word, and drawn by irresistible grace, others, by the operation of their own free will, under the ordinary strivings of the Holy Spirit, embrace the offers of the gospel, and ask that help from God which he denies to none who seek. But whichever theory may be the true one, the apostle here asserts that the predestinated are called, that the called are justified, and that the justified are finally glorified. In other words, that where a real work of grace has been begun, there it is carried on with power, and those who come as needy sinners to the cross, and obtain salvation there, have their spirits quickened, receive the unction from the Holy One, the blessed indwelling of God's Spirit, and are carried on from grace to grace, from one degree of holiness to another, till, in the presence of Jesus, they are perfected and glorified.

This is the great point towards which all our enquiry has been tending. We stand aloof from all theories of what is meant by predestination—we do not discuss the question whether grace at first comes unsought for, or sought for with many a tear; or whether it is irresistible or not. But we take our stand upon this point, that the quickening of the sinner's spirit, and the conversion of the sinner's heart, is a work of divine power, is a real and veritable new creation, and that those who thus become sons of God are finally kept and preserved, not by their own power, not by their own strength, but by the almighty power of God co-operating with each individual believer.

This is the precious truth which the prophet Ezekiel speaks of as the crowning blessing of Messianic times. "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them" (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27). This is that which the Lord Jesus referred to when, by the well of Samaria, he spoke thus to the Samaritan woman: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John iv. 14). This is that which he signified when "in the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth in me, as the Scrip-

ture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," which the evangelist explains: "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 38, 39; comp. also vi. 35).

It is this gift of the Spirit bestowed by the Lord Jesus, whereby guilty sinners become the sons of God, and by which they are made "holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. i. 5, 6). The means whereby they become so is stated (in 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14) to be the calling by the gospel, justification by "belief of the truth," and "sanctification by the Spirit." Those that are thus drawn, God will never "leave nor forsake" (Heb. xiii. 5). They are assured of "the hope of the eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus i. 2). And though they are admonished to take heed lest they fall, and are exposed to dangers from without and within, yet they are assured: "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. x. 13). And hence the apostle argues, from the immutability of God's counsel "unto the heirs of promise," that "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Heb. v. 17, 18).

Hence the apostle reminds the Corinthians that "all the promises of God in Christ Jesus are yea,

and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts," 2 Cor. i. 20-23. This sealing is an additional gift of the Spirit, whereby believers are marked as the Lord's own, and are assured of God's love towards them. So the apostle writes to the Ephesians: "After that ye believed ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession" (Eph. i. 13).\*

Is the Lord Jesus presented to us in the character of a Shepherd, how striking the contrast between his character and that of the hireling shepherds portrayed in Ezek. xxxiv. 4, who did not strengthen the diseased, or heal the sick, or bind up the broken, or seek the lost? He is come to seek and to save the lost, his people shall not want for his care, "for he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young" (Isaiah xl. 11). He does not lack in tenderness, "for in that himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. ii. 18). He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. iv. 15). He has power, for "he is able to save to the uttermost," Heb. vii. 25. He hath promised to keep his people: "My sheep hear

\* See Mozley's remarks (in his treatise on "Baptismal Regeneration," pp. 29-31) on the Biblical meaning of "sealing" as contrasted with the sense assigned to the phrase by the schoolmen.

my voice, and I know them, and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life : and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand," John x. 27, 28. If then our Saviour "want neither care nor tenderness, wisdom nor watchfulness, love nor ability, will nor faithfulness, how comes it to pass that they miscarry and fall away into ruin whom he hath undertaken to keep? David durst fight with a lion and a bear in the defence of his lambs, and Jacob endured heat and cold upon the account of faithfulness ; and shall we think that the Shepherd of Israel, from whose being so the Psalmist concludes he shall want nothing, Ps. xxiii. 1, who did not only fight for his flock, but laid down his life for them, will be less careful of his Father's sheep, his own sheep, which are required also at his hand, for his Father knows them and calls them all by name?"\*

There are, however, several passages of the New Testament which have been adduced against this doctrine of God's preservation of the saints, which we have been endeavouring to prove. We can here consider only the most important. St Paul (in 1 Cor. ix. 29) uses the expression, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." But that Paul laboured earnestly that he might not be a castaway is no argument to prove that he was uncertain of the result of his labour. His strongly expressed

\* Owen on "The Doctrine of the Saints' Perseverance," chap. iii., Works, vol. xi. p. 192, Goold's edition.

assurance, in 2 Tim. iv. 18, proves the very reverse. The apostle might well strive to stir up the apathetic Corinthians to the necessity of an earnest struggle for salvation by the consideration he here adduces, which is the same as that urged by St Peter, that "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear" (1 Pet. iv. 18). The same apostle could at other times break forth into such rapt expressions of assurance as (Rom. viii. 38, 39), "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The most important passage adduced on this side of the question is that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, (or rather, "and have fallen away,") to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

The simplest explanation of this passage is to consider it to refer to those who were intellectually enlightened in gospel truths, were baptized and received the heavenly gift, being made partakers of the Holy Ghost by obtaining some gift, as that of tongues, or prophecy, or healing, and who had experienced the comfort of God's word, and by the wonderful gifts of which they were made sharers,

had become aware of the powers of the world to come (a designation of Christian times, comp. ch. ii. 5), but who, with all these outward advantages, had never been regenerated, and made sons of God by adoption and grace. If such, says the apostle, were to fall away into open, downright apostasy (not merely into temporary sin) it would be found impossible to renew them again unto repentance, and bring them back again to that state of outward and visible fellowship with the church of God in which they might look for true conversion unto life.

Thus it is not of ordinary apostates the apostle speaks, but of those who enjoyed extraordinary privileges—not to be enjoyed in our day—who had received extraordinary gifts, and who had only to blame themselves if they did not receive converting grace because they did not ask for it from God, or if they did ask did not seek it aright (James iv. 3) by earnest prayer.

It has been well remarked that in all the full descriptions given of these persons there is no mention whatever made of their having had faith, nor are they said to have been called, to have been justified, or sanctified, or born again, or made sons of God by adoption.\* Though it was no shallow taste they had received of gospel truths, but on the contrary a full sense of their power and reality, yet from one cause or other they had remained at a stand-still, and had never had their spirits quickened from above. Hence their awful fall on the one hand, and the impossibility of their recovery on the other.

\* Owen on The Epistle to the Hebrews, *in loco*.



Our Lord's words in Matt. vii. 23, are confirmatory of this view, where he tells us that with truth he will profess to many apparent workers at the last day, "I never knew you."

Hebrews x. 26-29 is often cited as a parallel. But it is not so in reality. "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, &c." Dean Alford's explanation of the text is most satisfactory. He notices that the present tense (*ἀμαρτανόντων ἡμῶν*) signifies "'if we be found wilfully sinning,' not 'if we have wilfully sinned' at that day," that is, the day of the Lord, to which reference is made as it will be the settling-day for eternity. "It is not of any act or of any number of acts of sin, that the writer is speaking, which might be repented of and blotted out; but of a *state* of sin, in which a man is found when that day shall come." The man that is found then abiding in sin will remain for ever without salvation.

2 Peter ii. 20, 21, is also supposed by some to teach the possibility of the saints' final apostasy. The passage runs thus: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

Now mark the description of these unhappy individuals. They were enlightened as to the evil

of sin, they parted from the grosser defilements, the pollutions (*τὰ μiasματα*) of the world, they were outwardly reformed, but they had no inward change, hence when temptations fierce assailed them, they fell, for they were not grounded on the rock. Their reformation had been without the work of the Spirit (Luke xi. 24-26), "their last state," therefore, when they fall away from their outward reformation, "is worse than their first."

Contrast with this the description given in the same epistle (chap. i. 3, 4) of the truly converted, those whose reformation is the work of divine power (Luke xi. 21, 22). They are described as having "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," they are made partakers of a divine nature, the old man, the body of sin is crucified. To them is given "all things belonging to life and godliness," "that is, all inward principles, seeds, powers, and abilities of godliness, and a spiritual life, and those as the roots and habits of all things made natural." \*

Thus have we seen that sonship supposes perseverance in well doing, that sonship has the promise of final preservation. The Good Shepherd will keep his sheep, the Father will preserve his children, the Holy Spirit will train up to a perfect knowledge of Christ those whom he takes into his school. The divine fire kindled within will be fed and kept alive. It may be well-nigh extinguished by the floods of sin, but a little spark of grace will

\* See Goodwin's "Work of the Holy Ghost in our Salvation," Book vii. chap. i. p. 326, Nichol's edition.

be kept ignited in the spirits of those who have been once regenerated, born again, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And does such a doctrine conduce to a careless walking, to doing evil, and a daring presumption in sin? Not so. Let those that live carelessly, that dwell in sin, be horribly afraid lest their thoughts of their own condition be but fond imaginations and deceptions of their hearts, which are "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." St Paul declares the fitting result which the knowledge of the blessings should produce: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1.

Sonship does not only confer a blessed security on those who by free grace are received into the family of God, but also a right and title to a glorious inheritance. The righteous shall shine forth in the kingdom of the Father (Matt. xiii. 43). "They which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 17). "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17). "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. iii. 29). Ye are no longer servants, but sons, and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ (Gal. iv. 7, Eph. iii. 6).

The very name "heir" implies in itself the cer-

tainty of the obtaining of the heavenly inheritance. An heir to an estate is one who not only *may* but *must* succeed to it;—that is, he is not only presumptive but apparent. The Lord's people are called "heirs of salvation" (Heb. i. 14), "heirs of the kingdom" (James ii. 5), "heirs of the grace of life" (2 Pet. ii. 7), as possessing already, through the merits of Jesus, the right to everlasting salvation, and of a title to possess the kingdom which had been prepared for them. "Heirs of the kingdom," and heirs of the throne (Rev. iii. 21), all things belong to such, "the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23).

We have seen before that sonship also implies a participation of the divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4), a being made partakers of God's holiness (Heb. xii. 10). These are strong expressions, but they are Biblical. Christ became man that he might make man divine.\* Earth rebelled against heaven, but heaven has been brought down to earth, that earth might be made one with heaven.

If we are sons of the Most High God then are

\* " 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.' That is to say, that which is born of the Divine Spirit is itself Divine, by reason of its birth, which communicates to that which is begotten the nature of that which begets. Thus the Fathers speak of the Christian as being 'made a God,' and receiving a 'perfect deity' in baptism; evidently on the ground that regeneration, which takes place in baptism, is a birth from God, and that the offspring has a common nature with the parent."—*Mozley on Baptismal Regeneration*, p. 8.

we enabled to look upon all trials sent us as sent in love. They may perhaps take the form of punishment for some sin committed, but they are not punitive in the strictest sense of the word, and with reference to them we might exclaim in the words of the prophet: "O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction" (Habb. i. 12). They are punitive only in the sense of chastisement or chastening: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" Heb. xii. 5-7. Trials are often sent to "purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord" (Mal. iii. 3) "the sacrifice of praise continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name" (Heb. xiii. 15).

These then are the privileges, these the rights of sonship. To maintain a universal fatherhood on God's part, and therefore a universal sonship on the part of man, is to sweep away the boundary that separates right from wrong, evil from good, holiness from wickedness, and sin from righteousness. It is to break down the wall that surrounds the fold of Christ and protects his sheep and lambs. It is to confound the Church with the world; or to make the one to be separated from the other by a mere imaginary line, instead of being surrounded and encircled by the ocean of God's love. We

dare not act so. There are distinctions which God has drawn, limits and boundaries which God has set. If the man was cursed in ancient days, who removed his neighbour's land-mark, shall we not fear by the proclamation of an universal fatherhood to attempt to break down the bulwarks with which God has surrounded the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven? For if God be the Father of all, then shall all be saved, some by an easier, some by a harder path. Universal salvation is the only logical sequence of the doctrine of the universal Fatherhood, and universal salvation is not the doctrine of Holy Scripture.

There is, however, a way open for all, whereby they can pass from the waste howling wilderness without into the secure fold of the sheep of Christ. Christ is that way, Christ is the door, "the way, the truth, and life." We must be washed in his blood which was shed for the sins of the whole world, before we can join the company of the redeemed, the Church of the ransomed in glory. Jesus calls and invites the weary and heavy laden to come to him, and as the Great High Priest of his Church, he has promised to pardon all that simply believe, to welcome those who draw near to his throne of grace, and to cast out none that come unto God by him.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### BAPTISMAL REGENERATION CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE SONSHIP OF BELIEVERS.

SONSHIP, as we have already shown, is a real gift bestowed on believers in regeneration. It is a new creation within, a quickening of the dead and dormant spirit, a kindling of divine fire on the altar of man's inner temple. It is not a mere change of position, the gift of a higher standing, it is the imparting of a divine nature, of a new birth, from God the Father, by the power of God the Holy Spirit, through the grace of God the Son. The privileges of sonship, as revealed in Holy Scripture, are a permanent position in the house of God, and a right to a blessed inheritance, since those that obtain this honour are made partakers of the divine nature.

We have now to consider, in conclusion, the bearing of our whole argument on the vexed question of baptismal regeneration. If regeneration be indeed the divine thing which we have proved it is, if it be no mere metaphorical expression, but a statement of a real and veritable work performed

upon the believer, whereby, as each individual is a child of man by nature (so far as his soul and body are concerned) in the same sense he becomes a child of God by the new birth, as regards his spirit; his inert and deadened spirit being quickened into life by the operation of the Holy Ghost, and that thus God becomes "the Father of our spirits" in a literal but most mysterious sense.—If it be true that Scripture describes this sonship as an abiding thing, which, though ever in danger of being lost by sin, yet is a gift retained by the almighty power of the Spirit of God, until the leaven thus put within has leavened the whole man, and the seed sown grows up to a perfect plant of holiness.—If it be true that this is a gift of God bestowed upon individuals directly from heaven; not attainable by their own power, but given to those who earnestly seek it, whether that earnest seeking proceeds entirely from the free will of individuals, or because of their special election by God (this branch of the subject being left in our argument wholly undetermined).—If these points be admitted as proved,—then it is clear that regeneration in this sense is not a necessary accompaniment of baptism; for all the baptized are not holy, are not righteous, and are not infallibly saved.

If, therefore, we choose to maintain that all persons who duly, *i.e.*, after the proper manner, receive holy baptism are regenerated thereby, and hold that it is in this sense that St. Paul has termed baptism the laver or bath of regeneration (Titus iii. 5), we must assign to the term "regeneration" a meaning differing from that which is



conveyed by the expressions, born again, born of the Spirit, born of God, quickened, sons of God, heirs of eternal life, dead unto sin, alive unto God by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now it cannot be denied that it is admissible to apply the word to the grace given, or supposed to be given, generally at baptism, distinct from all the privileges belonging to the true sons of God, provided, that in the first case, clear passages of Scripture can be adduced to show that some such grace is given to all; and secondly, that this "regeneration" be carefully distinguished from the second birth, the death unto sin, the adoption and sonship of which we have already spoken.

The grounds on which we consider that this admission, thus carefully guarded, cannot be refused, are first, that the individual word is once applied to baptism, and in the only other place where it occurs in Scripture, namely, Matt. xix. 28, it is applied not to baptism, nor to conversion, as ordinarily understood, but to the regeneration of all things at Christ's second coming; or rather, to the acknowledgment of all the sons of God with power,\* when in the highest sense the words of

\* There is a twofold regeneration, "the regeneration of the soul in this life, and that of the body in the life to come; both of which are expressly said to make us 'the sons of God,' because the one only completes and consummates the other; and in both of which we are 'the children of God, being the children of the *resurrection*,—of a resurrection which is now spiritual (risen with Christ), and which shall hereafter combine spirit and body together. And hence it is that St. Paul (Rom. viii.) makes that future resurrection 'a manifestation of the *sons of God*,' an unveiling and public recognition of their sonship;

the Psalmist might be applied to them by God, "Ye are my sons, this day have I begotten you." And secondly, because the metaphorical use of the word was not unknown to heathen writers, inasmuch as Cicero termed his restoration from exile his regeneration.\*

But we have no hesitation in expressing our conviction that such a separation of the word "regeneration" from those other terms which are obviously identical with it in signification, is, though admissible, barely so, because it is arbitrary, and quite unsupported by the analogy of Holy Writ. For though we were to admit that the statement of the apostle (1 Cor. xii. 13) might refer, if it stood alone, to all the individual members of the Church, (and not merely be used hypothetically, which we consider to be its true sense), the statement to wit, "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one spirit"—yet it is certainly not of any mere power or capacity, which may or may not be improved, but of a real death unto sin, of which the apostle speaks (in Rom. vi. 4), when he says, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life. For if we have

and hence, too, it is, that in the one supernatural gift he finds the source of both the blessings." [Rom. viii. 11.]—*Archer Butler's Sermons*, First Series, p. 68.

\* See the Charge of the late lamented Bp. of Calcutta, 1863, and Dr. Vaughan's *Revision of the Liturgy*, pp. 23, ff.

been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Nor is it of a mere power or capacity for holiness, which may be used or neglected, but of an actual state of holiness, that the same apostle speaks again (Gal. iii. 27-29): "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. . . . Ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

When persons speak of "baptismal regeneration" it is necessary to ask what meaning they assign to the term regeneration itself. Are the baptized, considered as regenerate, actually holy? or do they merely obtain in baptism a power or capacity for becoming holy? If regeneration means actual holiness, and implies that those who are the subjects of it are actually justified, then we ask simply is this a fact in the case of all the baptized? If it be supposed to signify a holiness which may be lost, a justification which may have no effect through subsequent sin, then, we ask, are not those who have lost this grace in a worse position than those who have never obtained it? nay, are not such persons in the very same position of estrangement from God with the unbaptized, as they are confessedly involved in a deeper condemnation? If regeneration means actual holiness and consequent justification, and this holiness and justification is so easily lost, and so perilous to lose, then baptism had better be de-

ferred, after the example of the renowned Constantine, until the latest moment possible of our mortal existence.\*

The appeal to facts disproves the notion that regeneration, considered as universally imparted at baptism, is identical with holiness ; and, if it were, those who, on that supposition, lost that gift by subsequent sin, would be necessarily in the same position (except as to guilt) as those who never were baptized at all.

But what if regeneration be regarded as a mere spiritual power and capacity and no more ? In that case, be it clearly understood, it does not include holiness ; it is a state consistent with the greatest wickedness, a state which may indeed be affirmed of good and bad alike. If then baptismal regeneration means that a spiritual power or capacity for becoming holy is given to all those who duly receive baptism, and present no bar to its grace ; † then why is baptism performed *only* upon the conditions of faith and repentance ; conditions which are always expressed in the case of adult baptism, and *implied* in the baptism of children ? What is the meaning of attaching conditions, if regeneration in

\* Whatever regeneration consists in, it must be the same in the case of the infant and the worthy adult recipient of the rite. It cannot be only a spiritual power and capacity in the one case, and an actual imparting of holiness in the other. We must not separate the case of the adult from that of the infant ; regeneration, whatever it may mean, is alike in both.

† We only use the phrase for argument's sake, for we do not coincide with the theory implied under this expression, as we believe it has no warrant from Holy Writ.

baptism is only the gift of assisting grace? Why is not this assisting grace given at first? Does not the sinner require assisting grace to enable him to repent and believe? Does he never receive such grace till baptism? and if he does receive assisting grace before what new grace does he receive then, which is of such inestimable value, and so different from that grace he had formerly received before, as to be justly styled a new birth from heaven?

For here let it be noted that the advocates of baptismal regeneration do not confine themselves to the language of the text in Titus iii. 5, but apply, and in this they act rightly, all the other kindred language of the Bible to the same persons whom they denominate regenerate.

But the very care that was taken in the early church to train candidates for baptism, the discipline which they underwent which “aimed at nothing short of the very strictest and holiest state of mind, as the condition of admission to that sacrament,” the fact that the rite once performed was never in any case to be repeated, all these prove that regeneration was regarded as a real and actual change, that it was a final state into which the baptized person was supposed to be ushered; an actual renovation which he was supposed to attain thereby, and not a mere power of obtaining such.

The very expression of a second birth implies that the greatest change possible takes place in the individual who is the subject thereof, for birth is never used in the Bible in this signification as contrasted with growth; it is a divine birth, or a spiritual, which is always contrasted with a human or

natural one. When our Lord speaks of one who is "born of the Spirit," He means something far higher than one who is merely indued with new capacities ; He means one who has actually become so though he may have only the beginnings of this state.

"This, then," says an eminent writer, "is the meaning of 'regeneration' in Scripture, viz., holiness, imparted indeed, but still actual and real, and not merely a capacity for it. And this meaning of actual holiness is so strongly and so clearly stamped upon the word in Scripture, that one would have thought before-hand there could be no doubt about it. St. John says, over and over again, as plainly as language can express, that whosoever is born of God sinneth not, and whosoever sins is not of, *i.e.*, born of God. And St. Paul says that the sons of God are those who are led by the Spirit of God, and addresses throughout his epistles the regenerate as dead to sin, servants to righteousness, alive unto God, and risen with Christ ; expressions which plainly involve actual goodness and holiness in those to whom they are applied, and not the mere capacity for them.

"Again : that this is the sense of the terms 'regenerate,' and 'child of God,' appears not only from the use of these terms themselves, but also from another and opposite set of epithets, based on the same metaphor of birth or sonship. If 'child of God' means only a capacity for good, then 'child of the devil' means only a capacity for evil. But is this the meaning of 'child of the devil' in Scripture ? When our Lord told the Jews that 'the

devil was their father,' did He only mean that they had a will determinable to evil? When He said that they made their proselytes tenfold more the children of hell than themselves, did He mean no more than this neutral condition? When St. Paul addressed Elymas the sorcerer, as 'thou child of the devil,' did he mean only that Elymas had free-will? So interpreting 'child of God' and 'child of the devil,' it would appear that there was not much difference between them, and that a man might almost as well be the one as the other. . . . It is evident, then, that 'child of the devil' means an actually wicked man; and if so, it follows that 'child of God' means an actually good man."\*

But there are those who admit that regeneration is a divine gift, and, on this very account, maintain, in spite of all the proofs to the contrary, that it can be nothing more than a mere power or capacity of attaining holiness. For they are unable to see how holiness can be a gift of God since it implies the co-operation of man. They therefore resort to any device whatever to get rid of that conclusion which in their eyes seems impossible to be admitted. This difficulty disappears when we bear in mind that Scripture reveals the threefold nature of man, body, soul, and spirit, and teaches that the spirit which has been deprived of its life by sin, and exists only in a deadened state in the unregenerate, is by regeneration "begotten anew;" and that this

\* Mozley's *Primitive Doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration*, pref. p. xxii. An excellent book; a portion of the argument of which we abridge here.

inbreathing of a new spirit by the operation of the Holy Spirit is that which is so clearly marked out by the various expressions, "regeneration," "a new birth," "a new life," whereby those who are by nature only children of men, become by grace "children of God."

Thus, then, we arrive at these conclusions, (1) that regeneration is a real and actual change, a final change, whereby an actual holy seed is implanted, which must, by the Spirit's power grow into a plant of holiness; and (2) that the language of Scripture forbids us to weaken the meaning of regeneration so as to make it signify only a spiritual power, or capacity of becoming good. But (3) as "baptismal regeneration" is confessedly untenable if the first signification be adopted, and as the second signification assigned is unwarranted by Scripture, the whole theory must fall to the ground.

Now we beg it here to be most distinctly marked that we do not deny that grace is conferred at baptism,\* nor do we on the other hand affirm that it is. It is totally irrelevant to our present undertaking to discuss that part of the question. We only go so far here as to deny that each individual person is necessarily made in baptism "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven;" although each baptised person may be so termed hypothetically, and if he be truly converted is so in reality.

"The rule of supposition, or of supposing men to be what they ought to be, is one of the common

\* That is so far forth as our argument here is concerned.



forms of social life.”\* It is thus that we address every one as good unless we know positively that they are bad, that we are required to treat all men as if they spoke the truth until we discover they do not, that we view all persons as honest until we find them out of the opposite character. This rule, which is acted upon in every-day life, in all polite society,—and which is such a well-known supposition that we rarely ever refer to it, much less think of qualifying our expressions by it,—is when applied to the baptismal controversy decried by a party in the Church as “dishonest,” “evasive,” and so forth.

The Old Testament abounds with language of this sort, Israel and Judah, rebellious as they were, and addressed at times in very strong denunciatory language, are often spoken of as the holy of the Lord, the objects of his tenderest love, and as “the righteous nation” (Isaiah xxvi. 2).† It may, indeed, be said that the prophet in such language does not refer to all Israel, but only to the righteous individuals in that nation. “But he does not *say* this. What he says is that the Jewish nation is holy, that the Jewish nation is righteous, and that the Jewish nation shall enter into that final state which he describes. In saying this he makes a supposition. For he represents the nation as holy, righteous, and blessed, when he knows that only certain individuals in it are so.”‡

The language of the New Testament is exactly

\* Mozley, p. 61.

† See also Deut. xxxiii. 27, 29; Is. xli. 8-10, 13, 14; xliii. 1, 2; xlv. 1, 2, 21; xlv. 4; xlix. 15, 16.

‡ Mozley, p. 80.

similar. St Paul speaks of all Christians as saints, an expression which means one who *is holy*, not one who *may* be holy, as faithful, as elect, as chosen in God, as "sanctified in Christ Jesus," as heirs of everlasting salvation, as those who in everything are enriched by God, in all utterance and in all knowledge, who come behind in no gift, but wait patiently for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. i. 5-7), as those who are dead unto sin, but alive unto righteousness (Rom. vi. 11), as children of light, not of the night nor of darkness (1 Thess. v. 5). St John speaks of them as they that need no teaching (1 John ii. 27); St Peter addresses them as those that are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 2).

It is perfectly impossible to suppose that all this language is metaphorical, and that it denotes merely that they had the power of possessing such and such privileges if they would only use it. Language has no meaning if such statements do not signify that the gifts and privileges alluded to were actually had in possession.

The meaning of this language, it has been well remarked, is one thing, its application quite another. There is no violence whatever done to it by limiting the application of its statements, that is, by considering them as spoken of all hypothetically, but as actually belonging only to a smaller number. But great violence is done to such language by attempting to explain away the terms themselves, making a "saint" to mean one who has a capacity for be-

coming holy, and viewing believers as termed children of God because they may become so.\* “If a man is a child of God because he has the power of becoming so, a man is a child of the devil for the same reason. And in that case the best men are children of the devil, as the worst are the children of God, and the same men are children of God and children of the devil too. The literal interpreters, then, of baptismal regeneration commence with this specimen of literal interpretation, distorting words, explaining away texts, and setting in motion a whole interpretative machinery, which, if generally applied, would reduce the simplest statements of Scripture from plainness to ambiguity, and from ambiguity to nonsense.” †

This is the language of Mr Mozley of Oxford, and most true it is. There are some, we are fully aware, who, not satisfied with the plain fact that, in all these statements which apply to the whole church, the apostles used the language of charity, try to make out that the epistles in general were written only to true believers. But the denunciations of gross sin in which some of the persons who were addressed lived (as in the case of the Corinthians), cannot properly be said to have been designed for the truly converted. There is no escape from the truth that all the members of the professing church of Christ are addressed in the epistles, and that the statements before referred to are made of all such hypothetically, though they belong in reality only to true believers. For the kingdom of God or the visible Church of Christ is like a net cast into the sea which gathers fishes of every kind, bad and good.

\* Mozley, pp. 84-86.

† Mozley, p. xxxiii.

The language of the Fathers with regard to baptism was a natural continuation of the hypothetical language of Scripture. They spoke of all the baptized in glowing language, but in doing so they used the language of charity. If their language was to be applied to every individual professor, then it would be plainly untrue. They maintained rightly that regeneration was true holiness, and not a mere capacity for attaining to it. But no doubt there was an occasional, and often frequent, confusion of thought, and forgetfulness of the meaning of the language employed. Thus they came to use the word regeneration in two contradictory meanings—"regeneration is contemplated [by them] as actual holiness," which is the Scriptural sense, "when the greatness of the baptismal gift is the point; it is contemplated as a capacity only, when the efficacy of baptism in conferring it is the point."\* So far forth as they speak in this way, their language is self-contradictory and inconsistent.

Many of them, however, drew the Scriptural distinction between an apparent and a real baptism. Just as St. Peter, with a reference to the ark in which Noah was saved, says: "the like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us;" and then, lest his meaning should be mistaken, adds, "not a putting away of the filth of the flesh (or a merely outward baptism), but the answer of a good conscience towards God" (1 Pet. iii. 21), so writes Jerome, "there is the baptism of water and there is the baptism of Christ." "Those who live

\* Mozley, p. lxi.

ill have an apparent baptism, but not the robe of Christ." "Shew me," says Gregory of Nyssa, "ye who boast of your regeneration and renovation, your morals changed, and prove the reality of your new state by the purity of your life. Let us have some sure proof by which we may know that you are born again; some manifest tokens by which we may distinguish the new man from the old. Before baptism a man was dissolute, avaricious, rapacious, contumacious, a liar, a calumniator; after it let him be modest, sober, contented, charitable, truthful, courteous, affable. As darkness is dispersed by light, so is the old man effaced by righteous actions. Zaccheus after his call changed his course of life; Paul was a persecutor before grace, an apostle after. Such should be regeneration; so should we abolish the inclination to sin; such should be the conversation of the sons of God, as we after grace are called. We must copy the attributes of our Father, if we would be his true and lawful sons. Our Lord says that we must bless those that hate us, and pray for those that despitefully use us and persecute us, if we would be the children of our Father which is in heaven. He says, that we become the sons of God when we imitate the goodness of God."\*

The language of our Common Prayer Book is just a natural continuation of the charitable language of the Bible. The language of charitable supposition pervades it from beginning to the end. It is that with which the child is addressed at the font, and with which the aged man is laid

\* Mozley, pp. 100-102.

in the grave. "The asserted regeneration of the whole body of the baptized in our Prayer Book is but the continuation of the asserted righteousness of the holy nation in the Old Testament, and the asserted glory of the Christian Church in the New. The assertion in our formularies is the hereditary representation of an old assertion pervading all Scripture."\* That assertion is hypothetical, the one in our Prayer Book is hypothetical too. It was therefore not objected to by the early Puritans, nor cited as offensive till the Savoy Conference, and even then objected to simply because the presumption "cannot be rationally admitted in the utmost latitude of charity."† Nor did the Bishops then deny that the term was used presumptively but in one place, admitting the presumption as admissible ground, they defend it.‡

Though, therefore, some go so far as to deny our right to remain in the United Church of England and Ireland, because we hold not with them

\* Mozley, p. 103.

† Cardwell's *Conferences on the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 308.

‡ Thus, in the Bishops' answers, they maintain that "the Church in her prayer useth no more offensive phrase than St. Paul uses, when he writes to the Corinthians, Galatians, and others, calling them in general the churches of God, sanctified in Christ Jesus, by vocation saints, amongst whom notwithstanding there were many, who, by their known sins were not properly such, yet he gives the domination to the whole from the greater part, to whom in charity it was due."—*Cardwell*, p. 342. In another part of their answer they take up the more slippery ground about the infant recipients of baptism not being able ponere obicem."—*Cardwell*, p. 356.

in this point, and others dare to impugn our honesty in continuing to use services which they assert we in heart disbelieve, we claim first of all to interpret the words of the service referred to in their plain grammatical meaning, believing firmly that that meaning is hypothetical only, and that to regard it otherwise is to use words without a full ascertainment of their meaning, and thus to make statements which are in reality contradictory.

The Judgment of the Privy Council, the Final Court of Appeal of our Church, and which we trust will remain ever such as long as our Church is established, has solemnly declared that the doctrine we have put forward "is not contrary or repugnant to the doctrine of the Church of England as by law established." In a remarkable sentence that Judgment states: "The Services abound with expressions which must be construed in a charitable and qualified sense, and cannot with any appearance of reason be taken as proofs of doctrine. Our principal attention has been given to the Baptismal Services; and those who are strongly impressed with the earnest prayers which are offered for the Divine blessing, and the grace of God, may not unreasonably suppose that the grace is not necessarily tied to the rite; but that it ought to be earnestly and devoutly prayed for, in order that it may then, or when God pleases, be present to make the rite beneficial."\*

Notwithstanding this, it is quite consistent with

\* See Brodrick and Fremantle's "Judgments of the Privy Council," p. 101.

faithful loyalty to the Church of England, to desire that words which have been made the means for keeping up an erroneous doctrine, however defensible in themselves, should be struck out of our formularies, a consummation which we most earnestly wish for with regard to those words in our Baptismal offices which have been made to teach a doctrine repugnant to our Articles and to the Word of God.

Scripture reveals to us that the grace of regeneration may be given either before, in, or after baptism. Before baptism, as in the case of Cornelius and his company, upon whom the Holy Ghost fell when they had heard the word (Acts x. 44), and who, in token of that faith and grace which they received when as yet unbaptized, were then solemnly baptized in the name of the Lord (Acts x. 47). Compare the analogous case of Abraham with regard to circumcision alluded to in Rom. iv. 11). In baptism, as in the case of Paul who seems to have received the Holy Spirit as "the spirit of adoption" in this holy rite (Acts ix. 17, 18; xxii. 16). After baptism, as is the general case when men, under awakening providences, or by the preaching of the Word, are, after having come to years of discretion, "converted unto the Lord." For it is a misuse of language tending to lead to serious mistakes to call those who are yet in their sins, not only hypothetically before we know they are unconverted, but actually when we know their state, "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven."

If it were true that regeneration, even under-



standing it as a spiritual capacity (which we have proved it is not), were necessarily conferred on all infants by baptism, and that those infants that die baptized are really safer than those who die without baptism, the example of the pious but mistaken Xavier who baptized all the heathen children he could possibly lay hold of, ought to be held up as worthy of all imitation. We pause not here to examine how different that conduct was to that of the Apostle Paul, who thanked God he had baptized none of the Corinthians (1 Cor. i. 14), lest they should imagine that he had baptized them in his own name.

But regeneration is identical with the new birth, and the gift of the second birth confers all the rights of sonship. These rights and privileges consist in obtaining a permanent position in the family of God, in being gifted with the boon of immortality, in acquiring a right and title to the heavenly inheritance. The sons of God are, by the abiding of the Spirit within them, secured from finally falling away. They are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Pet. i. 5), and at last are made partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. These blessings are not conferred on all the baptized, therefore whatever grace may be necessarily granted in baptism (and on this point we here say nothing) it is clearly not (except hypothetically) the gift of the new birth, and it only misleads to speak of baptismal regeneration; baptism being indeed "the laver of regeneration," so far as it represents, and shadows out that grace to all, which in it may occasionally be granted to some.

Here we close. The knowledge of the tripartite nature of man casts a flood of light upon many disputed points of theology. The doctrine of original sin can never be thoroughly comprehended on the dichotomist theory. But once we perceive that it is the spirit in man which has been deadened by the Fall, the truth of doctrine becomes clear. The meaning of regeneration becomes also more apparent when the "new birth" is understood not merely as a metaphorical expression, but as a literal truth with respect to the spiritual part of the believer. In connection with the outpouring of the Spirit in New Testament times, this fact shows that the doctrine of final perseverance can be upheld without any resort to theories of election. The notion of a necessary regeneration in baptism is also seen to militate against the truth of the believers' sonship, and to be indefensible, unless either the term when applied to baptism be regarded as distinct in meaning from the "new birth," or being "born again;" or that the doctrine of final perseverance be overthrown. In the latter case, since the grace of regeneration given in baptism can be lost, there is no good reason why that rite might not be administered a second time. The disputed question of the Fatherhood of God is solved by the simple distinction that God is the Creator and God of all men, but in a higher sense the Father of the spirits of the redeemed. The close relationship of the believer to Christ is better understood when the deep analogies are carefully noted between the work of the Holy Ghost on Christ and in every child of God.

# APPENDIX.

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No. I.

## THE TRIPARTITE NATURE OF MAN.

THE passages of Scripture in which the threefold nature of man is distinctly alluded to are few in number though they are conclusive on the point. The first of them is 1 Thess. v. 23, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Apostle prays here that the conversion of his converts might be complete, and might extend to all the parts of their nature and to all their faculties. Here then the spirit (*πνεῦμα*) is unmistakeably distinguished from the soul (*ψυχή*), with which it is so often loosely confounded, and the doctrine implied in the prayer is, that all the parts of man are to be sanctified to the Lord's glory. Sanctification is not to be partial, it is to be entire, and to extend to the whole man.

The next passage which may be adduced is Heb. iv. 12. It is well to consider it along with its context in verse 11 and verse 13, "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." It is simpler to understand by "the word

of God," the sword of the Spirit (Ephes. vi. 17), or Holy Scripture, than to suppose that the Lord Jesus is alluded to under that name. The sense of the whole passage is, Let us labour to attain God's rest, and to thoroughly enter into it, namely, into the rest of the Gospel dispensation, lest we come short in comprehending our privileges and blessings, as the Jews did of old. For God's word is powerful, and cuts not only through the flesh, but through the bone, entering likewise into the marrow, or the innermost parts. It reaches even to the impulses of the soul, and the thoughts and intents of the heart. It condemns the iniquity which lies deep within as well as that which manifests itself without. If we seek to attain Gospel peace, we must take cognisance of our thoughts, as well as of our actions, and if we feel that we are not "sufficient for these things," we should draw near to the throne of our great High Priest, who is willing to impart to us grace to bring us into the way of righteousness and peace, and to keep us in the same evermore.

The passage draws a clear distinction between the soul and spirit, but we do not think its meaning is to shew that Scripture alone discovers the tripleness of man's nature, and thus evidences itself to be divine. Some of Mr Heard's expressions would lead us to infer that this is the meaning which he assigns to the passage, but it is possible that he only means to assert that Scripture, by drawing the distinction between soul and spirit, assigning to the former the emotional and intellectual acts, and ascribing to the latter the function of spiritual-mindedness, reveals a philosophy which it had not entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Mr Heard cites four other passages in which "the soul" is spoken of as the "characteristic faculty of unregenerate human nature," while the activity of the spirit is spoken of as "characteristic of the regenerate."

The first of these is 1 Cor. ii. 14, "The natural (*ψυχικός*) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually (*πνευματικῶς*) discerned." That is, the man who is without grace, even though he be fully endowed with understanding, does not grasp the true realities of divine things, but he who has been regenerated by the Spirit not only comprehends but receives the things of the Spirit of God, though he may be ignorant of many other things which are of great value from an intellectual point of view.

The second is the passage in 1 Cor. xv. 45, where St Paul

asserts that "there is a natural (soulish, ψυχικόν) body, and there is a spiritual (πνευματικόν) body." There is a body whose centre is the soul (ψυχή), and there is a body whose centre is the spirit (πνεῦμα). The former is that which we inherit from the first Adam, and which has become mortal on account of his sin; the other is the body we receive from the second Adam, and will be made immortal through his righteousness. Adam being only a "living soul" (ψυχὴ ζῶσα) could transmit no more to his posterity; Christ being not only "a spirit," but a "life-giving spirit" (πνεῦμα ζωοποιόν), can impart to his "little children" the spirit which will ultimately spiritualize their bodies.

The remaining two passages are James iii. 15 and Jude 19. St James tells us that the wisdom which shews itself in bitter envying and strife is "earthly, sensual (soulish, ψυχική), devilish." Pride, which produces strife on earth, and contention even among believers, springs not from the operations of "the spirit," but from the inclinations of "the soul." These inclinations ought to be kept in check by the spirit, and when they are not kept under by it, are often made use of by devilish agency to lure unwary ones away from those paths of peace, which the Lord Jesus has appointed for his people to walk in. St Jude, too, speaking of the mockers who should come in the last time and walk after their own ungodly lusts, describes them as those who separate from the company of true believers, being "sensual (soulish, ψυχικοί), having not the spirit." By "the spirit" in this passage we must understand not the Holy Ghost, but the "spirit," which, while in the regenerate it is quickened by the agency of the Holy Ghost, remains in a "deadened" state in those who are not "born again."

"We gather," remarks Heard, "from this passage in St Jude this decisive truth, that the spirit is that part which is dead in the unregenerate man. The commission of sin does not kill the psychical (soulish) nature; for, though there are certain brutal acts which refinement forbids, and which the intellectual man, as such, is incapable of, yet these are not the worst acts of sin. Refined sensuality, in which vice has only increased its malignity by losing all its grossness, so far from deadening the psychical (soulish) nature, rather awakens it to a higher activity. When Savonarola lifted up his voice against the demoralization of Florence, what were the objects of his attack, and against what did he stir up the citizens of Florence? It was art which had entered into a league with vice, so close and intimate, that there was no reaching vice except over the prostrate body of art. The longing of the

awakened spirit for purity took the form of Puritanism. The world, of course, sees only the extravagance, and cannot see, for it knows and feels not, the need of inner and heart purity. But so it was, and so it will ever be. The psychical (soulish) nature is disgusted at some of the grosser forms of vice, and tries to keep up the appearance of virtue; but this is all. These indulgences do not repel it and deaden it as they do the pneumatical (spiritual) nature. They war against the psyche (soul) it is true, as St Peter says (1 Pet. ii. 11), so that the end of these things is death, in the sense that they who sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but the directly deadening effect is felt in the *pneuma* (spirit), not in the *psyche* (soul). It is conceivable of a licentious scoffer having the psychical (soulish) nature in its highest perfection; it is not conceivable that he could exercise the *pneuma* (spirit).” \*

Phil. i. 27 might also have been cited by Mr Heard, for soul ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ ) and spirit ( $\piνε\tilde{\upsilon}\mu\alpha$ ) are there noted as distinct. The apostle exhorts the Christians at Philippi to “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ ), striving together for the faith of the Gospel,” or in other words, with all their spiritual and intellectual powers.

Other passages might be easily brought forward which imply the tripartite nature of man. For instance, that which refers to our Lord, “Jesus increased in wisdom (the powers of the  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ ) and stature (the growth of the  $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\mu\alpha$  or  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\tilde{\xi}$ ), and in favour with God and man (resulting from the growth of the  $\piνε\tilde{\upsilon}\mu\alpha$  in God-consciousness and moral consciousness).” (Luke ii. 52.) The believers were after Pentecost “of one heart ( $\καρδία$ , generally applied to the  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ , here, however, being in contrast to it, referring to the  $\piνε\tilde{\upsilon}\mu\alpha$ ) and of one soul ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ ).” Acts iv. 32. So also Titus i. 15, where mention is made of those whose mind ( $\νο\tilde{\upsilon}\tilde{\varsigma}$ , the powers of the  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ ) and conscience ( $\sigmaυνείδησις$ , the remains in us of the  $\piνε\tilde{\upsilon}\mu\alpha$ ) are defiled.

Gen. ii. 7 may be quoted, as Mr Heard has done, as a passage which implies, though it does not distinctly assert, this tripleness of man’s nature. But the passages quoted are enough to shew that at least the New Testament reveals to us that man is a union of three natures, body, soul, and spirit, or, in other words, that he has sense-consciousness from the body, self-consciousness and intellect from the soul, and God-consciousness (or as respects man, moral consciousness) from his spirit.

\* Heard’s Tripartite Nature of Man, p. 82.

Although we by no means assert that the words spirit and soul are always strictly used in these different senses in the New Testament, yet it is worth noting that the one word is generally used when God-consciousness and moral consciousness is alluded to, and the other when the intellect, or the feelings, are referred to.

Thus we read of the *πνεῦμα*, or "spirit," that it "is willing but the flesh weak" (Matt. xxvi. 41, etc.), of Mary's spirit rejoicing in God her Saviour (Luke i. 47), of Paul's spirit being stirred in him when he saw the city given to idolatry (Acts. xvii. 16), of our Saviour's growing strong in spirit (Luke i. 80), of being fervent in the spirit (Acts xviii. 25; Rom. xii. 11), of serving God in the spirit (Rom. i. 9), of glorifying God in the spirit (1 Cor. vi. 20), of the spirit praying (1 Cor. xiv. 14), of Titus' spirit being refreshed by the work of God he saw among the Corinthians (2 Cor. vii. 13), of Paul's purposing in the spirit (Acts xix. 21), of his not having rest in his spirit (2 Cor. ii. 13), and of those according to the spirit being persecuted by those after the flesh (Gal. iv. 29). Holiness must belong both to the body and the spirit (1 Cor. vii. 34), for both may alike be polluted (2 Cor. vii. 1); the pollution of the latter resulting in a seared conscience. They are, however, naturally opposed to one another in their tendencies (Gal. v. 17). The spirit deadened by the Fall requires renewal (Rom. vii. 6), and the renewed spirit is the governing principle of the understanding (*νοῦς*), or of the powers of the soul (Eph. iv. 23). Hence those who are sensible of their natural state are called poor in spirit (Mat. v. 12), that is, persons who realize their spiritual poverty, and long for the aid of the Holy Spirit (the spirit of life from God, Rev. xi. 11) to quicken (John vi. 63) their dormant spirits into true life and energy.

No doubt spirit, or *πνεῦμα*, is used in the New Testament in various other senses, as for instance, to signify simply *life* (James ii. 26; Rev. xiii. 15), *power of mind*, etc., as well as in reference to the Holy Spirit and to other spiritual beings, but these passages which we have quoted seem to refer to it as the nature in man which shews itself in God-consciousness and moral consciousness.

The adjective and adverb derived from spirit are often used with a like peculiarity of meaning. Thus we read of spiritual things (1 Cor. ii. 13; ix. 11) and spiritual persons (iii. 1) as opposed to carnal (*σαρκικός*), of those supported by spiritual food and drink (x. 3, 4), *i.e.*, food to keep alive their spiritual sensibilities, of spiritual gifts (xii.) of spiritual blessings (Eph. i. 3), of spiritual songs (v. 19), of spiritual discernment (1 Cor. ii. 14). Also, of spiritual wicked-

ness (Eph. ii. 12), of those that are truly spiritual (Gal. vi. 1), and of those that imagine they are so (1 Cor. xiv. 37).

Soul ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ) on the other hand is often, indeed chiefly, used in a different signification, of that immaterial part of our nature in which the sense of self-consciousness and the powers of the understanding reside. Thus our Lord speaks of those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul (Matt. x. 20), of giving rest unto the souls of those who come to him (xi. 29) of losing the soul (xvii. 26; Mark viii. 35, etc.), of serving God with all the soul (Matt. xxii. 37). Peter, referring to the Old Testament, speaks of Christ's soul not being left in Hades (Acts ii. 27, 31). Unbelieving Jews made the minds (souls  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ ) of the Gentiles evil affected against the brethren (xiv. 2). Judaizers are said to subvert souls (xv. 24), while Paul and Barnabas confirmed the souls of the disciples (xiv. 22). Paul desires to be spent for the souls of the Corinthians (2 Cor. xii. 15), and exhorts believers (Eph. vi. 6), to do the will of God from the heart ( $\epsilon\grave{\iota}\kappa\ \psi\upsilon\chi\eta\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ ). So also Col. iii. 23. Watching for souls (Heb. xiii. 17) is spoken of, the fainting of souls (xii. 3) exhorted against. The salvation of souls is often alluded to (1 Pet. i. 9; James i. 21; v. 20; Heb. x. 39). Hope is an anchor of the soul (vi. 19), and fleshly lusts war against it (1 Pet. ii. 11). There are unstable souls (2 Pet. ii. 14), and souls kept stable (1 Pet. iv. 19) by the bishop of our souls (ii. 25), which therefore prosper (3 John 2). The souls of the martyrs are represented as crying out for vengeance (Rev. vi. 9), and as afterwards living and reigning with Christ (xx. 4).

The adjective from the word "soul" ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$ , psychical or soulish) is only met with in the New Testament in the passages we have already noted (1 Cor. ii. 14; xv. 44, 46; James iii. 15; Jude 19), where it is used in its strict signification.

The psychology of the Old Testament is by no means so precise. Nephesh ( $\text{נֶפֶשׁ}$ ,  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ , soul, and ruach ( $\text{רוּחַ}$ )  $\pi\nu\epsilon\tilde{\upsilon}\mu\alpha$ , spirit, are used in general without any precise difference. The doctrine about the spirit and its life it was reserved for New Testament times to unfold. For the distinction between spirit and soul has much to do with that life and immortality which has been brought to light by the Gospel. Spirit and soul in the Old Testament were not clearly distinguished from one another, and both are said to belong to the beast that perisheth. The word  $\text{רוּחַ}$  signifying the soul is applied to both man and beast: see Eccles. iii. 21; viii. 8; xii. 7. Other passages, however, alluding to Messianic times, use



the word in the New Testament sense. So Ezek. xi. 19; xviii. 31, especially the latter passage, which might almost be cited in proof of the tripartite nature of man. But the phrase רוח חיים is used with reference to man and beast in Gen. vi. 17; vii. 15, 22.

But while we cannot discover much of the New Testament doctrine concerning the spirit in the Old Testament, as out of place there till the Holy Ghost should be poured out on all flesh, which was predicted to take place in the times of the Christ, we can find in the Old Testament more of the New Testament doctrine about the soul. There is not a single word spoken about its immortality in the Old Testament, though here are many proofs of a life after death. The soul נֶפֶשׁ is represented as having an intimate connection with the blood, a connection which modern science seems to confirm. See Gen. ix. 4, 5; Lev. xvii. 11; Deut. xii. 23, etc., and compare Lam. ii. 12. The soul therefore requires for its nourishment the nourishment of the bodily frame with which it is so closely conjoined. It is said to belong to the animals as well as man (see Gen. i. 21, 24; ii. 7, 19; ix. 10, 12, 15; Lev. xi. 10, etc.) It is sometimes used to signify the soul as commonly understood, as Gen. xxxv. 18; 1 Kings xvii. 21; Job xiv. 22, etc. It is often used of the compound being, who lives, thinks, wills, and acts. In this sense, as Mr Heard notes, it "is exactly equivalent to Aristotle's use of ψυχή." Thus, it sometimes is almost identical with our "person." It is sufficient to refer to Lev. v. 1; Joshua x. 28, 30, 32, 35, 37, for proofs are abundant. Hence we read of killing the soul or person (Numb. xxxi. 19). From this use arises such phrases as נֶפֶשׁ, "my soul," for "myself," נִפְשׁ, for "thyself," etc. In the sense of person it is applied even to one who is dead, נֶפֶשׁ מֵת (Numb. vi. 6; Lev. xxi. 11), and even is used in this signification without the qualifying adjective מֵת, dead (so Numb. v. 2; ix. 6, 7, 10; Lev. xxii. 1; Haggai ii. 13, etc.), though we must not imagine that the word is synonymous with body. Mr Heard has correctly caught the distinction when he says: "The ruach and the nephesh are certainly distinguished from each other, as the animus and the anima of the Latins, the πνεῦμα and the ψυχή of the Greeks. But the distinction was rather between the lower and the middle than between the middle and the higher kind of life. Nephesh and Psyche are used in the Old Testament to distinguish the animal from the intellectual, not the intellectual from the spiritual, properly so called. The nephesh of the Old Testament is a

general term expressive of life."\* Every living thing that has conscious personality has a soul.

Now the psychology of Scripture has an important bearing on its vital doctrines. For we may see at once from the mere statement of the nature of man, as we have defined it, that there are in man three specifically distinct tendencies: those arising from his body or the sensual (in a good sense), those springing from his soul or the intellectual, and those which have their source in his spirit or the spiritual. The state of perfection would be when all these forces are held in perfect equilibrium, and this we may presume was the condition in which our first parents were when they were originally created.

This point being conceded, we may, from a survey of what we find man is now by nature, come to some idea in what the fall consisted. We do not find that equilibrium within us now, but rather a war in our members, the body warring against the soul, the sensual inclinations often overcoming the rational or intellectual powers, and the latter, not content with their own proper sphere, usurping authority over the spiritual. Now, as it is clear that the higher ought to rule the lower, so it is manifest that the intellect or the reason ought to govern the bodily powers, and that it in turns ought to be subject to the spiritual capacity. In plain words, our duty to God and man ought to be the rule by which all our faculties in the last resort ought to be directed. But, alas! the fall has destroyed the proper balance in our nature. The soul, or the union point between body and spirit, in which self-consciousness, or the ego, resides, was free to choose between the bodily or the spiritual point of attraction. Our first parents chose the evil, and rejected the good. They thus obtained an inclination to evil, they weakened or deadened their spirits, they lost the life which had been breathed from heaven into their spirits, and hence they have transmitted this evil bias to their posterity. It is the deadening of the spirit that has given the upper hand to the soul or body in our fallen nature.

\* Heard, p. 61.

## No. II.

## SCRIPTURE REVELATIONS ON THE INTERMEDIATE STATE OF THE DEAD.

The various questions connected with the intermediate state of souls departed this life are in one aspect quite independent of all theories as to the Fatherhood of God. But as we have been obliged to refer more or less to points connected with it, and as our argument will not otherwise be apprehended in all its bearings, we must here review briefly this subject.

The first question is, what does Scripture tell us regarding the soul itself in this middle state? Is it in a state of consciousness or not? Do our souls sleep till the great trumpet of the archangel shall summon us on the resurrection morn? or are we even in this intermediate state in a condition of conscious activity?

The death of the saints is indeed called a "sleeping in Jesus" (1 Cor. xv. 18; 1 Thess. iv. 14). In anticipation thereof, Paul could exclaim, "to me to die is gain" (Phil. i. 21), and the patriarch express his assurance that "there the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest" (Job. iii. 17). The righteous are said to "enter into peace" (Isaiah lvii. 2); "to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8); they are "with Christ," which is far better than life on this earth (Phil. i. 23). Our Lord speaks of the death of Lazarus under the expression, "our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (John xi. 11), and in Old Testament phraseology the death of individuals was often spoken of under the statement, "he slept with his fathers."

Some of these expressions give countenance to the idea that the state after death is one of sleep, while others of them, which speak of that state being gain, and of the righteous in it enjoying the presence of Christ, seem rather to support the view that it is a state of joyous consciousness.

There are yet two other passages which allude to this state in relation to the condition of the righteous dead, the latter of which has even a still more extended reference. We allude to the comforting assurance that our Lord gave the penitent thief, "this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke xviii. 43); and the parable

concerning Dives and Lazarus in Luke xvi. 19-31, which implies unmistakably that both the good and the evil in the middle state are conscious of their respective conditions.

Stephen, just before he yielded up the ghost, had a glorious view of the risen Redeemer, into whose hands he committed his spirit (Acts vii. 55-60), and it is hard to believe that the sleep into which he fell immediately after was more than the sleep of his mortal frame, and that he was not immediately escorted to the presence of that Saviour who so graciously strengthened the proto-martyr in his dying hour.

On the Mount of Transfiguration Moses, as well as Elias, appeared in glory, and if the case of the latter cannot be fairly cited as an example of one in the interim state, no fair reason can be assigned against the case of the former being so brought forward.

The expression, "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23), which refers to all the departed righteous, from Abel downwards, who are mentioned by the apostle as forming an essential part of the Church Catholic, loses all force and beauty of meaning, if we are to suppose those spirits to be in an unconscious condition.\*

The above passages, however, are sufficient to prove that the righteous in the intermediate state are in a state of blessed consciousness.† That the wicked are alike conscious, and suffer punishment, at least in 'anticipation, Heb. x. 26 gives us great reason to conjecture, a conjecture which is confirmed by the passages in 2 Pet. ii. 4 and Jude 6, if those passages apply to any of the unrighteous dead (as by and by we shall attempt to prove); and

\* Rev. vi. 9, 10, and xiv. 11, might perhaps be referred to, but both of them are open to objections if cited in proof of a conscious state of the righteous dead.

† Mr Heard, in his interesting volume on "The Tripartite Nature of Man," has an ingenious speculation, that the consciousness in the intermediate state will be all inward, and that we shall in it for a little lay aside our powers of apprehending the external world. That sense-consciousness will cease, and self-consciousness and God-consciousness only be retained. "Now our life is all outward—then it will be all inward. We groan now because the senses are so strong, and the spirit life so weak" (p. 276). Substitute in the first sentence the word "chiefly" for "all," and we are inclined to coincide with this view. Further than this we do not see that we can go with Scripture. We feel inclined to believe in the existence of a subtle material body in which the soul is enveloped, and by means of which it can have some sense-consciousness also. The case of Moses' appearance after death is a case in point, see p. 282.

finally, the parable of Dives and Lazarus puts this view beyond legitimate doubt.

But that parable is capable of a much wider application, and goes far to settle the second question, namely, whether departed souls are in a fixed state or not, that is, whether the state in which they die is one which will continue without alteration, the righteous remaining righteous, and the unrighteous similarly remaining unrighteous, or whether there is a possibility of that pardon, which was not sought after and obtained on earth, being granted to those who repent on the other side of the grave.

For we learn from that parable, that immediately after, or shortly after, death, the rich man was placed in a state of misery, and the beggar brought to a state of happiness. The anxiety of the rich man after his brothers on earth shews us that the scene embraces the very state we are discussing, and not the state of godly and ungodly after the judgment-day.

Both alike seem to be fully conscious, the one of his bliss, the other of his misery ; and both, that their respective portions were the result of their several actions when on earth.

Two other important points are pressed upon us by the teaching of our Saviour in this parable. First, that the blessed, even if willing, are not able to alleviate the sufferings of the wicked ; and secondly, that a great gulf was fixed between both to prevent any passage from either side to the other.

Many questions may be raised about this parable and its interpretation which do not affect these conclusions. For instance, whether the whole was a real occurrence, or merely a parable, conveying deep meaning indeed, but not to be viewed as literally true. It may be questioned, and there is very little to guide us to a conclusion on either side, whether the punishment of the wicked in this middle state, or even at the last, will consist in being punished with material fire, or not. It may be gravely questioned whether the lost and saved can hold intercourse with one another, although so described as a necessity of the parable. The introduction of Abraham,\* too, into the scene, is one which gave life to the picture, in the eyes of the Jews, but must not be strained literally.

But whatever decision we may arrive at on these several points,

\* The Jews were wont, as Lightfoot has learnedly shown (*Horæ Hebraicæ, in loco,*), to call the state into which righteous men are admitted after death by three different names :—first, *Paradise* ; secondly, *Abraham's bosom* ; and thirdly, *lying under God's throne*. Their views drawn from the

or any others that may be raised, we do not see how we can avoid drawing the conclusion that our Lord teaches that the souls of the righteous departed this life are in rest and felicity, that the souls of the unrighteous are in a state of misery, and that both these states are final and unchangeable.

“A Bachelor of Divinity,” indeed, asserts that Abraham only “points out the impossibility at present of any passing to and fro of the spirits in prison to the spirits in Paradise,” or *vice versa*, and that “there is no reference whatever to the period after the resurrection, or to the nature and duration of suffering in that subsequent dispensation.” (“An Answer to the Archbishop of York on the subject of Eternal Torments.”) On the other hand, other writers, as Lange (“Bibelwerk,” 1 Pet. iv. 6), argue that repentance may be possible beyond the grave, since many passages of Scripture imply, as they say, that the final decision is made not at the moment of death but at the last day. Acts xvii. 31; 2 Tim. i. 12, 18; 1 John iv. 17, are referred to in proof of this. But these and similar texts only prove that the sentence on bad and good will be publicly pronounced at the last day, not that any opportunity of pardon will be offered in the intermediate state. A criminal is not condemned until his trial has taken place, but his conduct during the time that may elapse between his arrest and trial is not taken cognizance of by the judge. Scripture everywhere declares that the actions and conduct of men in this world will be taken account of at the great judgment day, and that now is the time for closing with the offers of gospel mercy. This language is plain enough to exclude all hope so far forth as Scripture is concerned. It may be possible that salvation may be offered to some in the intermediate state, but as Scripture does not hold out the slightest hope of pardon being so offered, it is safer for us to assume that it will not. Prayers for the dead, or some theory of universal restoration, are the natural results of going beyond Scripture on this point. It is safer to stop short where Scripture itself stops. What meaning can be fairly assigned to those many passages which speak of punishments and rewards, meted out hereafter for the deeds done in the body? of all words and actions and thoughts being brought up for judgment, and punished or rewarded according to their several

Old Testament writings by laboured deduction were correct in the main on these subjects, and hence our Lord himself uses the two first named expressions. On the last compare Rev. vi. 9, 10, bearing in mind that the Jews regarded the altar as the throne of God.

deserts, if we are to imagine that a time of grace and opportunity of repentance is to be given after death to those who despised when in life the free offers of pardon through Christ's atoning blood? The case of the heathen stands on a different footing, but Scripture does not hold out any hopes even of their salvation. This conclusion seems forced on us from a review of the various passages which speak of the awful state of man without Christ, of the blindness of his understanding and the hardness of his heart, and of the hopelessness of all attempts to get life outside that life displayed in Christ. If we were to maintain the doctrine of eternal torment in the case of the heathen dying without having heard of Christ, it would be impossible, with our present light, to reconcile such a doctrine with God's character of love. But if by their everlasting punishment, be simply meant an everlasting exclusion from heaven, and such other punishment as they may be found to deserve for their offences against the law written on their hearts, resulting in an utter loss of consciousness or their extinction, such punishment even with our present light is quite defensible, if the deserts of sin, its awful nature, and the justice of God, be taken into account.

The passage in Rom. ii. 12 might be cited in proof of the view we have advanced. It may, too, be argued that were it otherwise the apostles would not have laboured so energetically, nor would so many incitements be given in the New Testament to urge the Church forward to the work of missions. If, as supposed by some, the chance of repentance after death be afforded to all who have not heard of the Gospel in this life, then who would not prefer to leave the heathen as they are, knowing well that the chances of their acceptance of the Gospel after death must be much greater than experience proves it to be in this life?

There is, indeed, an ingenious argument raised in defence of this idea of salvation after death founded on the famous passages in 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20, and 1 Pet. iv. 6.

Before proceeding, however, to discuss those passages, in order to complete our general view of the subject, we must say a few words on the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory.

Purgatory is, by the divines of the Romish Church and her recognized authorities, considered to be a place where the faithful atone for such venial sins as they may not have repented for in life, by various punishments of various lengths and severities. Nothing unclean can enter heaven; therefore, say they, those who die before they have repented of all their lesser sins must be purified from these in the purgatorial fire. The blood of Christ has remitted the

eternal punishment, but some punishment must still be inflicted notwithstanding.

This doctrine, however, is in plain opposition to the statements, that "the blood of Jesus cleanseth us *from all sin*" (1 John i. 7,9); that "there is *no condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1); "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah i. 18); "By one offering Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 14); "With his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah liii. 5, 11). Hosts of passages could be adduced to prove the fulness and freeness of Christ's pardon, all which are rendered wellnigh meaningless by this dogma of the Church of Rome. See Rom. viii. 33; Isaiah xlv. 22, xliii. 25; Jer. l. 20; Micah vii. 19; Eph. v. 25, 27; Col. i. 14; ii. 14; Titus iii. 5; Rev. i. 5, vii. 14.

The doctrine, too, attaches a value to the fire of purgatory, in sanctifying and cleansing the soul, similar to that which Scripture assigns to the Holy Spirit.

The Biblical arguments in its favour are few and far-fetched. Much stress is laid by its advocates upon the word *till* in Matt. v. 25, 26, and the corresponding passage in Luke xii., in order to enable such a meaning to be extracted; but see Psalm cx. 1; Isaiah xxii. 14; Gen. viii. 6, 7; Isaiah xlvi. 4, and as a strong *ad hominem* argument, Matt. i. 25. 1 Cor. iii. 10-15 is eagerly caught at as a proof passage, because in it the word "*fire*" occurs. But the apostle is there speaking of Christian ministers, whose works will all be tried by the fire of judgment in the day of the Lord, and if found then to endure, they shall receive especial rewards as faithful ministers; but if the teacher's work be not genuine, even though he may himself be a believer, he shall lose the reward of a teacher; though for his individual faith he may not be excluded from the *free gift* of salvation through Christ Jesus. The passages in 1 Peter, already alluded to, are also adduced in favour of this dogma, but we reserve them for a special discussion.

Our Lord's statement, that the sin against the Holy Ghost "shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Matt. xii. 32), is also quoted by the Romanists to prove that there is forgiveness of sins in the next world, and consequently that there is a purgatory. But even if the former be admitted, the latter does not at all follow. The parallel passages, however, in Mark iii. 29, and Luke xii. 10, shew that the *meaning*



of our Lord was simply to intimate that the sin in question should not be forgiven. The peculiar phrase used in Matthew does not occur in the other Evangelists.

The explanation of that phrase is also very simple, and it does not become a scholar like Mr Barlow to ignore it as he does.\* The Jews made use of the expression, עולם הבא, "the world to come," in two different senses; first, to signify the state after death; and, secondly, as a common name for *the times of the Messiah*. The exact words used in Matthew *l. c.* are found in Heb. vi. 5, in this very signification, and a cognate expression (rendered in our authorized version by the same phrase) occurs in the identical same sense in Heb. ii. 5. The meaning of our Lord's warning seems to have been, that neither under the old covenant, which was then passing away, nor under the new, which was to be manifested when his sacrifice was offered up, was any provision made for the pardon of such a sin.

In passing from this subject, and before treating of the difficult passages in 1 Peter, we must say a few words on the practice of prayers for the dead. These prayers are very natural, if the Romish doctrine of purgatory be embraced as true; but if that be rejected as repugnant to God's Word, they ought also to fall with it. Yet it cannot be denied that very early in the history of the Church such prayers were wont to be offered up; and the Greek Church, while denying the existence of a purgatory, still retains this practice.

The motives which influenced the early Christians in offering up such prayers were various. Some thought that though the safety and rest of the righteous were secure, their happiness in the intermediate state was capable of increase, and therefore they prayed for them. Others prayed that their friends might obtain part in the first resurrection (Rev. xx. 5, 6); and others, too, under the false impression that at the end of the world even the righteous should have to pass through the fire, which should consume the world in general, to their peculiar abodes in heaven, and that that fire would be the means of effecting their complete purification, prayed that the Lord might deal graciously with them in that day. We say under a false impression, for Scripture informs us that both the saints which may be alive at that day, and those which shall be raised, shall escape that final mundane conflagration.

But whatever their motives may have been, and however it may be true that prayers for the dead do not necessarily involve a

\* "Eternal Punishment and Eternal Death," p. 112.

belief in a purgatory, those who followed such practices were seriously in error. The history of the Church is a history of the development of error, as well as of the manifestation of the truth, the seeds of the great apostasy, which afterwards took place, were growing up even in apostolic times. Scripture, which is the only rule of faith, gives us to understand that those who die unholy remain for ever in that condition; that those who die filthy are not cleansed after death; and that the righteous and the holy are, on the other hand, preserved in their righteous and holy state. We have no right "with human philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men and not after Christ," to "intrude into those things we have not seen, vainly puffed up by our fleshly minds" (Col. ii. 8, 18.) No instance can be shewn in Holy Writ of prayers having been offered up for the departed by the saints on earth, or of any such custom being recommended to us to follow. We refuse to leave the sure ground of Scripture to follow "Fathers," so called, whose writings, valuable as they are in many respects, abound in puerilities, and who are in this as in many other points, hopelessly at variance with one another.

We have asserted that Scripture affords us no instance of prayers for the dead; but we are fully aware that an attempt has been made to make 2 Tim. i. 16-18 bear this meaning. The apostle there prays that the Lord may grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus. That expression is not found elsewhere, but from his household being alluded to in chap. iv. 19, as well as from the peculiar wish in verse 18,—“May the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord in that day,” the day of judgment,—it has been supposed that Onesiphorus was dead, and hence verse 18 has been paraded as a much wished-for proof of the practice of prayers for the dead.

The conclusion is an illogical one,—a small peg on which to hang such a dogma or practice. It may have been that Onesiphorus was not with the apostle at the time, as Theodoret and Chrysostom imagine, and the use of the aorists is not of so much weight in arguing against this as Dean Alford in his *Commentary* is disposed to allow. It may have been that Onesiphorus was away from his family and under some affliction elsewhere, which would explain the prayer of the apostle. It may have been that Onesiphorus, the faithful friend of the apostle, had sadly fallen into some sin,—not unto death, but which brought disgrace on his character and family; and the apostle would remind Timothy of his former good deeds in order to stir him up to deal gently with the offender. It may have

been that poor Onesiphorus had faltered in faith, and fallen into some of the pit-falls of Satan. It may even be granted that he was dead and perhaps died under some cloud as respects his faith; but it by no means follows that Paul's pious wish, that hereafter he might be found among the redeemed, would justify the practice of prayers for the dead. It is monstrous to put force upon an allusion left unexplained by the apostle, in order to give an apostolic colouring to a practice which, if apostolic, would have been mentioned in other passages of Holy Writ.

We have now to consider the famous passage in the First Epistle of Peter iii. 18-20, which is the stronghold of those who hold peculiar views respecting the state of the dead in the intermediate state. We quote it from our Authorised Version, and shall afterwards notice the suggested alterations of rendering. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water."

Roman Catholic divines are never tired of quoting this passage in defence of their doctrines of purgatory and of *Limbus Patrum*. It is cited in almost every book, large or small, written in defence of those dogmas. Now, be it carefully noted, that the persons preached to were the sinners who perished by the waters of the deluge; sinners of a most inveterate type, upon whom the warnings of Noah had no effect. The Church of Rome informs us that the souls of the righteous who died before Christ were confined in what she calls *Limbus Patrum*; until Christ died on the cross, and descending into Hades, released them from their imprisonment. But even granting the existence of such a place (which has no Scripture warrant whatever), this passage cannot by any possibility refer to such a prison, or to the souls confined there. For the antediluvians of Noah's age were not Old Testament believers, but Old Testament reprobates. Nor can "the prison" of St Peter's Epistle, consistently with Romish doctrine, be held to mean purgatory. Purgatory, according to the Council of Trent, is supposed to be a place where "the souls of just men are cleansed by a temporary punishment, in order to be admitted into their eternal home, 'into which nothing defiled entereth.'" But the antediluvian sinners were not just men defiled with sins of weakness or

of ignorance, but obstinate and hardened sinners, who were cut off in what would be styled, in Romish phraseology, "mortal sin." Of the antediluvian apostates, and of them only, does the passage speak when it says—"Christ preached to the spirits in prison."

The Lutheran divines also are generally noted for holding peculiar views respecting Christ's descent into hell, which they usually support by a reference to this passage; because if this passage can be shewn not to allude to that event, there is no other part of Scripture from which any fair deduction can be drawn respecting what took place between Christ's death and resurrection.

The article of Christ's descent into hell is referred to both in the first and second part of the *Formula Concordiæ*. It is there stated that there was much difference of opinion among the theologians who professed the Augsburg Confession, how or in what manner, and at what time Christ descended into hell. Nothing is decided in the first part regarding the various opinions referred to. The Formula only states that the article cannot be understood by our senses or reason, but must be accepted by faith. It recommends, therefore, that there should be no discussion about the question, but that the article should be believed and taught as simply as possible. In the second part it is more distinctly laid down:—"We therefore believe simply that Christ in his whole person, God and man, after his burial descended into hell, vanquished Satan, overturned the power of hell, and took away from the devil all strength and power." But nothing is asserted in any of the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church as to the mode in which Christ accomplished this result.

Luther himself, however, has expressed his opinion about the point a little more clearly. I know, says he, "that Christ himself, personally, has destroyed hell and has bound the devil," and "that all the devils ran and fled before him as before their death and poison." Hollaz considers,—and this is the common Lutheran idea,—that Christ descended into hell "in order to shew himself as the Conqueror of death to the wicked spirits and the damned souls."

Now all these interpretations of the article in the Creed are grounded on this very passage of St. Peter, although several other texts are cited to throw light upon its more obscure portions.

We must not forget that this sense, too, was put upon the passage in the Articles of the Church of England published in King Edward the Sixth's reign, but happily omitted from the present Thirty-nine Articles:—"That the body of Christ lay in the grave

until his resurrection : but his spirit, which he gave up, was with the spirits which were detained in prison, or in hell, and preached to them, as the place in St. Peter testifieth.”

We need scarcely remark that the passage in its very form utterly precludes such a meaning from being, on any sound principle of interpretation, extracted from it. Christ's preaching, wherever and whenever it took place, is in the text limited to those persons who were disobedient in the days of Noah. We must insist upon the point, that from this passage alone we have no right to infer that he preached to others. There are other objections which are of weight against both the views stated above, but we purposely waive their discussion at present.

Another view of this passage has been proposed, which has had defenders almost in every time,\* and which Dean Alford will have to be its only possible meaning. It is, “that our Lord in his disembodied state did go to the place of detention of departed spirits, and did there announce his work of redemption,—preach salvation in fact, to the disembodied spirits of those who refused to obey the voice of God when the judgment of the flood was hanging over them.

Bishop Horsley is one of the most noted of the English theologians who has adopted this view. He admits that “the great difficulty in the description of the souls to whom this preaching for this purpose was addressed, is this; that they were the souls of some of the antediluvian race.” Yet he proceeds to say:—

“Not that it at all startles me to find antediluvian souls in safe keeping for final salvation. On the contrary, I should find it very difficult to believe

\* Dean Alford asserts that this is the view of the great majority of commentators,—ancient and modern. It may be so; but it must not be forgotten that the ancient commentators consist chiefly of the Fathers, whose minds were warped by superstitious fancies of every kind, and whose judgment is consequently of little value in such a question. The modern commentators referred to consist principally of those orthodox German theologians, who have felt themselves bound as far as possible to support the opinions of Luther and of their Church, by which an unnecessary mystery has been thrown over the simple article of Christ's descent into the realms of the dead. Most of the rationalistic commentators, too, adopt the same view of the passage, from a too evident desire to graft upon Scripture notions which seem, at least at first sight, to partake of the spirit of the legends of the middle ages. The majority, however, of orthodox Protestant divines since the Reformation (Lutherans in general being excepted), have rejected this interpretation.

(unless I read it somewhere in the Bible), that of the millions\* that perished in the general deluge, all died hardened in impenitence and unbelief; inso-much that no one of that race could be an object of future mercy, beside the eight persons who were miraculously saved in the ark, for the purpose of re-peopleing the depopulated earth. . . . But the great difficulty, of which, perhaps, I may be unable to give any adequate solution, is this: For what reason should the proclamation of the finishing of the great work of redemption be addressed exclusively to the souls of these antediluvian penitents? Were not the souls of the penitents of later ages equally interested in the joyful tidings? To this I can only answer, that I think I have observed, in some parts of Scripture, an anxiety—if the expression may be allowed—of the sacred writers to convey distinct intimations, that the antediluvian race is not uninterested in the redemption, and the final retribution. It is for this purpose, as I conceive, that, in the description of the general resurrection, in the visions of the Apocalypse, it is mentioned, with a peculiar emphasis, that the ‘SEA gave up the dead that were in it;’ which I cannot be content to understand of the few persons, few in comparison of the total of mankind, lost at different times by shipwreck; a poor circumstance to find a place in the midst of the magnificent images which surround it; but of the myriads who perished in the general deluge, and found their tomb in the waters of the raging ocean.” †

This solution of the difficulty is eminently unsatisfactory. The counter-difficulty raised against the common opinion that the antediluvian sinners were finally lost, is just the same objection which has ever been brought against any wholesale condemnation of the wicked at all.

But there is this much to be said of Horsley’s view, which is worthy of high commendation, namely, that he does not strain the text beyond its plain statements. Whatever meaning is intended to be conveyed thereby, the preaching of Christ in the text is limited to the antediluvians, and to such Horsley is willing to limit to.

Mr Ker is a commentator of quite a different school. He thus attempts to grapple with the difficulty that the antediluvians alone are referred to:—

“It is true that this preaching seems to have been limited to those of Noah’s days. But no good or just reason can be assigned why the limitation should be so insisted on, as to exclude the belief that others might also experience a similar grace. Once admit the principle that there is hope for *any* of the departed, and we are justified in extending that blessed hope to *all* who have in every age, or in any age, departed this life in involuntary

\* It is not at all necessary to suppose that millions perished by the flood. However, this is a question which it is out of our present purpose to discuss.

† Bishop Horsley’s sermon “On Christ’s Descent into Hell, and the Intermediate State,” appended to his Translation of Hosea, with notes explanatory and critical. London: 1804.

ignorance of the Saviour. I say 'involuntary,' because, as I have often and earnestly impressed upon you, for those who depart this life in the wilful rejection of Christ, the Scripture holds out no hope of any kind.\*

Our argument against all similar expositions of the place under consideration is: Peter, in his Epistle, limits the preaching of Christ, at the time referred to, to the antediluvian apostates. But no good or just reason can be assigned why the antediluvian sinners should be deemed worthy, above all others, of that mercy being offered to them in the intermediate state which Scripture does not warrant us to say is offered to others. Therefore there is an *à priori* presumption that, on a careful examination, the preaching of Christ referred to will be found to have taken place in this world, and is to be identified with the preaching of Noah, who is also alluded to in the very passage itself.

If, of course, it be logical to draw a conclusion from the particular to the universal, and assert that what is stated to refer to *some* refers to *all*, if we are to introduce our surmises to fill up the gaps left in Scripture, unquestionably then, but not till then, our whole line of argument is proved to be invalid.

Dean Alford is more cautious in his expressions, but arrives at a very similar conclusion; a conclusion, indeed, which all the advocates of this interpretation feel to be more or less required in order to render their view tenable.

The Dean writes as follows:—

“Why these [the antediluvian transgressors] rather than others are mentioned—whether merely as a *sample of a like gracious work on others*, or for some special reason unimaginable by us, we cannot say. It is ours to deal with the plain words of Scripture, and to accept its revelations as far as vouchsafed to us. And they are vouchsafed to us to the utmost limit of legitimate inference from revealed fact. That inference every intelligent reader will draw from the fact here announced:—it is not purgatory; it is not universal restitution; but it is *one which throws blessed light on one of the darkest enigmas of the divine justice: the cases where the final doom seems infinitely out of proportion to the lapse which has incurred it.* And as we cannot say to what other cases this κήρυγμα may have applied, so it would be presumption in us to limit its occurrence or its efficacy. The reason of mentioning here these sinners, above other sinners, appears to be, their connection with the type of baptism which follows. If so, *who shall say that the blessed act was confined to them?*”

The italics are our own. We have used them to point out the process of thought in the mind of the commentator. Horsley's

\* “The Popular Ideas of Immortality, Everlasting Punishment, and the State of Separate Souls, brought to the test of Scripture,” p. 133.

notion, that the reason of the preaching referred to was "some special reason unimaginable by us," is alluded to, but felt to be unsatisfactory, and hence let drop out of view. If Scripture does not lead, imagination must run ahead. Wherefore we are first informed that it may be *possible* that the antediluvian sinners were only mentioned as a *sample* of a class upon whom a gracious work is performed; then the intelligent reader, it is concluded, will not fail to draw the proper conclusion from this passage,—that in cases where the doom on earth appears too heavy for the sin it succeeds, the balance is righted in the other world. In fact, who can dare to say that, "as a man soweth, so shall he reap," for there is a hope that in the intermediate state he may obtain that mercy which he refused to accept in this world?

The Dean says it is presumptuous to limit the occurrence, or the efficacy, of Christ's preaching to the dead. But Peter, so far forth as may be concluded from the text, does limit it to the antediluvian transgressors; and why should they be thought presumptuous who refuse to go beyond the text, and who maintain that it gives us no grounds whatever to believe that the Gospel will be offered after death to any of the human family?

If the passage in St. Peter teaches that our Lord preached the Gospel in Hades to those persons who perished in the time of Noah, then Horsley's view is the only one which we are warranted to entertain, namely, that we neither know why or wherefore the Gospel was preached specially to them. If Dean Alford's conjectures are admissible, we see no valid reason why the text may not be considered to hold out hopes of a universal restitution.

We must here notice Dean Alford's rendering of this passage, and the criticisms which he brings to bear against what, for convenience sake, we may be permitted to call the Reformation view of the passage. The Dean renders it thus:—

"Because Christ also suffered for sins once, a just person on behalf of unjust persons, that He might bring us near to God, put to death indeed in the flesh, but made alive [again] in the spirit: in which He also went and preached to the spirits in prison, which were once disobedient, when the long-suffering of God was waiting in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared, in which a few persons, that is, eight souls, were saved by water."

His own explanation of the portion under dispute is rather obscure.

"Christ's flesh, which was living flesh before, became dead flesh:



Christ Jesus, the entire complex Person, consisting of body, soul, and spirit was put to death *σαρκί* [‘in the flesh’], but made alive [*ἀγὰιν*] in the *spirit*; here there may seem to be difficulty: but the difficulty will vanish if we guide ourselves simply and carefully by the former clause. ‘Quod ad carnem,’ the Lord was put to death: ‘quod ad spiritum,’ He was brought to life [for this, and not ‘remained alive,’ must be insisted on the meaning of *ἐξωπορεύθη*]. His flesh was the subject, recipient, vehicle of inflicted death: His Spirit was the subject, recipient, vehicle of restored life. But here let us beware, and proceed cautiously. What is asserted is not that the *flesh died* and the Spirit was *made alive*; but that ‘quoad’ the flesh the Lord died, ‘quoad’ the Spirit, He was made alive. He the God-man Christ Jesus, body and soul, ceased to live in the flesh, began to live in the Spirit; ceased to live a fleshly mortal life, began to live a spiritual resurrection life. His own Spirit never died, as the next verse shews us. ‘This is the meaning, that Christ by His sufferings was taken from the life which is flesh and blood, as a man on earth, living, walking, and standing in flesh and blood. . . . and He is now placed in another life, and made alive according to the Spirit, has passed into a spiritual and supernatural life, which includes in itself the whole life which Christ now has in soul and body, so that He has no longer a fleshly but a spiritual body.’—Luther.”

The difficulty in the ordinary explanation lies in the fact that the *θανατωθεῖς μὲν σαρκί*, “being put to death indeed in the flesh, in the one member of the sentence, and the *ζωοποιηθεῖς δὲ Πνεύματι*, “being quickened by the Spirit,” in the other, though identical constructions, and antithetical in their nature, are according to it understood in a different sense. For by the *flesh* is understood *the human flesh of Christ*, whereas the *Spirit* is not considered to mean Christ’s Spirit, but *the Holy Ghost* itself.

The Dean of Canterbury asserts that “the rendering of the English Version here, ‘*by the Spirit*,’ is wrong both grammatically and theologically.” but he thinks it unnecessary either to point out the grammatical blunder or the theological error. We admit the difficulty or harshness of the Greek construction, but we assert that taking all the difficulties, critical and exegetical, into consideration, Dean Alford’s interpretation is encompassed with many more difficulties than the Reformation view of the passage. If the difficulty is considered to lie in the absence of the article before *πνεύματι*, then it must be borne in mind that the *Textus Receptus* and other authorities have it, and that *Πνεῦμα* is used several times without the article to indicate the Holy Spirit. Although, too, when persons are referred to, *ἐν* or *διὰ* are more frequently used, instead of the simple dative of the instrument, yet it is allowable to use the latter to express the same idea.

As to the theological error, we confess we cannot see where it lies. God the Father is spoken of in several passages as having

had a share in raising up Christ (Acts ii. 24, 33; Eph. i. 20; Heb. xiii. 20; unless, indeed, some of these be understood to refer to the Spirit), although it is said in other passages that Christ was raised up by his own power. Where is the theological error in considering that the Holy Spirit had also a part in that transaction? a fact, we think, pointed out forcibly in Rom. i. 4, where, however, Dean Alford also objects, but, as we consider, on insufficient grounds, to the rendering of our Authorised Version.

It ought to be taken into consideration that the construction here of *σαρκί*, as well as *πνεύματι*, is unique in the New Testament; the phrase *ἐν σαρκί* or *κατὰ σαρκά* being met elsewhere instead.

The phrase *ἐν ᾧ* can be rendered either *by which*, or *in which*, or *at which time* (the last being the harshest rendering), according to the view which expositors individually may hold concerning the reference of the passage in general. By *τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασιν* can be understood the spirits *which were* in prison, kept shut up in some part of Hades awaiting the judgment, in which case the text must mean that Christ preached in Hades to those spirits. Or, by "the spirits in prison" may be understood *the spirits who are in prison*, that is, who are now there, but were not there at the time of Christ's preaching to them. The notion that by the *prison* here is meant *the place of the lost* is strongly supported by the use of this expression in reference thereto in Rev. xx. 7 (comp. Matt. v. 25, and Luke xiii. 58), and by the similar expressions used in Luke xvi. 23—26; 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6; Rev. xx. 3, etc. By the preaching we understand Christ's preaching by the Spirit through Noah, who in Peter's Second Epistle is called "*a preacher of righteousness*" (chap. ii. 5), agreeably to the statement, which is also Peter's, that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

It is an argument in support of this exposition that the *long-suffering* of God in Noah's time is specially alluded to in the text, a reference which loses much of its force on the other interpretation being adopted.

Nor must we omit to state that another strong argument against the opinion that the text in question refers to Christ's preaching in the lower world may be derived from the fact that St. Peter's own words convey the idea that he was alluding to a fact well known to all Christians. But there is no other passage of Scripture whatever which gives us a hint of any such work being performed by our Lord in the intermediate state, nor is there one

single reference in the Apostolic Fathers to such a fact. This opinion was prevalent no doubt very early in the Church, but at no time did it meet with universal acquiescence in, and it derived its entire support from the obscure phraseology of our passage, instead of having been held independently of it, as if true the passage itself would lead us to infer.

The view of the passage in Peter, which we advocate, has been adopted substantially by such scholars as Hammond, Beza, Lightfoot, Scaliger, and Hofmann. This being the case, surely Dean Alford ought not to have asserted that "it must be evident to every unprejudiced scholar, how alien such an interpretation is from the plain meaning and connection of the words and clauses."

Before we bring our remarks on this verse to a close, we must allude to the passage in chap. iv. 6, which is supposed to be closely connected with it. Happily there is but little contest about its translation, and the Authorised Version is sufficiently accurate for our purpose. "For for this cause [*i.e.*, because Christ will judge the quick and dead] was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead [or as Alford, 'to dead men also,' *i.e.*, as well as to living, which translation is also admissible], that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

Dean Alford explains this passage as referring back to the former, with, however, the important variation, that he views the "dead," here named, to refer not only to the antediluvians, but to the dead generally. "The want of the article does not justify any limitation of this word; for the article is also wanted before *νεκρός* in ver. 5, which indisputably is universal in its reference." His idea is that the verse means:—

"Our Lord is ready to judge the dead: and with reason: for even they have not been without opportunity of receiving his Gospel: as the example which was adduced in chap. iii. 19 shews. For this end the Gospel was preached even to the dead, that they might—not indeed escape the universal judgment on human sin, which is physical death,—but *that they might be judged* [aor.; be in the state of the completed sentence on sin, which is death after the flesh] *according to* [as] *man as regards the flesh* [this first clause following *ὅνα* being the subordinate one, of the state which the *εὐαγγέλιον* left remaining], *but* [notwithstanding] *might live* [pres.; of a state to continue] *according to God* [a life with God, and divine] *as regards the spirit.*" \*

Such an exposition is against the analogy of Scripture.

\* All the italics and brackets in this quotation are the Dean's own.

be true, it follows as a matter of course not only that the antediluvian sinners, drowned in the flood, were saved *as a body*; but, also, that what is supposed true in their case occurs commonly to all the dead. So that the dead have the Gospel proclaimed to them after death, and, as our verse would, according to this explanation, lead us to infer, it is preached to them then with almost universal success; while the very reverse might be predicated with respect to preaching in this life.

Logically, we cannot stop where the Dean would wish us; we must go further. If the want of the article before the word "dead" does not justify us in limiting its application, then we may affirm the general proposition, that the Gospel will be preached after death to the dead, with a view to their final salvation, and that the punishment they may have received on earth, with some temporary imprisonment in Hades, will be all that will be exacted from them. But such a view is contrary to the analogy of Scripture.

What is, then, the interpretation of this verse? There are at least two explanations which meet the exigencies of the case. Accepting as correct Dean Alford's explanation of the clause, "judged according to man as regards the flesh," as referring to the death which all must share, we may explain the "dead" to mean those spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, to whom the Gospel is preached in order that, while they cannot escape the death of the body, they may obtain eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. The objection to this, which Dean Alford thinks is of itself conclusive, is that "seeing that *γάρ* binds verses 5 and 6 logically together, and that *καὶ νεκρῶς* distinctly takes up the *νεκρούς* before in this logical connection, all interpretations must be false which do not give *νεκρῶς* in verse 6 the same meaning as *νεκρούς* in verse 5; *i.e.*, that of *dead men*, literally and simply so called; men who have died and are in their graves." We have, however, a very notable instance of the contrary in the passage in Luke ix. 60, "Let the dead bury their dead," where the word "*dead*" is used in the same sentence in these two different significations. Comp. John v. 25, 28, 29.

Or, we may suppose that by "the dead" are meant those persons who had actually died in the faith, or some of their number, who, though they had died as others in the flesh, yet had obtained the precious gift of immortal life in the spirit through Jesus Christ.

The importance of this passage of the epistle in connection with that in chap. iii. 19, 20, is that, if it refers to the same event,

it proves that the antediluvian rebels, *in general*, obtained salvation after death, and that the preaching of Christ to them, if that preaching took place in Hades, was effectual to their eternal deliverance.

Is there any passage of Scripture, it may then be asked, which leads us to entertain a different view regarding the individuals referred to? We think so.

First, then, let us see the character of these antediluvians as painted in Genesis,—of these persons among whom Horsley and others incline to think there were not a few misguided believers, and whose case they regard as one of those dark enigmas of the divine justice in which “the final doom seems infinitely out of proportion to the lapse which had incurred it.”

Scripture is plain enough, and leads us to infer that if ever people deserved destruction, these individuals did so. What else means the statement, “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen. vi. 5)? or, “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth” (verses 11, 12; see also ver. 13)?

The sixth chapter of Genesis in its earlier verses gives us the account of the origin of this terrible apostasy. The “sons of God” mentioned there were the professors of religion in that day, the descendants of Adam (among whom the Sethites were pre-eminent), who kept up the worship of God. Cain had separated himself, and gone away to a land eastward of Eden, the land of Nod; the family of Seth, and the other children of Adam who adhered to them, remained in the habitation of their forefathers. There, in front of Eden, was their home; there was reared their family altar. But it would seem that, probably after the death of Cain, in the days of Enos, the son of Seth, the scattered members of all the families began again to associate in sacred rites before the ancestral altar, and “to call upon the name of the Lord” (Gen. iv. 26). The professors of religion left their proper homes, and were fascinated by the arts of the daughters of men, as the Cainites were called (in much the same way as the Israelites in latter days by the daughters of Midian, Numb. xxv.), and induced first to commit whoredom with them, and afterwards to become united in matrimonial alliances. These alliances soon led to fearful irreligion and prevalent immorality.

What is meant by the Nephilim of Gen. vi. 4 cannot be de-

cided with any degree of certainty. The word may mean *giants, robbers, tyrants, apostates*. Numbers xiii. 33 is no proof that "giants" is the right translation, and we think that translation almost meaningless in Gen. vi. 4. It may be that "apostates" is the right meaning there, and that the apostates first named in the text were those who brought about the unhallowed union between the professed godly and ungodly, and the second "apostates" alluded to those children, who were the fruits of these intermarriages, and who seem to have excelled their fathers in wickedness.

We reject with horror the notion advocated by some, among whom are such great names as Delitzsch and Kurtz (of "the Fathers" we make little account in such a question), that by "the sons of God"\* are meant angels who intermarried with earthly women.

\* The exact expression בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים is not often found in the Bible.

The phrase seems generally to point out not *angels* in the common acceptation of that term, but *righteous men*. Compare Hosea i. 10, where the Israelites are called בְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי, the cognate expressions which are used in

Deut. xiv. 1; Psalm lxxiii. 15; Prov. xiv. 26; Isaiah i. 2; xliii. 6; Jer. iii. 19, and the common use of the phrase "*sons of God*" in the New Testament, where it is applied only to *righteous men*, and not to angels. In Job xxxviii. 7, the phrase בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים is indeed commonly supposed to signify *angels*,

but unnecessarily; see p. 56. The expression, "sons of God," in Job i. 6, and ii. 1, can be understood to mean the professors of true religion in Job's days. In those very mysterious passages Satan is described as appearing in the midst of the congregation of God's worshippers, confronted there, however, by the Great Advocate of the people of God. See p. 55, and also Lee's Commentary on Job. The exact expression בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים only occurs in

the passages quoted, but a similar expression (בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים) is found in Psalm

xxix. 1; lxxxix. 6, which has been rendered in our Authorised Version (following most of the ancient expositors) by *the mighty and the sons of the mighty*, and is evidently referred to the kings and mighty men of the earth. A comparison of Psalm xxix. 1, with Psalm xcvi. 7, is strongly in favour of that view. Nor can anything decisive be adduced against it, though Hengstenberg and others consider it distinctly opposed by Psalm lxxxii. 6,—a passage which has nothing whatever to say to the point. The phrase בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים

may be rendered "*sons of God*," but it is not identical with בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים.

In this signification it may also be understood (in the passages in question of the Psalms) to refer to the righteous, the professing worshippers of God, or the saints of the earth. Psalm xxix. 1 can easily enough bear this meaning. Psalm lxxxix. 6 is not quite so clear. But in the fifth verse of that Psalm we have the angels in heaven and the saints on earth contrasted together; and in the seventh verse we have the same parallelism, though reversed.

Such deeds of the flesh do not correspond with them, and our Lord's words in Matt. xxii. 30; Mark xii. 25; Luke xx. 35, 36, are decisive against the notion. It is a weak reply to say that our Lord there speaks only of what the angels do not do, and not of what they never could have done, for the Creator has implanted no desires in any of his creatures which were never designed to be satisfied.

But the punishment of these apostate sons of God,—these antediluvian transgressors,—is alluded to also by St. Peter and Jude (2 Peter ii. 4; Jude 6). The angels\* there mentioned as having fallen are no other than those rebels against God. In popular explanations, indeed, they are identified with the fallen angels which fell with Satan, yet it can be shewn with tolerable certainty that they ought not to be so identified. The angels in Peter and Jude are described as even now in a state of darkness and confinement, in a place called Tartarus, reserved against the punishment of the great day of the Lord, while the angels which fell with Satan are mentioned as roaming about our earth, and believers are exhorted to contend against them. The angels in Peter and Jude are, too, identified by most expositors with “the sons of God” of Genesis. Peter gives no particulars of their sin, but Jude informs us that it consisted, at first at least, chiefly in fornication. The seventh verse of his epistle runs as follows: “Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them [about Sodom and Gomorrah, to wit, Admah and Zeboim] following fornication in like manner to these,” *i.e.*, the angels formerly mentioned, “are set forth as an example,” etc. Now the first sin of “the sons of God” was that of contracting unholy marriages (if marriages they were at first, for Gen. vi. 4 leads us to conjecture that they were not so), even as the sin of the angels here is said to have consisted in fornication. The angels in Jude are further said to have “kept not their first estate,” or “dignity,” but to have “left their own habitation,” or “their proper habitation,” even as we have shewn “the sons of God” did.

It, therefore, suits the contrast better to regard the distinction as also existing in the sixth verse, than to suppose that the angels of heaven are to be understood in both the members of that verse? The contrast is also preserved intact in all the verses, if we understand by the **בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים** according

to the view of the ancient expositors, *the mighty men*, or *kings*, of the earth.

\* In Rev. xii. 7, 11, we have the name *angels* used of Christian men. See verses 11, 12 of that passage: also compare Rev. xxii. 8, 9.

But view them as identical, and what is the result? That we have positive Scripture warrant in asserting that the earlier rebels against God were punished not only with the death of their bodies, but with the eternal destruction of their souls. But Gen. vi. 4, 5, tells us plainly that the sin of their descendants was even greater than their own, and that the world grew riper for punishment instead of improving in virtue.

Place alongside of this conclusion then the fact that *if* 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20, and 1 Pet. iv. 6, teach that Christ preached in Hades to these antediluvians, they teach likewise that, at least, the great body of them were saved there, which is contrary to the conclusion we have arrived at above.

And also, that *if* the common Reformation view of those passages be abandoned, Scripture then teaches not only that there is a hope of the salvation of the heathen, but also that there is a hope of salvation for the majority of mankind, if not for all, on the other side of the grave.

Either, too, the passages in Peter must be understood in some such way as we have interpreted them, or we shall be driven to hold that angels have fleshly feelings as we have, with this difference, that there is no provision made for their lawfully gratifying the same.

But each or any of the above conclusions, which we must adopt if we deny the ordinary Protestant interpretation, are full of difficulties, and we arrive therefore at last at the conviction, that the theological and exegetical difficulties which beset the view of the passages referred to (adopted by Alford and others) vastly surpass all the critical difficulties (which are not in themselves conclusive) against the common interpretation.    Q. E. D.

The state of the soul after death is, as far as we know, a final one, and Scripture affords us no grounds to imagine that any change in character will be made from bad to good, or the reverse, in the intermediate state.

It does appear from the passages we have cited during our investigation, that the popular theology is mistaken at least in its nomenclature. In ordinary language, the righteous are said to go to heaven immediately after death, and the wicked to hell, whereas Scripture, we have seen, teaches us that both go to an intermediate place, called by the name of Hades, which is divided into two distinct compartments; the one the region of the blessed, termed Paradise, or Abraham's bosom; the other the place of the condemned, Tartarus, after the name given to that place by the Greeks,



2 Pet. ii. 4. Hence our Lord speaks of himself after his resurrection as not yet having ascended into heaven, John xx. 17, although his soul was in Paradise after his death upon the cross.

This popular mistake, however, is but a trivial one, as by heaven in such popular language is meant a place of blessedness, which Paradise is; and hell is similarly used to indicate a place of misery, which Tartarus also must be. The apostle's expression, too, in 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4, seems to favour the popular view of the identity of Paradise and heaven, although even there the words may be understood of two distinct places.

From the doom pronounced on the wicked when consigned to their proper abode, and from the joy granted to the righteous, we have seen there is no reason to suppose that there can be any escape on the one hand or falling away on the other. The misery or the blessedness of each are final, though Scripture tells us that both will be increased at the judgment of the great day.

It may be fairly deduced from the language of Scripture that there is no egress from Hades permitted to the righteous or the wicked. For Scripture tells us that at the last day Hades shall deliver up the dead, righteous and unrighteous, which shall then be found in it, Rev. xx. 13. In verses 2, 3, of the same chapter it is said that Satan, when confined in Tartarus, before the great judgment, shall not be able to break forth, and this statement, taken in connection with the passages in 2 Peter and Jude, which we have already discussed, leads us to infer that the wicked confined there are likewise unable to come forth from their prison house. The statement of the prophet Isaiah, in chap. xxiv. 21, leads us to the same conclusion. It is as follows:—"The Lord shall punish in that day the host of the high ones that are on high," *i.e.*, the wicked angels that take part with the Lord's adversaries, "and the kings of the earth that are upon the earth," the manifested opponents of God's kingdom. "And they (the latter, or perhaps both of them) shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered together in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited." The prison here spoken of is the prison of Hades, where they are to be confined in chains and darkness; and the visitation predicted after many days is a visitation of wrath, namely, their being brought forth to receive their final sentence before the bar of the Eternal God. The word used in the original for "visited" is *יִפְקְדוּ*; and, as Delitzsch has shewn in his *Commentary* on Isaiah, *נִפְקְדָה* is only used of a visitation of judgment. Com-

pare Isaiah xxix. 6; Ez. xxxviii. 8. Gesenius, Umbreit, Böhl, and others, coincide in this view, though Hitzig, Knobel, and Ewald, take the opposite view of the passage.

Zechariah ix. 11, 12, has been adduced by some as a proof of the righteous souls being similarly restrained from leaving Hades, while they are said to enjoy peace and happiness there. But "the prisoners" alluded to in that passage are not the dead in the intermediate state, but simply the exiles of Judah and Jerusalem, and their "prison house," as Hitzig and Maurer well explain it, is the foreign land from whence they will return. Pits empty of water, or empty wells, were used anciently for prisons, Gen. xxxvii. 24, and into such a pit Jeremiah was thrown as a captive, Jer. xxxviii. 6. Hence the expression *בֵּית הַבּוֹר*, "the house of a pit," was used to denote a *prison*, Exod. xii. 29, Jer. xxxvii. 16.

Some instances, however, are said to be given in Scripture of souls in their disembodied state revisiting this earth. Thus Moses appeared with Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration in converse with our Lord. This instance is one to the point, for it is quite a gratuitous assumption to suppose that Moses' body was raised from the dead for the occasion.

The second case brought forward is one of a more doubtful character, namely the real or assumed appearance of Samuel to Saul recorded in 1 Sam. xxviii. Mr. Ker in his book already referred to, and the late venerable Rev. G. S. Faber, in his curious and interesting work on *The Many Mansions*, maintain, with many others, that it is impossible to understand that narrative otherwise than as asserting a real appearance.

It may be admitted, as Thenius\* has well put forward, that the witch of Endor knew well who Saul was, notwithstanding his disguise. His lofty stature and noble appearance made it hard for him effectually to preserve the *incognito* which he had assumed. Hence the woman first secured herself from harm by exacting a solemn oath from him before she proceeded to try her art. But if the appearance of Samuel was not a real one, many difficulties present themselves for solution. Why should the woman have predicted such a terrible end, when the object of persons of her craft was mainly to please those who had recourse to them? If she spoke from motives of revenge, and from a wish to exult over the man who had once acted so severely towards those of her profession,

\* See his Commentary on Samuel in the *Kurzgefasstes exeget. Handbuch zum alten Test.*

still how could she know exactly not merely the result of the next day's battle (which perhaps she might have conjectured from the dejection of the king), but the minuter points of his death and that of his sons! The 14th verse seems certainly to convey the meaning that Saul beheld the spectre, as he saluted it in the Oriental manner.\* Not till the spectre had ceased speaking did Saul cast himself on the ground. Those who uphold the real appearance of Samuel maintain that he was not raised by the magical arts of the woman, but by the power of God; and that the woman herself was terrified at the appearance, and *screamed out* for fear (ver. 12) when she beheld what she thought at first was the apparition of "God (not as in our version "*gods*") ascending out of the earth." She had placed the king in some outward room with the intention to deceive him by the arts of some confederate; and, therefore, was terrified when she saw a real appearance from the dead. Thenius, on the other hand, explains the cry of the woman to be only feigned, and designed to terrify Saul. Ewald, however, preferably regards the cry to have been one of terror.

The arguments against the reality of the appearance derived from considerations of the strangeness of this mode of dealing with Saul are of little weight, and we cannot but confess that we are inclined to agree with Mr. Faber and Mr. Ker; although we must demur to their positive statements on the point, as the matter is by no means conclusive, notwithstanding all that has been adduced in favour of their view.

Mr. Ker strangely regards "the Scripture evidence for the possibility of the ungodly departed overpassing the barriers of the unseen world as much stronger" than that respecting the righteous. He has adopted the same view of demoniacal possession as that advocated by Faber, namely, that by "demons" are meant evil spirits which had once upon earth tenanted human bodies. Justin Martyr and Athenagoras both held the same view, and the latter believed that the demons were the souls of the antediluvian giants. Faber, on the other hand, regards them rather to be "indiscriminately the wicked dead."

It is, we think, clear that the word "demons" does mean in several passages of Scripture disembodied human spirits, who were worshipped as mediators, in defiance of the Biblical doctrine that there is but "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ

\* Thenius does not seem to think much of this point, as he makes no comment on it.

Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5). Joseph Mede has elaborately worked out this point in his treatise on the *Apostasy of the Latter Times*. But we doubt much whether there is any distinct evidence of the use of the word in Scripture in the signification of malignant human spirits in their disembodied state.

There is Scriptural evidence enough of the plurality of fallen angels (see Matt. xxv. 41; Eph. vi. 12; Rom. viii. 18; Col. ii. 15), and it is singular that they are not called by the name *δαιμόνοι*, but are spoken of in various other ways. Satan himself is called "the prince of the demons" (Matt. xii. 24), and victory over them is said to be victory over him (Luke x. 18), while he is styled at the same time the "Prince of the power of the air" (Eph. ii. 2), and he and his angels are described as roving up and down in this world. But the lost spirits of the human race when spoken of, in all undisputed passages, are described as in prison, under darkness, in the prison house, and unable to escape their awful lot even for a season (Luke xvi. 26). These facts lead us to infer that "demons," when spoken of in an evil sense, are really identical with what we call "devils." Compare also James ii. 19; iii. 15, where it is difficult to suppose disembodied human spirits to be referred to.

But we must draw this paper to a close. Man in the intermediate state seems to exist not as a simple spirit, but as a spirit combined with matter. This conclusion seems to be legitimately drawn from the *visibility* of the recorded appearance of Moses, from that of Samuel, and from the mutual visibility ascribed to Abraham, Lazarus, and Dives in Hades. Faber in his *Many Mansions* has some interesting remarks on this subject.

To the same book also we would refer those who are interested in the discussion of the locality of the intermediate state of disembodied human spirits, only mentioning that the conclusion at which Mr. Faber arrives (and we beg our readers to note that we neither express our approval nor disapproval of it) is that that region is described in Scripture as being beneath the surface of this our earth.

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### No. III.

NOTE ON PS. ii. 7, p. 109.

It is high time for those who desire to keep to the plain meaning of Holy Writ to abandon the gloss which the Fathers have put

upon these words. The psalm itself could never suggest such an interpretation; the New Testament never hints at it. The psalm primarily refers to David; and in their primary reference it is clear that the words, "I have begotten thee," signify, I have invested thee with royal dignity, and seated thee on thy throne in virtue of the covenant I have made with thee as my son or faithful worshipper. The phrase "this day" refers to the time of the fulfilment of God's promise when, in spite of the opposition of man, David was appointed king on Sion as the seat of his dominion. In the New Testament the unholy confederacy mentioned in the first verses is expressly referred to the coalition of the Jews, Herod and Pontius Pilate against the person of the Lord Jesus (Acts iv. 25-27). Starting from this apostolic explanation it is easy to point out the Messianic nature of the psalm. Christ, by his death, gained the victory over death and hell (Heb. ii. 14); and his resurrection was his triumph, for by it his Divine Sonship was most clearly proved. Acts xiii. 33 ought to be conclusive on this point. With all due respect to Pearson, Bleek, Alford, Candlish, and Treffry, we cannot but esteem their explanation of the passage as totally opposed to the context of the psalm, in which there is no representation of Christ as the Son of God before the creation of the world; and the contrast sought to be discovered by Bleek and Alford in verses 5 and 6, as drawn between Christ's appearance in time and his existence before time, is one purely imaginary. We take our stand upon the New Testament explanation of the psalm, and refuse to go further than the New Testament warrants, or to suffer its statements to be explained away. The technical use of *σήμερον* in the Alexandrine theology is no argument whatever to prove that the psalmist, many centuries previous, employed *דִּינָה* in the same signification.

The eternal filiation may be a logical consequence from an admission of the doctrines of Christ's essential divinity and of the unity of God. But the psalm has to be tortured to make it teach "the eternal filiation." Truth has been often greatly injured by texts being adduced to prove doctrines, which have no real connection with them at all. A refuted argument should, it is true, go for nothing, but as Archbishop Whately has remarked, it is sure in practice to tell against those who have adduced it.

Mr. Treffry attempts to get over Acts xiii. 33 by supposing it to refer to Christ's being raised up to sit on the throne of David. In support of this opinion he refers to Acts ii. 30. But even there the apostle refers to the resurrection itself; see v. 31. The

resurrection of Christ was the grand fact which proved his mission and Divinity. Hence the resurrection itself was the chief subject of apostolic preaching (Acts iv. 2 ; xxxiii. 17, 18, &c.) Mr. Treffry seems to forget the great importance of this fact. But if it can be made out that Acts xiii. 33 does not refer to it, but to the exaltation of Christ to sit on David's throne, then Ps. ii. 7 must be referred to that exaltation. In neither case would it refer to the eternal generation. Ps. ii. 7 points out that the Saviour whom man rejected, despised (Is. xlix. 7), and opposed, was, even in the hour of his seeming discomfiture, acknowledged by Jehovah as his Son, and very soon after triumphantly manifested as such by his resurrection from the dead. We uphold the Apostolic explanation of the Psalm in opposition to the Patristic. The verbal criticism of the passage has been ably treated by Delitzsch and Hupfeld, and we are glad to see that Perowne in his recent commentary has defended the true interpretation of the passage.

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#### No. IV.

ON THE TRANSLATION OF PS. II. 12, p. 109.

This is a matter which has been the subject of some discussion. In the number of *Evangelical Christendom* for April, 1862, to an article written by a friend on *Faith and its Aids*, I affixed at his request a short note confirmatory of this statement. This note drew forth a letter from Dr. Tregelles, which was given by me in full at the close of an article in the May number, on "*Weak Criticisms adduced in support of Truth.*" I may mention here the points I urged then to show that the translation of the passage was doubtful, and to which Dr. Tregelles made no answer. The rendering "kiss the son" has the Syriac alone among the ancient versions in its favour. Dr. R. Williams' translation (in *Essays and Reviews*) "worship purely" is substantially the same as the καταφιλήσατε ἐκλεκτῶς of Aquila, and the προσκυνήσατε καθαρῶς of Symmachus. Ewald renders it nehmt lautere warnung an, *receive advice*, following the LXX. δράξασθε παιδείας, Targ. קִבְּלוּ אוֹלָפְנָא, Vulg. apprehendete disciplinam, and the Arabic. The objections to the ordinary rendering may

briefly be stated : (1) בַּר, in the sense of *son*, is not found in Hebrew, except in Prov. xxxi. 2. It is Chaldee, and in Proverbs occurs with decided Chaldaisms, as מַלְכִין. But the second Psalm belongs to the time of pure Hebrew. In verse 7 the regular Hebrew word for son is used, בְּנִי. It is plainly unsatisfactory to attempt to explain the change of the word by the supposition that it was to avoid the cacophony of בְּנִי, lest, following, for the Psalmist would have used it in that case with the article הַבֵּן, *the Son*, or with a suffix, as in ver. 7, בְּנִי. (2.) If בַּר was used in the sense of son, it ought to have either the article, or a suffix, or be followed by a genitive. As בַּר not בֵּן, is the word for son in Syriac, the Syriac translator might easily have overlooked the absence of the article while rendering the word definitely, (בְּרֵא). The answer which Hengstenberg has made to this objection, that the word is here used in a sort of transition to being used as a proper name, requires no refutation. Nowhere in the Scriptures is the term "son" with reference to Christ unaccompanied by the article, a qualifying pronoun, or noun in the genitive, as son of man, Son of God. The common rendering "kiss the Son" has for its defenders among the moderns De Wette, Winer, Hitzig, Hengstenberg, Fürst, Gesenius, Delitzsch, Perowne, while it has been attacked not only by Dr. R. Williams but by Ewald, Hupfeld, Olshausen, Koester, Dietrich and others. Ewald defends his translation by considering that בַּר, *das lautere*, the pure or sincere, is a poetical expression for counsel, sincere admonition. The verb נִשַּׁק expresses properly *to cleave to*, or *to attach oneself to another* (hence *to kiss*); and consequently in a new active sense (in Piel) it may well signify *laying hold of*, seizing, availing oneself of.

Adjectives in the masculine are sometimes used adverbially (though the feminine is the more common form), and בַּר therefore can be taken in an adverbial sense "*purely*." The masculine is sometimes used in a neuter sense, as well as the feminine, and therefore בַּר can mean also *what is pure*, as Ewald has viewed it. The verb נִשַּׁק does not always mean *to kiss*, but is used also of *drawing* bows, and of *arranging* oneself, and therefore it is possible for it to have been used in its original signification of *joining together* (comp. the verb in Arabic), hence *cleaving to*, or even *worshipping*. The difficulty of those who uphold the common translation lies in the word בַּר, and its construction; the difficulty of the opponents of

that translation lies unquestionably in the usage of the verb. Scholars on both sides have been too dogmatical. Hupfeld's conjecture that we should read בּוֹ instead of בֵּר, which would make the passage signify, "worship him," or "kiss him," in token of submission, has much to recommend it. As the text stands the translation of the authorised version is that most generally approved of, but it is by no means without its difficulties, nor can those that render it otherwise be decisively proved in the wrong. Whatever rendering, however, be adopted the Messianic reference of the Psalm is quite unaffected thereby.



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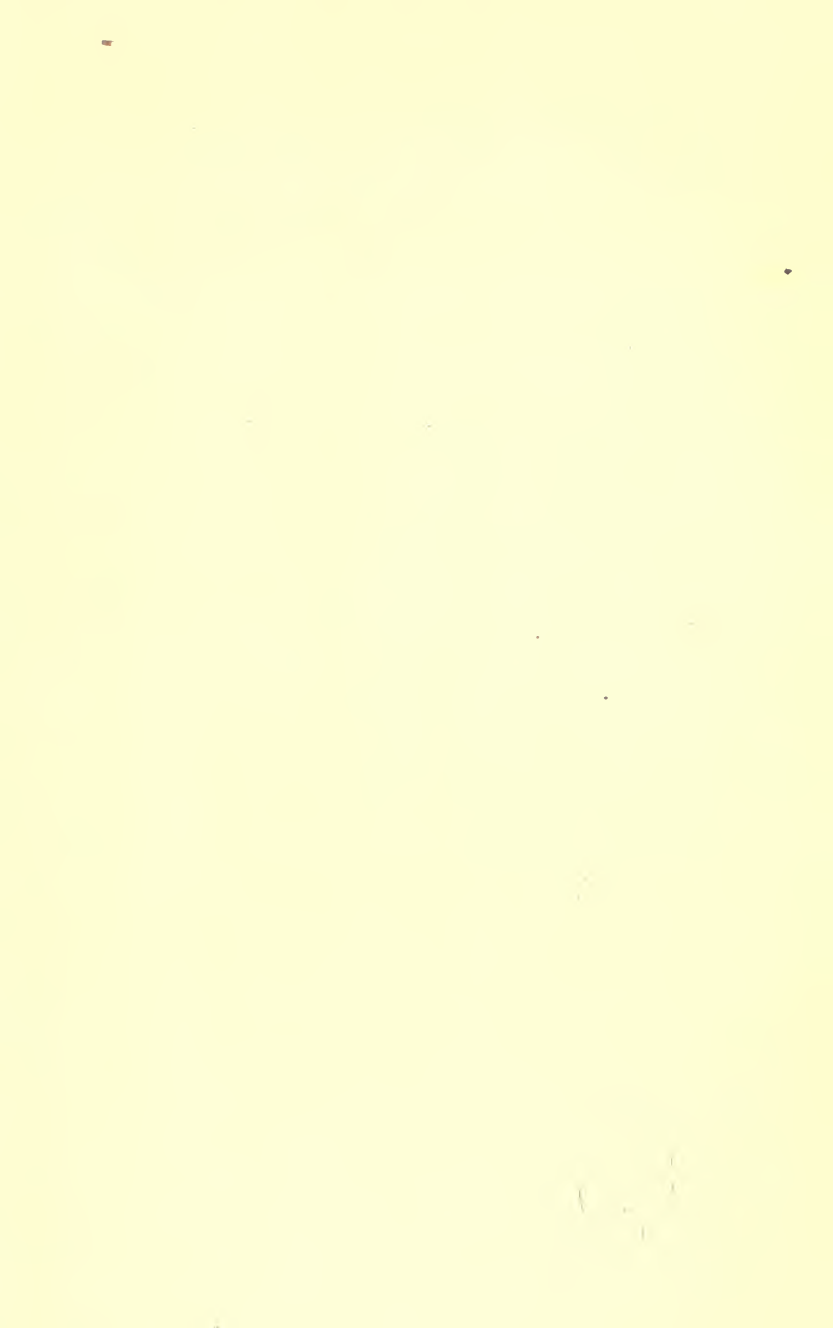
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